

'She believed in every one of us': ex-pupils on their inspirational teachers

Level 3: Advanced – Teacher's notes

Article summary: The article describes how different people, including the singer Adele, were inspired by their teachers.

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 for students to focus on successful female singers. In the activity, students are asked to match the singers with their nationalities. You could also ask them to name famous female singers from their country or any other well-known singers they like.

Key:

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

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. Point out that the verb *trigger* is commonly used in a medical context, as in 'The disease is *triggered* by contact with an infected person.' The adjective *instrumental* is usually followed by *in* and a gerund or noun, as in 'She was *instrumental in* developing the vaccine.' The word *peer* is often applied to one's classmates, as in 'He was ahead of his *peers* in most school subjects.' *Spot on* is very common in British English and can be used as a response when someone gives an answer that is completely accurate.

Key:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. viral | 6. bully |
| 2. trigger | 7. transition |
| 3. lasting | 8. spiral |
| 4. upbeat | 9. peer |
| 5. instrumental | 10. spot on |

3. Comprehension check

- a. The answers given are only suggested answers and students may correctly answer the questions in different ways, e.g., in #1 they may say 'She thought she was inspirational' or similar.

Key:

1. She thought she was cool and engaging.
2. His father died.
3. She hugged his mother at a parents' evening.
4. He was anxious about his sexuality.
5. She told him it was OK to be gay and that there was nothing to be afraid of.
6. He's a public health doctor.
7. It's a centre for educators and their families.
8. She experienced difficulties with the English language.
9. So she could communicate with her grandparents.
10. She encouraged her to read as much as she could.

4. Key language

- a. Students could be asked to do this exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs. Note that *go on about* often has negative connotations, as in 'He keeps *going on about* that new car of his.' If you are *heading for* something, it is often something negative, as in 'She's *heading for* trouble' or 'He's *heading for* a nervous breakdown', but it can also be used in a travel context, e.g., 'After Berlin, we're heading for Prague.'

Key:

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

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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.

6. In your own words

- a. The text has examples of different ways people have been influenced by a teacher – to start performing, to ignore bullies, to go to university, and so on. Most people can probably remember a teacher who helped them in some way. If not, they may remember a teacher who made them determined not to do something in a particular way!