

The man who unwittingly became a meme

Level 3: Advanced – Teacher's notes

Article summary: The article describes how a photo of a Spanish man became an internet meme with over two billion views.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Vocabulary

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- a. The purpose of this activity is to introduce the topic and the idea of the enormous numbers of people who visit websites, including social-media websites. The order given is taken from monthly statistics at the beginning of 2021. Google is way out ahead with over 90 billion hits a month, YouTube has around 35 billion and Facebook 25 billion, while Twitter, Wikipedia and Instagram all have around six billion.

Key:

- | | |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Google | 4. Twitter |
| 2. YouTube | 5. Wikipedia |
| 3. Facebook | 6. Instagram |

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. The adverb *vaguely*, and its corresponding adjective (vague), can be used to mean 'a little' or 'unclearly' as in 'I know her vaguely' or 'I have a vague memory of seeing that film.' The expression *take heed of someone's advice/warning* is arguably more common than *pay heed to* but both forms are used.

Key:

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. scroll | 6. obnoxious |
| 2. vaguely | 7. infamy |
| 3. heed | 8. eureka |
| 4. unwittingly | 9. reclaim |
| 5. meme | 10. spotlight |

3. Comprehension check

- a. The answers given are only suggested answers and students may correctly answer the questions in different ways, e.g., in item 2 they may say 'because he was standing in for someone else' or similar.

Key:

1. his brother-in-law
2. because he (Josep's brother-in-law) was checking the light before taking a photo of an American writer
3. It was used to illustrate an article in an American magazine.
4. almost two billion
5. in a marketing agency
6. because messages arrived from many English-speaking countries
7. He felt shocked.
8. when he decided to reclaim his image and launch a Facebook page
9. whether he is the worst person or whether he is looking at the worst person
10. his sense of humour

4. Key language

- a. Students could be asked to do this exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs. Encourage them to check their answers in the text. Note that you can also express *an* interest in something. *Roll in* (also in the text) has the same meaning as *pour in*.

Key:

- | | |
|------|------|
| 1. c | 4. e |
| 2. f | 5. b |
| 3. a | 6. d |

5. Discussion

- a. Allow students time to note down their ideas about each statement and encourage them to say why they agree or disagree with each one. You can also encourage them to share other famous quotes about this topic.

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6. In your own words

- a. The task could also be done as homework and students could then present their memes to the class.