

1. Just a bit of fun?

This week's lesson is on the subject of national lotteries and also gambling in general.

Level

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

How to use the lesson

1. If some forms of gambling are accepted in your students' country, ask your students to name, in English, as many forms of gambling as they can. What do your students think are the dangers of gambling? Do they think some forms of gambling should be made illegal, and if so, why? If your students' country has a national lottery, ask the students what they think is good and bad about it. Have they ever bought lottery tickets (presuming they are old enough to do so), and if so, have any of them ever won anything? Do they know any stories about the way people's lives have changed – for better or worse – after winning a large amount of money either on the national lottery or through some other form of gambling?
2. Give your students five to ten minutes to read through Worksheet A, encouraging them to look up new vocabulary. You could ask them to check if any of their ideas are mentioned. 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 different types of comprehension questions in Exercises 1, 2 and 3.
4. Check answers in open class.
5. Ask the students if they particularly agreed or disagreed with any of the opinions expressed on Worksheet A, and if so, why.
6. Ask the students to put away Worksheets A and B or to temporarily hand them back to you. Then, keeping the students in pairs, hand out Worksheet C and give them another ten minutes for the gap-fill exercise in which they have to complete the missing words from the text. If the students cannot remember what the words are, encourage them to try to work them out from the context of the sentence. You might also want to point out that some of the words feature in the glossary.
7. Check answers in open class.

Answers:

Exercise 1

1. Jim, Mary 2. David, Jim 3. David, Jim, Mary 4. Mary

Exercise 2

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

Exercise 3

1. National lotteries; betting on sport (football and horse racing); online poker; going to casinos; fruit machines.
2. Good causes, such as community projects.
3. The chance of being struck by lightning.
4. Because young kids might begin to become addicted to them.
5. First, people in many parts of the world have gambled for hundreds of years, and probably always will; second, because of minimum age limits in Britain for almost all kinds of gambling, the people who gamble are usually adults and therefore old enough to make their own decisions.

Exercise 4

1. idiots 2. lightning 3. loads 4. couples 5. split up 6. desert 7. now and again 8. harmless 9. draw 10. causes 11. minimum 12. sensible 13. on 14. fault 15. blame 16. addicted to 17. illegal 18. afford 19. shocking 20. addiction

2. Related Websites

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

http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_8510000/newsid_8516500/8516518.stm

A short text from BBC *Newsround* (2010) on a British couple's recent £56m win in the EuroMillions lottery. Accessible to pre-intermediate level.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/uk/newsid_3558000/3558141.stm

A *Newsround* article (2004) on a teenager in Scotland who won more than £1.5m in the UK National Lottery. Accessible to pre-intermediate level.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/8517946.stm>

A BBC article (2010) asks 'Does winning the lottery make you happy?', followed by readers' comments. Intermediate level and above.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/sport/newsid_2676000/2676997.stm

Again from *Newsround*, a story from 2003 on the admission by the famous English footballer Michael Owen that he had lost a huge amount of money through gambling. Accessible to pre-intermediate level.