

e-lesson

Week starting: December 14, 2009

1. A domestic disagreement

This week's lesson is based on a couple's conversation about housework.

Level

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

How to use the lesson

1. Introduce the expression "chores" and brainstorm as many domestic chores (i.e., kinds of housework) as possible. How many of those chores do your students do? If they don't do them, who does? Which are their least favorite chores, and why? Which do they least mind doing, and why? What kinds of chores/housework are usually done in their home before friends or family come over for a meal?
2. Give your students five to ten minutes to read through 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 determine questions in Exercise 2.
4. Check answers in open class.
5. Keeping the students in their pairs, ask them to turn over their copies of Worksheet A or to hand them back to you temporarily. Then ask them to attempt Exercise 3 on Worksheet C, which contains the text from Worksheet A with twenty-five 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.
6. Check answers in open class.

Answers:

Exercise 1

1. In Paul and Ella's home. (The references to all the domestic chores, and to watching TV and eating cookies, make this fairly clear. Also, Ella refers to "this house," and Paul to "these shelves.")
2. She had agreed to do the grocery shopping.
3. Because the bathroom is not clean (Paul apparently said about three days previously that he would clean it, but has not yet done so) and there are guests coming over for dinner (who obviously might use it).
4. He says he does all the repairs.
5. He said he made the bed.
6. The dishes, the dusting, and the vacuuming, and also cleaning the bathroom.
7. He says the guests won't notice if the bathroom is not clean because it is pretty dark inside – because he hasn't changed the light bulb yet. (No, it appears he isn't being serious, because Ella says, "It's not funny.")
8. In about three hours.
9. Because if he doesn't do the dishes, she won't be able to start cooking – because all the pans she needs are dirty.
10. Because Paul has been eating cookies.

Exercise 2

1. T 2. D 3. T 4. F 5. T 6. T 7. F 8. T 9. T 10. T

Exercise 3

1. come 2. in 3. crumbs 5. vacuum 6. turn 7. chores 8. do 9. dusting
10. about 12. notice 13. bulb 15. behavior 16. packed 17. exhausted
18. made 19. deal 20. share 21. repairs 22. shelves 24. on 25. coffee 26. rush 27. course
28. cleaning 29. run out of 30. new bottle
Words in bold that are correct: 4. cookies 11. over 14. fair 15. totally 23. pigsty

2. Related Websites

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

<http://life.familyeducation.com/marriage/jobs-and-chores/45600.html>

A helpful guide to dividing up household chores, taken from the book *The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Perfect Marriage* (© 2001). Accessible to pre-intermediate level.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB121978677837474177.html>

A *Wall Street Journal* article (2008) about how much time children spend helping with chores, and why encouraging them to help around the house is a good thing. Challenging for intermediate level.

<http://video.google.co.uk/videoplay?docid=5733089465356680126&ei=7aEfS6jGFdOg-Aajr-WYDw&q=extreme+ironing&client=firefox-a#>

How to make housework fun? Turn it into an extreme sport, as shown in this Google video on "extreme ironing," a worldwide event. Accessible to intermediate level.