

1. Tom Hanks

The subject of this week's lesson is an American star who regularly comes near the top of polls in which the public are asked to choose their favourite film actor: Tom Hanks.

Level

Intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level B1 and above)

How to use the lesson

1. Ask the students who their favourite film actors are, and why. Have any students seen any of Tom Hanks' films (e.g. *Forrest Gump*, *Apollo 13*, *Saving Private Ryan*, *The Da Vinci Code*)? If so, encourage them to describe the films to rest of the class.
2. Give each student in the class a copy of Worksheet A and give them five to ten minutes to read through it, encouraging them to look up new vocabulary. Tell the students it is important that they try to remember as much of the information as possible.
3. Tell the students they are going to prepare a quiz for each other. Then divide the class into two teams, A and B.
4. Cut Worksheet B in half and give each member of each team the corresponding half. Explain that each team has to work together to formulate the questions that produce the answers given, based on the text on Worksheet A. Note that it is possible for there to be slight variations of each question.
5. When both teams have finished preparing their questions, ask them to turn over Worksheet A and the glossary so that they can't see them.
6. The two teams now take it in turns to ask and answer the questions. Encourage the teams to confer before answering, but make it clear that once they have given their answer they cannot change it. You should only accept answers given in correct English. Keep the score on the board: the team with the most correct answers at the end of the quiz wins.
7. Keeping the students in their pairs, and reminding them not to look at Worksheet A, ask them to attempt Exercise 2 on Worksheet C, which contains the text from Worksheet A with twenty incorrect words that they have to identify and correct. The words containing the mistakes are all in bold, as are five other words that are correct. Point out that the mistakes are all grammatical or lexical, and that no correction requires them to write more than one additional word.
8. Check answers in open class.

Answers:

Exercise 1

Team A

1. Where was Tom Hanks born?
2. What is *Angels and Demons* about?
3. What role does Hanks play in *Saving Private Ryan*?
4. When did the Apollo 13 space mission take place?
5. In *Saving Private Ryan*, why do the American commanders want to send Private Ryan home?
6. In the Second World War, when did the American landings on the beaches of Normandy take place?
7. Why does Hanks drive an electric car?
8. What was the aim of the Apollo 13 mission after the explosion?

Team B

1. How many Oscars has Tom Hanks won?
2. What do people most often shout at Hanks when they see him in the street?
3. Who directed *Saving Private Ryan*?
4. What was the objective of the Apollo 13 space mission?
5. When did American astronauts land on the moon for the first time?
6. When did Hanks support Barack Obama?
7. How does *Forrest Gump* influence American history?
8. When did Hanks start acting in films / make the step up to cinema?

Exercise 2

2. career 3. comedies 4. mid 5. has played 6. awards 8. environmental
9. emissions 10. hearted 11. disability 12. present 13. crucial 16. land
17. spacecraft 18. back 19. at 20. given 21. whose 22. been killed
23. home 25. scene

Words in bold that are correct: 1. polls 7. plot 14. importance
15. lines 25. scene

2. Related Websites

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

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000158/>

Tom Hanks' entry in *Internet Movie Database*. Intermediate level and above.

<http://www.tomhanks-online.com/home.php>

One of the best Hanks fan sites. Intermediate level and above.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstoppers/celebritynews/5347314/Tom-Hanks-gets-gridlocked-brid-to-the-church-on-time.html>

From British newspaper the *Daily Telegraph* (May 2009), the story of how Hanks interrupted filming for *Angels and Demons* in Rome to ensure that a bride stuck in a traffic jam caused by the film set got to church on time. Challenging for intermediate level.