

1. A good read?

This week's lesson is based on a conversation about the merits of celebrity gossip magazines.

Level

Pre-intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level A2-B1 and above)

How to use the lesson

1. Ask your students which newspapers and/or magazines they read, and why. Give an example of a well-known celebrity gossip magazine and ask the students to describe its contents. What do the students think of such magazines?
2. Give your students five to ten minutes to read through the dialogue on Worksheet A, encouraging them to look up new vocabulary. Tell them they are going to answer a series of questions on the text, but that they shouldn't write anything down at this stage.
3. Divide the students into pairs and hand out Worksheet B. Ask them to work together to complete the comprehension questions in Exercise 1 and the true/false/doesn't say questions in Exercise 2.
4. Check answers in open class. Note in Exercise 1 that a couple of the questions offer some scope for discussion. You might also want to ask the students which person in the dialogue they agreed with more, and to establish the meaning of sarcasm so as to help the students with question 5.
5. Next, tell the students they will now need to remember as much as possible about the text on Worksheet A. Ask them to turn over Worksheet A, or temporarily hand it back to you, then hand out Worksheet C. Keeping the students in their pairs, ask them to attempt Exercise 3, in which some sentences have been taken from the original text but the words in bold have been mixed up. The students' task is to put these words back in their correct positions.
6. Check answers in open class.

Answers:

Exercise 1

1. Victoria Beckham's hairstyle; what restaurant Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie have been to; how a famous actress looks in her bikini; Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie's relationship.
2. A serious newspaper
3. Every week
4. Angelina Jolie
5. Clare's two sentences beginning 'Oh, sorry' and ending 'Everyone needs to know that'.
6. She says reading about the world's problems all the time is depressing and also that it doesn't actually solve those problems.
7. Probably because Laura shows no sign of agreeing with her but instead begins talking (perhaps sincerely, perhaps just to be irritating) about Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie.
8. They are probably friends as there is quite a lot of language that could be considered rude otherwise – e.g. 'you don't know what you're talking about', 'give me a break', 'it's rubbish', and Clare's sarcasm.

Exercise 2

1. F 2. T 3. T 4. F 5. F 6. D 7. T 8. F

Exercise 3

1. educational 2. fun 3. happen 4. up 5. care 6. hairstyle 7. know
8. sad 9. important 10. world 11. get 12. serious 13. give 14. depressing

2. Related Websites

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

<http://www.ok.co.uk/celebnews/view/8405/Jade-Goody-official-tribute-issue/>

The website of *OK!*, a popular celebrity gossip magazine that was first published in the UK and has since reached various other countries. Some of the material is accessible to pre-intermediate level.

<http://www.heatworld.com/>

The 'Heat World' website, with content similar to that of *Heat* magazine. Some of the material is accessible to pre-intermediate level.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/chat/your_comments/newsid_3618000/3618061.stm

A forum on the BBC *Newsround* website (2004) asking 'Do celebs have a right to private lives?' Accessible to pre-intermediate level.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_6160000/newsid_6161300/6161380.stm

Another *Newsround* forum (2006), this time asking 'Do you get excited about celebrity weddings?' Accessible to pre-intermediate level.