

1. Lionel Messi

This week's lesson is about Lionel Messi, the 23-year-old Argentinian soccer player who is the biggest star in the Barcelona team and is widely seen as having the potential to be the greatest player of all time.

Level

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

How to use the lesson

1. Presuming some of the students will be interested in soccer, ask them who they think is/are the best player(s) in the world, and why. Brainstorm on the subject of Lionel Messi: how much do the students know about him? You might want to introduce some soccer-related vocabulary, including words that come up in the text – *goal*, *score*, *shot*, *dribble*, etc.
2. Give your students between five and ten minutes to read through Worksheet A, encouraging them to look up new vocabulary. Note, however, that many of the words that might be new are not in the glossary because they form part of Exercise 1.
3. Give each student a copy of Worksheet B, then divide the class into pairs and ask students to work together to do Exercise 1, in which they have to find the words to match the definitions.
4. Check answers in open class.
5. Ask the students to turn over their copies of Worksheet A or to give them back to you temporarily. Then, keeping the students in their pairs, hand out Worksheet C and ask them to move on to Exercise 2, in which one word has been omitted from each line of the text. With no indication of what the words were, or any blanks to show exactly where they have been taken from, how many of the words can the students remember and replace? This is not a test of memory alone, however: the students should be able to draw on their grammatical and lexical knowledge, and you should also point out that both the glossary and the students' correct answers to Exercise 1 on Worksheet B should be of some use. Award a point for each word that is correctly replaced. (You could perhaps award half a point if the students come up with a word that fits the sentence but is not actually the original word, such as *child* instead of *boy* for number 23.)
6. Check answers in open class.

Answers:

Exercise 1

1. stocky 2. goal 3. compatriot 4. diagnose 5. string 6. stands
7. napkin 8. potential 9. crucial 10. sign 11. impression 12. at first sight
13. limpet 14. dart 15. coach

Exercise 2

1. minute 2. between 3. goal 4. to 5. meters 6. scored 7. victory 8. won
9. old 10. has 11. Brazilian 12. Argentinian 13. greatest 14. Born 15. his
16. run 17. ball 18. string 19. is 20. team 21. fan 22. gave 23. boy
24. deficiency 25. parents 26. club 27. happened 28. Spain 29. the
30. piece 31. contract

2. Related websites

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

http://soccernet.espn.go.com/player/_/id/45843/lionel-messi?cc=5739

Biography of Lionel Messi on the ESPN (Entertainment Sports Programming Network) website, with statistics and other information. Accessible to Intermediate level.

<http://www.uefa.com/uefachampionsleague/>

The official UEFA Champions League (European soccer, or “football”) website. Accessible to Intermediate level.

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

The official FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) website. Accessible to Intermediate level.