

## England: To be or not to be: The play

**Level:** Pre-intermediate / Intermediate

**Age:** Teenagers / Young adults

**Duration:** 60-90 minutes

**Aims:** In this lesson the students will:

1. Listen to a short play and then perform their own version using background soundscapes
2. Practise extensive and intensive listening and listening for emotion/mood
3. Consolidate a range of adjectives related to feelings and emotions, including *angry*, *embarrassed*, *excited*, *curious*, *relieved*, *suspicious*, *scared*, *amused* and *shocked*
4. Consolidate the meaning of the above adjectives by rehearsing and performing the play, paying close attention to expressing emotion and mood through intonation

**Materials:** one copy of the worksheet per student; one set of cut-out role cards per group of students; Track 1 (market sounds); Track 2 (full audio); Track 3 (medieval soundscape); Track 4 (time travel and modern day soundscape) and Track 5 (time travel and medieval soundscape) – all downloaded from onestopenglish

**Summary:** Join time traveller Amber Adams as she meets suspicious medieval market seller Toby and explains why she has come from the future to meet William Shakespeare. How will she prove she comes from the 21st century?

**Note:** This lesson is best taught after completing [A Time to Travel: England: To be or not to be](#).

### Language task

**Aim:** to revise adjectives related to different emotions

Hand out the worksheet and ask your students to discuss the meaning of the adjectives for emotions. Monitor and elicit any words that pairs are struggling with.

**Note:** These adjectives were covered in [A Time to Travel: England: To be or not to be](#).

### Listening task 1

**Aim:** to establish context and to demonstrate the juxtaposition between medieval and modern day sounds

Tell your students that they are going to listen to a variety of sounds, then play Track 1. As they listen, ask them where they imagine they are. Which sounds are more modern? Why? What sounds can they identify? Do the task with them, compare your ideas and have a whole-class discussion.

### Listening task 2

**Aim:** to practise listening for the emotion and mood of each character and to build an awareness of the impact that a speaker's emotion has on nuances of intonation and pronunciation

1. Ask your students to listen to the entire play and decide which character, Amber or Toby, is the friendliest and why. Play Track 2.

**Key:**

*Amber is friendlier than Toby. Throughout the play she remains upbeat and carefree compared to Toby, who is suspicious and often scared of Amber and being taken to the future.*

2. Ask your students to listen and read the play at the same time. Point out that there is an emotion before each line in brackets. Encourage your students to recognize the changes in the actors' voices depending on the emotion.

**Note:** There is no need to get too particular at this stage about the exact intonation and changes in emphasis. The exercise is more a gentle awareness-building process. When your students come to perform the play themselves, they can consider this in more detail.

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### The performance

**Aim:** to practise portraying emotions, extensive reading, speaking for an extended period and working collaboratively

Put your students into groups of three and hand out a role card for each person in the group. Ideally, in mixed classes, girls can play Amber and boys can play Toby. If you only have boys you can remind them that boys played female roles in Shakespearean times!

**Note:** Make sure the directors for each group have practised changing tracks on your computer before they perform. Monitor closely, correcting pronunciation and encouraging students to add movement to their performance. It would also be advisable to make the shyer members of the group take on the role of director. Give your students plenty of time to rehearse.

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### Language task

Look at the adjectives related to feelings and emotions in the box below. Check through the meaning of the words again with your partner.

friendly	confused	amused	suspicious	excited	angry
scared	shocked	curious	embarrassed	relieved	

### Listening task 1

Listen to the two different sounds and discuss the questions below with a partner.

- Where do you imagine you are for each one?
- Which sounds more modern? Why?
- What sounds can you identify?

### Listening task 2

- a. You are now going to listen to Amber, a time-travelling teenage girl, as she meets a medieval market seller called Toby. As you listen, decide which character is friendlier than the other. Why?
- b. Listen again and read the script at the same time. Notice that, before each line, there is an emotion / feeling adjective from the box in the Language task. Can you hear the differences in their intonation and pronunciation?

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### Director

You are the director and you have a very important role. You need to make sure your actors perform well and you also control the sound.

Listen to your group!

As your actors rehearse the play, listen to their pronunciation and intonation and the way they express the emotion of each line. Encourage your actors to speak their lines until you are happy.

#### The soundtrack

Either use your computer or your teacher's to play the background audio tracks. There are three tracks and in the stage directions you will see when you need to change to the next track.

Track 3 (medieval soundscape)

Track 4 (time travel and modern day soundscape)

Track 5 (time travel and medieval soundscape)



### Actor 1: Toby, the market seller

You will play a 16th-century market seller. You are immediately suspicious and concerned about Amber. When you travel forward in time you are shocked at the discovery of modern-day life! Some things you like but others you find very frightening. Be guided by the emotion of each line!

### Actor 2: Amber, the teenage time-traveller

You will play Amber Adams, a 16 year old girl from modern-day England. You have travelled back in time to discover William Shakespeare's favourite line from his play *Hamlet*. In order to meet Shakespeare, you have to audition for his play. However, in 16th-century England, girls were not allowed to perform in the theatre. You must find some boy's clothes at the local market to disguise yourself. You must also convince market seller Toby that you are from the future.

Remember, you are having an adventure! Be guided by the emotion of each line!

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### [Play Track 3]

**Amber:** [*friendly*] Hi!

**Toby:** [*friendly*] Hello and welcome to my clothes stall! How can I help?

**Amber:** [*friendly*] I want to buy some boys ...

**Toby:** [*confused*] Boys? I don't sell boys! How dare you ask me such a thing?

**Amber:** [*amused*] Ah, if you'll let me finish, I'm looking for some boy's clothes.

**Toby:** [*friendly*] Oh! I see. I am sorry. Well, you've come to the right place then! [*suspicious*] Hmm. You look funny.

**Amber:** [*excited*] That's because I'm from the future!

**Toby:** [*suspicious*] The future? You are strange and I'm not sure I trust you.

**Amber:** [*friendly*] Hey you can trust me! Listen, how about we start this conversation again. What's your name?

**Toby:** [*suspicious*] Toby. What's yours?

**Amber:** [*friendly*] Nice to meet you, I'm Amber!

**Toby:** [*unfriendly*] I don't serve people from the future.

**Amber:** [*friendly*] Oh please can you help Toby, I really need to disguise myself as a boy!

**Toby:** [*suspicious but interested*] Why?

**Amber:** [*excited*] Because I've come from the future to find William Shakespeare!

**Toby:** [*angry*] Stop talking about the future. I don't believe you!

**Amber:** [*friendly*] I'll prove it to you. Toby, touch my watch!

### [Play Track 4]

**Toby:** [*scared*] What just happened? Where are we?

**Amber:** [*excited*] It's OK, Toby, relax! We've gone to the future! We're in Camden Market in London in the 21st century!

**Toby:** [*shocked*] Oh my goodness! Am I dreaming? This is unbelievable! What is that music? It is very strange.

**Amber:** [*excited*] It's reggae music.

**Toby:** [*excited*] Reggae music? I like reggae music.

**Toby:** [*surprised*] I can hear a ringing sound, what is that?

**Amber:** [*amused*] It's just a mobile phone.

**Toby:** [*curious*] What's a mobile phone?

**Amber:** [*friendly*] It's a ... it's a long story.

**Toby:** [*excited*] You know what, this music is fantastic. Come on Amber, dance with me!

**Amber:** [*embarrassed*] Err ... OK, I guess so.

**Toby:** [*scared, shouting*] What's that?

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**Amber:** [*amused*] It's only a helicopter.

**Toby:** [*scared, shouting*] A what? It's a flying monster! I'm scared! We need to go!

**Amber:** [*amused*] It's OK Toby; it's not going to hurt you.

**Toby:** [*scared, shouting*] Please, take me home!

**Amber:** [*amused*] OK, calm down I'll take you home! Quickly, touch my watch.

### [Play Track 5]

**Toby:** [*relieved*] Oh, thank goodness! I'm home. Never do that to me again!

**Amber:** [*friendly*] I'm sorry; I guess I should have told you what was going to happen first.

**Toby:** [*angry*] Yes, you should have done that ...

**Amber:** [*friendly*] So ... About those boy's clothes ...

**Toby:** [*unfriendly*] Listen, just take whatever you want from this pile – they're very fashionable, but no one seems to be buying them.

**Amber:** [*excited*] Thank you so much, Toby!

**Toby:** [*curious*] Now, would you mind doing one last thing for me?

**Amber:** [*friendly*] Sure, anything.

**Toby:** [*angry*] Please go away and never, ever come back!