

1. Famous quotations

On 13th November 1789, Benjamin Franklin wrote a letter to a friend in which he said, '... in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes'. This quotation has gone down in history and is still used today. This e-lesson features a collection of well-known sayings.

Level

Upper intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level B2 and above)

How to use the lesson

1. Give each student in the class a copy of Worksheet A and ask them to work in pairs or small groups. Together they look at the beginning of each quotation and then match it with its ending.
2. As your students are working, go around helping them to make the connections. You can tell them to look for clues such as a repeated word (for example, 'together' in items 7 and *d* and 'loved' in items 1 and *c*) or punctuation (if the first part ends in a full stop, the second part can't start with a lower-case letter). Most importantly, the two halves should form a meaningful quotation. While items 4 and *b* make a grammatically correct phrase (*I'm President of the United States and I'm not someone else*), it doesn't make sense; and Woody Allen has never been President of the United States!
3. Check answers in open class.
4. Hand out Worksheet B and ask students to work individually to find and circle the incorrect word in each quote. Explain that a *homophone* is a word that sounds the same as another word but is spelt differently and has a different meaning. They should write the correct word on the line.
5. Check answers in open class. Remind students that for each quotation, the words they circled and wrote on the line are pronounced exactly the same in English. If there is time, you could see how many of the homophone pairs students can translate into their own language.
6. Ask your students whether they had ever heard of any of these quotes before, or the people who said them. Find out which quotation your students thought was the funniest, the most insightful, etc. For homework, you could ask students to research some of the quoted people, or find other famous quotations said by women.

Answers:

Exercise 1

1. c 2. i 3. e 4. a 5. h 6. j 7. d 8. b 9. f 10. g

Exercise 2

1. ~~threw~~ through 2. ~~bare~~ bear 3. ~~write~~ right 4. ~~due~~ do 5. ~~new~~ knew
6. ~~witeh~~ which 7. ~~sew~~ so 8. ~~hear~~ here 9. ~~meat~~ meet 10. ~~weight~~ wait

2. Related websites

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

<http://www.quoteland.com>

An online quotation database that allows you to search by topic, category or keyword. Also available are historical documents, famous speeches and audio recordings (require RealPlayer™ to listen: downloadable for free from www.real.com). Accessible to Upper intermediate level.

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

Another quotation website, which includes ‘picture quotes’, famous birthdays, quotations by author and a ‘quotation of the moment’. Accessible to Upper intermediate level.

http://www.lovefilm.com/features/detail.html?section_name=editorial&editorial_id=2399

Lovefilm’s list of the most common misquotes from films. Accessible to Upper intermediate level.