

Words In The News

Teacher's pack

Lesson plan and student worksheets
with answers

'Fat man' finishes walk
across US
10 May 2005



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LEARNING ENGLISH



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BBC Learning English – Words in the News

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Level: Intermediate and above

Topic: Obesity and exercise

Language: Vocabulary of news report

Aims: Reading skills – Understanding a short news report
Language skills – Practising the Past Perfect
Writing skills – Improving writing fluency skills

Materials: Worksheet 1 – Comprehension questions
Worksheet 2 – Vocabulary matching task
Worksheet 3 – Grammar/language focus – the Past Perfect
News story – Available online at:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/newsenglish/witn/2006/05/060510_fat_man.shtml

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LESSON STAGES

A Simulate student interest in text

Generate interest about today's topic by asking students what ways people can lose weight. Write their ideas on the board. You will use these ideas later in the lesson.

Possible answers:

eat less food
do more exercise
have surgery
use drugs

B Pre-teach essential vocabulary

Elicit/present key vocabulary that students need either to understand the key points in the text or to understand and/or answer any questions that you'll set them later in the lesson. The vocabulary is from Words in the News (so you can elicit the vocabulary by using the explanations provided online or below).

You could either pre-teach the vocabulary at this stage of the lesson or you could use the vocabulary building activity from further down in this lesson plan. Have students working in small groups together and ask them to try to match the vocabulary with the definitions. Encourage them to work with the other groups to pool their knowledge. When they have done as much as they can, if they have dictionaries, ask them to look up the words to check their answers and to find out the definitions of any words they were not sure of. If they don't have dictionaries, check their answers and give them help with any words they aren't sure of.

Whichever method you use to elicit/present the vocabulary, you should then model it (say it clearly, highlighting the word stress) and get them to repeat the words after you.

epic

very long

original aim

plan

falling into a depression

becoming very unhappy

developing an eating disorder

becoming ill with a condition where you cannot control your eating habits e.g. You eat too much or too little

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lighter

less heavy than he was before

the state of mind than body

the mental attitude than the physical

secret

best or only way

voyage of self-discovery

time of finding out more about himself

viewed by millions

seen by millions of people

his first plan

the first thing that he was going to do

C Written record of vocabulary

Write the words on the board, eliciting spelling as you write. Elicit and show the word stress of each item and word class, if appropriate.

Give students some time to copy your boardwork into their notebooks.

Boardwork:

journey

original aim

falling into a depression

developing an eating disorder

lighter

the state of mind than body

secret

voyage of self-discovery

viewed by millions

his first plan

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D Set a global question.

Students read text the first time.

Tell the students they are going to read a text about an overweight American man who has been trying to lose weight. Give them a time limit (1 - 2 minutes) to read the text quickly to find out how many of the ideas mentioned at the start of the lesson are mentioned in the text.

It's not important the students predict every way mentioned in the text (it's unlikely that they could). The point of this task is to get them interested in the text by predicting what they are going to read about and for them to skim the whole text.

Boardwork

eat less food

do more exercise

have surgery

use drugs

E Check answers

Elicit students' answers and tick the correct answer on the board.

All the paragraphs mention walking as a type of exercise to help him lose weight.

The text also mentions that happiness helped him to lose weight.

Boardwork

eat less food - **no**

do more exercise - **yes**

have surgery – **no**

use drugs – **no**

F Set specific information questions

Hand out Worksheet 1 or use the online quiz. Students complete the worksheet to help them understand the text in more detail. Give them a time limit (5 - 6 minutes) to read the text in more detail and to answer the questions.

G Check answers

Elicit True or False answers. Direct attention to a particular paragraph if an answer is wrong to try to elicit correct answer (see worksheet 1 and answer key).

H Vocabulary consolidation/building

Before the lesson, make enough copies of worksheet 2 so that there is 1 worksheet for every 4 – 5 students. Cut up the vocabulary and explanations.

In class tell students to match the correct word with the right definition.

I Check answers

Elicit answers. If an answer is wrong, ask other students to try to elicit correct answer.

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J Grammar focus

Hand out Worksheet 3 which focuses on the Past Perfect. Tell students to fill in the blanks to complete each sentence.

K Check answers

If an answer is wrong, ask other students to try to elicit correct answer (see worksheet 3 and answer key).

L Follow-up activity: Writing

Ask students what they think about Steve's walking tour.

Would they like to walk for over a year?

What would they miss from home?

Who would they miss?

Tell students to imagine they have been away from home for over a year and are now writing a letter about their experiences. First think about why they are away from home (perhaps working, studying or walking!). Next, think about who they are writing to (family, friends, boy/girlfriend).

Students work in pairs of small groups to brainstorm ideas about why they writing, who they are writing to what they are writing about. Then, work by themselves to create their letters.

While they are writing, move around the room listening to them unobtrusively. Make notes of any errors you see.

If possible, display some or all the letters around the classroom at the end of this activity.

M Feedback

Give praise for content (for example, who wrote like a homesick son/daughter).

Give praise for correct examples you saw.

Give feedback on incorrect examples you saw. You could write some examples phrases or sentences on the board and elicit from students which ones are correct and which ones are wrong and why.

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WORKSHEET 1

Are the following sentences true or false?

1. Steve finished his huge trip by going over the a Manhattan bridge. T/F
2. Before he started on his trip, Steve had been unhappy and had been eating badly. T/F
3. He lost more than 40 kilograms of weight during his trip. T/F
4. He thinks that you can become slimmer by concentrating on physical exercise and diet. T/F
5. A lot of people logged onto the internet to follow Steve's progress. T/F
6. The first thing he wanted to do after his finished his trip was to write a book about his experiences. T/F

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WORKSHEET 2

VOCABULARY

Match these words and phrases to their definitions

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. epic | A. best or only way |
| 2. original aim | B. less heavy than he was before |
| 3. falling into depression | C. seen by millions of people |
| 4. developing an eating disorder | D. plan |
| 5. lighter | E. time of finding out more about himself |
| 6. the state of mind than body | F. very long |
| 7. secret | G. becoming ill with a condition where you cannot control your eating habits e.g. You eat too much or too little |
| 8. voyage of self-discovery | H. the first thing that he was going to do |
| 9. viewed by millions | I. the mental attitude than the physical |
| 10. his first plan | J. becoming very unhappy |

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WORKSHEET 3

GRAMMAR FOCUS – THE PAST PERFECT

Fill the blanks with either the Past Perfect or the Past Simple to complete the sentences below.

1. 'Was Mark at the pub when you got there?' 'No, he _____ (leave) about 5 minutes before I arrived.'
2. The flat was really quiet when I got there. All my flatmates _____ (go) out.
3. My parents were so angry with me when they found out that I _____ (not do) any studying for my exams.
4. When I asked the old man why he walked with a limp he _____ (tell) me that he _____ (be injured) during the war.
5. When we were on holiday last year, we _____ (go) to Paris, then we _____ (take) the train to Rome and _____ (stay) there for a few days.
6. When she was 14 her parents _____ (get divorce). They _____ (be) unhappy for many years before that.
7. We _____ (realise) we _____ (be burgled) when we _____ (arrive) home. The window was smashed and there was broken glass everywhere.
8. I felt sick. I _____ (eat) some seafood at the weekend and it really _____ (do not) agree with me.

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ANSWER KEY

WORKSHEET 1

1. True – Paragraph 1 says 'Steve ... took the final steps of his epic journey as he crossed the George Washington Bridge into Manhattan'
2. True – Paragraph 2 '... after falling into a depression and developing an eating disorder.'
3. True – Paragraph 2 says 'He did arrive forty-five kilograms lighter'.
4. False – Paragraph 2 says 'He ... learned that weight loss was more about the state of mind than body.'
5. True – Paragraph 3 says 'His voyage of self-discovery was viewed by millions around the world on his website'.
6. False – Paragraph 3 says 'his first plan was to put on some new socks.'

WORKSHEET 2

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. I |
| 2. D | 7. A |
| 3. J | 8. E |
| 4. G | 9. C |
| 5. B | 10. H |

WORKSHEET 3

1. left or had left
2. gone out
3. hadn't done
4. told/had been injured
5. went/took/stayed
6. got divorced (had been divorced)