

1. A Fish Called Samuel

Samuel Goldwyn was born Shmuel Gelbfisz on August 27th, 1882 (although the dates vary depending on the source). He was a larger-than-life movie mogul whose dictatorial image and colourful use of English has earned him a place in history. This week, we say 'Happy Birthday, Sam' with this reading and speaking activity. There is one page to print. Click here to get your copy.

<http://www.insideout.net/warehouse/worksheets/August/IO012S-fish.pdf>

Level: Upper intermediate and upwards

How to use the lesson:

1. Give each student in the class a copy of the worksheet and tell them they have four minutes to read the text and find out how the names and numbers in the box relate Goldwyn's life.
2. After four minutes, ask the students to tell each other, in pairs, the significance of the names and numbers.
3. Check the answers in open class.
4. Ask students to work in pairs or small groups. Tell them to look at the 'Goldwynisms' and discuss why each one could be considered amusing.
5. Check all answers in open class.

Answers to 1

Lasky: The name of his brother-in-law and partner in his first film company.

35: He spent 35 years as sole proprietor of his own company.

27: His birthday is on the 27th August.

Leo: The name of the lion that appears at the beginning of an MGM film.

Warsaw: The city in Poland where he was born.

Oscar: He was nominated for many Oscars but only won one.

11: He left Poland at this age and went to England.

Selwyn: The name of his partner in his second film company. He used the last part of Selwyn's name along with the first part of his to produce the new name Goldwyn.

Gelbfisz: The name he was born with.

1914: The date his first ever motion picture, *The Squaw Man*, was released.

5: Five years after setting up the Goldwyn Pictures Corporation, he was pushed out of the company.

Possible answers to 2

1. A bachelor and a single man are the same thing.
2. An oral contract is spoken, not written.
3. Usually, this is the reason why people see a psychiatrist.
4. It would be impossible to write your autobiography after you're dead.
5. Clichés, by their nature, are never new.
6. He probably meant that people should not make fun of them, deride them.
7. A cross between two expressions: "They always bite the hand that feeds them" and "Don't kill the goose that lays the golden egg".
8. Although amusing, this gives us an indication that he thought of himself as the boss and didn't like to be contradicted.
9. The expression is "Take the bull by the horns". Possibly mixing the ending with "Get the bit between your teeth".
10. Suggests that it is his own thoughts which are causing confusion.

2. Related Websites

Send your students to these web sites, or just take a look yourself.

<http://www.rinkworks.com/said/samuelgoldwyn.shtml>

more quotes from the master of misuse

<http://www.reelclassics.com/Producers/Goldwyn/goldwyn.htm>

a closer look at the life of the great man. Includes Goldwyn links

<http://www.screenplayers.net/samgoldwyn.html>

an interview with Sam