Language for ...

dating and friendship

Age: Young adult / Adult
Level: Upper-intermediate
Length: 45–60 minutes
Language Focus: key vocabulary for describing people and relationships
Skills: speaking, reading, listening
Materials: one copy of the worksheet per student , video (on onestopenglish or downloaded in advance of the lesson)
Aims: to provide students with language for describing friends and relationships

What are red words?

Ninety per cent of the time, speakers of English use just 7,500 words in speech and writing. These words appear in the Macmillan Dictionary in red and are graded with stars. One-star words are frequent, two-star words are more frequent and three-star words are the most frequent. 'Language for' lessons are based on red words and encourage students to improve their English through communicative tasks using collocation and commonly used phrases.

1   As preparation for the lesson, ask students to think of a close friend or their partner (if they have one) and write a few short sentences to describe them. Tell them to think about describing their personality (e.g. adjectives such as *funny, friendly, generous, kind*) as well as their appearance, and the reasons why they like them.

Teaching tip: Students could be invited to share their work on a class blog/website. Ask them to submit a photo so that as a class they create a 'gallery' of their friends and related descriptions which can later form a resource for the lesson.

2   Give a copy of the worksheet to each student (please see step 7, for a note on pairwork

exercise 3a). Start the lesson by dividing students into groups to brainstorm ideas for the warmer question: *What different ways are there to meet new people?* Have each group report back to the rest of the class and put together a whole class list. Which of these ways do students think is best? Encourage students to explain their choices and talk about their own experiences.

3   Explain to students that they are now going to watch a video in which four different people (Sam, Maitrayee, Patrick and Erica) talk about their partner or best friend, and how they first met them. Ask students to listen out for the various ways to meet people that the speakers mention and make a note of any ways they hadn't already thought of (NB: they will have to listen carefully to Maitrayee, as she speaks quite quickly and with a strong accent). Play the video and check answers as a class.

4   Explain that you're going to play the video again but this time students will have to listen carefully so that they can identify the correct speakers of the questions in exercise 2b. Give students a few seconds to read through the questions before playing the video a second time. Then ask them to complete the exercise and then check answers with a partner.

5   Ask students to read the questions in exercise 2c and circle the answers they think are correct. Play the video a final time. Do they now want to change any of their answers? Check the answers as a class.

6   Split students into small groups to briefly discuss the question in exercise 2d and have some groups report their answers to the class, including their own opinions about dating / internet dating.

7   Divide the students into pairs for exercise 3a, giving one the Student A material and the other the Student B material (either cut up this exercise

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in advance of the class, or ask students to fold the worksheet in half so they can only see their half of the profiles – A or B). Tell them to read the two profiles and then ask each other questions to complete the missing information (you may want to explain *pet hates = things you dislike very much*). Check answers. Then ask students to look at the profiles again and briefly discuss in their pairs whether they think the two people might get on with each other. Invite some of the pairs to share their conclusions and give reasons why or why not – what do/don't these people have in common? (See key for suggested answers.)

8 Exercise 3c highlights some words and expressions commonly used when talking about someone you have recently met or made friends with. Start the exercise by inviting four confident students to read the two dialogues to the rest of the class. You may wish to point out that, in spoken scenarios like these, *guy* is very often used in place of *man* and the expression *get talking* means *to start a conversation with someone you didn't know previously*. Then ask students to complete the exercise in pairs. Tell them not to use a dictionary straight away but to first complete any matches they think they know and to look at the surrounding context to help them complete the rest. Check the answers as a class.

9 Tell students to find a partner and spend a couple of minutes noting down ideas for exercise 4. Remind them that for help they can look at the conversation texts and vocabulary from earlier exercise material, as well as their lesson preparation.

10 For exercise 5, ask students if they know what is meant by *speed dating* and *speed friending (a version of speed dating for making friends rather than romantic relationships)*.

11 If time permits, set up a speed-friending activity in class. Give students three minutes to talk to each other before moving on to the next person. Remind them to briefly describe themselves and talk about their interests. Based only on what they discovered in the three minutes, who would they like to meet again?

KEY:

1a students' own answers

2a students' own answers

2b
1. Sam
2. Sam
3. Patrick, Sam, Erica
4. Maitrayee
5. Patrick
6. Maitrayee

2c
1. strong
2. complement
3. goals
4. out
5. comfort
6. caring
7. company

2d Suggested answers:
Pros: Dating apps are often quick, easy to use, can be used anywhere with an internet connection and give a lot of choice
Cons: There is a security risk when meeting strangers, they can take up a lot of time, the need to promote yourself means you have to be quite confident

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3a

1. a night in front of the TV
2. dog hairs
3. (lots of) meat
4. go to the gym
5. Star Wars movies
6. tidy kitchens
7. ice-cream in unusual flavours
8. taking my dog for a run

3b Suggested answers:

Yes. They both love taking exercise. They both enjoy eating meat and sweet things. Neither of them is tidy in the kitchen or care too much about their appearance.

No. They may not like watching the same things on TV. One of them has a dog and the other one doesn't like dog hairs.

3c

1. have (a lot) in common
2. hit it off
3. get to know
4. get on with
5. get on like a house on fire
6. flirt
7. enjoy (each other's) company
8. click
9. on the same wavelength
10. ask (you) out

4 students' own answers

5 *speed dating / friending* = an organised event in which people looking for a partner/friends divide into pairs and have short conversations with each other. They then decide which of these people they would like to meet again.