

The man who unwittingly became a meme

Level 1: Elementary / Pre-Intermediate – 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. Point out that *obnoxious* is a very strong word when applied to a person. If someone or something is *in the spotlight*, they are the subject of a lot of attention; *out of the spotlight* is the opposite.

Key:

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| 1. work out | 6. Empathy |
| 2. brother-in-law | 7. spotlight |
| 3. global | 8. viral |
| 4. meme | 9. debate |
| 5. obnoxious | 10. bother |

3. Comprehension check

- a. Ask students to work individually to answer the questions and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. The answers given are not the only possible answers. For example, in item 6, students may say 'because he lives and works in Spain, and the phrase is in English' or similar.

Key:

1. his brother-in-law
2. in 2014
3. A US magazine used the photo in an article.
4. He realized he had become a global meme.
5. almost two billion
6. because the phrase is in English
7. thousands of messages arrived
8. because he wanted to stay out of the spotlight
9. because it might go viral again
10. funny

4. Key language

- a. Students can check their answers in the text after completing the exercise. Note that *okay* more commonly written as *OK*.

Key:

1. from
2. on
3. at
4. for
5. out of
6. with

5. Discussion

- a. Allow students time to note down their ideas and encourage them to give reasons for their answer.

6. In your own words

- a. This could also be done as homework.