

'We called the mums about an hour after the ceremony': the rise of secret weddings

Level: Elementary – Teacher's notes

Article summary: Why getting married in secret without friends or family present is becoming increasingly popular

Time: 90 minutes

Skills: Reading, speaking, writing

Language focus: Vocabulary, speaking, writing

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- If possible, have students do this task before they see the article.
- Students brainstorm ideas, words and phrases they associate with weddings and write them into the box.
- Now provide the students with the article (if they don't have it already) so that they can find out which of the words they suggested appear there.

2. Key words

- Students write the correct words from the wordpools next to the definitions on the lines provided. Then they find and highlight them in the article to read them in context.

Key:

- | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1. couple | 6. honeymoon |
| 2. instead | 7. complex |
| 3. ceremony | 8. upset |
| 4. common | 9. left out |
| 5. groom | 10. supportive |

- Before reading the article carefully, students use some of the key words to fill the gaps in the sentences to ensure that they understand and know how the words are used in other contexts.

Key:

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. instead | 4. honeymoon |
| 2. supportive | 5. couple |
| 3. ceremony | 6. complex |

3. Understanding the article

- Students read the statements and decide whether they are true or false according to the article. They should correct any that are false.

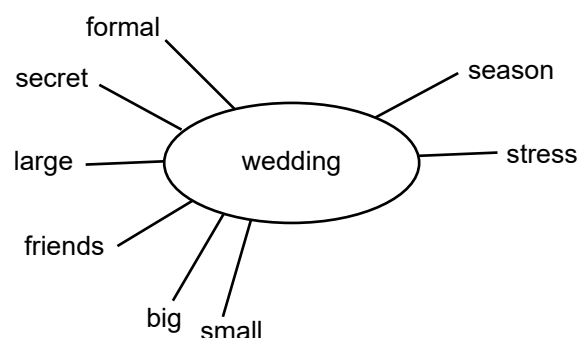
Key:

- False. Because everything is more expensive (inflation, energy costs, etc) and because of the effects Covid had on jobs and income, people have less money to spend on weddings*
- False. At a large formal wedding, you need to plan where everyone will sit and what they will eat.*
- False. The average cost of a formal wedding in the UK is now around seventeen thousand pounds.*
- True*
- False. Secret weddings are usually less stressful for the bride and groom.*
- True*
- True*
- True*

4. Key language

- Students find the collocations with *wedding* in the article and write them onto the word spider.

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- b. Then they add any further 'wedding' collocations they can think of (e.g., *wedding cake*) and share them with other students.

5. Discussion

- a. Students talk about their own wedding or a wedding they attended. As far as possible, they should use the collocations from task 4 as well as the prompt words in the box. Then they discuss the question about how weddings have changed over the years.

6. In your own words

- a. This task can be set as homework or as a semi-collaborative exercise in which students discuss with a partner what to write and how best to word the email and then write it together. In either case, the emails can be shared amongst the class and feedback given as to how they would feel if they'd received the emails. The beginning of the email is given to start them off but, if they'd prefer to word it differently, they do not have to use it.