

Keep your English up to date 3

Teacher's pack

Lesson plan and student worksheets with answers

Muppet



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Lesson Plan: Teacher's notes

Muppet

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Level: Intermediate and above

Topic: Silly mistakes we make

Aims: Listening skills – A short talk
Language – ‘Muppet’ and other blend words

Materials:

Worksheet 1	– Introductory speaking and vocabulary exercises, Listening section 1
Worksheet 2	– Listening section 2
Worksheet 3	– Extra work: Vocabulary, language and discussion
Audio script	– Available in teacher’s notes
Recording of the talk	– Available online at bbclearningenglish.com

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LESSON STAGES

A

Explain to the students that they are going to listen to a talk by Professor David Crystal, an expert on the English language, and that the talk is about the way English is changing. This particular talk is about the word 'muppet'.

B

Hand out **Student Worksheet 1**. Students do **Speaking, Exercise 1** in small groups or pairs.

C

Students do **Vocabulary, Exercise 2** - without dictionaries at first.
Practise the pronunciation of the vocabulary, as they will hear it in the talk.

D

Students read **Listening: Section 1, Exercise 3** and then listen to Section 1 of the talk.
They answer question 'a'.

Students listen again and do **Listening: Section 1, Exercise 4**.

E

Hand out **Student Worksheet 2**
Students read **Listening: Section 2, Exercise 5** and then listen to Section 2 of the talk.
They answer question 'a'.

F

Students try to answer **Listening: Section 2, Exercise 6**. They listen again to Section 2 to check/complete their answers.

G

If you wish to do some extra work with the class, hand out **Student Worksheet 3**.

For the vocabulary exercise, give the students copies of the audio script and play the complete talk as they read.

The language work focuses on other blend words.

The final discussion practises some of the language from the lesson.

AUDIO SCRIPTS

Listening Section 1

Muppet. Somebody who acts in a way that the speaker considers ignorant or idiotic - 'you're a muppet!' Very friendly kind of tone attached to this word, jocular, affectionate, even. It's much less forceful than, 'idiot' or 'prat' or 'fool'. The tone of voice has got to be jocular. I just can't think of it as a vicious term – I couldn't say 'you horrible muppet!' – that doesn't work for me, though I can imagine some people might use it.

The implications, of course, are – because it's an inanimate thing – that the mind has gone elsewhere, you're being controlled by another, you're being clumsy – it's because the word comes from 'puppet' really, and that's the way puppets act.

Listening Section 2

The Muppets were, of course, a Jim Henson creation back in the 1970s – you know, Kermit the Frog in *Sesame Street* and, of course, *The Muppet Show* from that time onwards. Jim Henson once said that he just made the word up because it sounded good, but when he was pressed, he said it was actually a combination of 'marionette' and 'puppet', and it goes right back to the 1950s.

Well, it's developed all sorts of other uses since – have you ever heard of 'muppetry', for instance? That's a group of people behaving like Muppets! You know, sort of, automata, they're not thinking straight!

Oh, by the way, you have to distinguish it from 'moppet' – that's different – that's a charming, doll-like, little child, often with a mop of hair. Moppets aren't Muppets!

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ANSWER KEY

VOCABULARY

Exercise 2

- | | |
|---|--|
| a. ignorant | lacking in knowledge; not clever |
| b. jocular | light-hearted, humorous or funny |
| c. clumsy | when someone often drops or breaks things |
| d. marionette | a puppet; a doll that can be moved, often by strings |
| e. combination | a mixture of two or more things |
| f. to distinguish one thing from another | to find the difference between two things |

LISTENING: SECTION 1

Exercise 3

- a. iii.** you behave in an stupid or foolish way

Exercise 4

- a.** False – ‘It’s much less forceful than, ‘idiot’ or ‘prat’ or ‘fool’.’
- b.** False – ‘The tone of voice has got to be jocular.’
- c.** True – ‘the mind has gone elsewhere, you’re being controlled by another, you’re being clumsy – it’s because the word comes from ‘puppet’ really, and that’s the way puppets act.’

LISTENING: SECTION 2

Exercise 5

- a.**
- i. The origins of the word
 - ii. Further developments of the word
 - iv. Words that sound similar to ‘muppet’

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Exercise 6

- a. False – ‘The Muppets were, of course, a Jim Henson creation back in the 1970s.’
- b. True – ‘he said it was actually a combination of ‘marionette’ and ‘puppet’.’
- c. False – ‘that’s a charming, doll-like, little child, often with a mop of hair.’

EXTRA WORK

VOCABULARY

Exercise 7

- a. vicious
- b. an inanimate thing
- c. made (the word) up

LANGUAGE

Exercise 8a

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. Japanimation | 5. aquarobics |
| 2. Fantabulous | 6. smog |
| 3. brunch | 7. docudrama |
| 4. ginormous | 8. emoticon |

Exercise 8b

- a. Emoticon = emotion + icon
- b. Brunch = breakfast + lunch
- c. Japanimation = Japan + animation
- d. Aquarobics = aqua + aerobics
- e. Smog = smoke + fog
- f. Fantabulous = fantastic + fabulous
- g. Docudrama = documentary + drama
- h. Ginormous = gigantic + enormous

WORKSHEET 1

SPEAKING

1. Discuss these questions with your partner.

a. Have you ever made any of these silly mistakes? Tell your partner what happened.

- i. lost your wallet or purse
- ii. lost your mobile phone
- iii. got up to go to work or school at the weekend or on a holiday
- iv. lost your passport
- v. forgotten to go to an exam
- vi. lost your keys
- vii. gone to an interview or meeting on the wrong day
- viii. left your bag or other property on a train or a bus
- ix. sent an important or embarrassing email, or text message, to the wrong person
- x. forgotten a very close friend's birthday

VOCABULARY

2. Match these words and phrases to their definitions.

- | | |
|---|--|
| a. ignorant | a puppet; a doll that can be moved, often by strings |
| b. jocular | to find the difference between two things |
| c. clumsy | lacking in knowledge; not clever |
| d. marionette | light-hearted, humorous or funny |
| e. combination | when someone often drops or breaks things |
| f. to distinguish one thing from another | a mixture of two or more things |

LISTENING SECTION 1

3. Now, listen to Professor Crystal talking about a new word in English and answer this question.

- a.** Which is correct: If you are a muppet...
- i. you behave in an angry and aggressive way
 - ii. you behave in a friendly way
 - iii. you behave in an stupid or foolish way
 - iv. you behave in an intelligent or sensible way

4. Listen to Section 1 again and decide if the following statements are true or false, according to Professor Crystal.

- a.** 'Muppet' is one of the strongest ways to say someone is stupid.
- b.** You should say 'muppet' with a very angry tone of voice.
- c.** Being a muppet is like being a puppet because you are not in control of your actions.

WORKSHEET 2

LISTENING SECTION 2

5. Listen to Section 2 of the talk and answer this question.

- a.** Which of these things does he discuss?
- i. The origins of the word
 - ii. Further developments of the word
 - iii. The future of the word
 - iv. Words that sound similar to ‘muppet’

6. Listen again to Section 2. Are the following sentences true or false?

- a.** The Muppets was a TV show in the 1960s.
- b.** The word ‘muppet’ is made from parts of two other words.
- c.** A moppet is a particular type of doll that looks like a child.

WORKSHEET 3 - EXTRA WORK

VOCABULARY

7. Find the phrases in the text that have the following meanings.

- a. very nasty or aggressive
- b. an object, something that does not have life
- c. invented or created

LANGUAGE

8a. Muppet is a blend word – it is a combination of parts of two other words: marionette and puppet. Put the blend words in the box in the correct sentences below.

emoticon	brunch	Japanimation	aquarobics
smog	fantabulous	docudrama	ginormous

- 1. I'm a big fan of _____, you know, Manga cartoons that come from Japan.
- 2. _____! That's the most wonderful news I've ever received. I'm going to be a father!
- 3. I didn't have time for breakfast today. Can we go for _____ now? I'm hungry!
- 4. I went fishing yesterday and caught a massive fish. It was _____!
- 5. I've joined a new exercise class at the gym. It takes place in the swimming pool and its called _____.
- 6. California has a pollution problem called _____ because there are so many cars. Sometimes the sky looks grey rather than blue.
- 7 Did you see that _____ about the death of Princess Diana on TV last night?
- 8 My favourite _____ is the smiley face – I use it when I write e-mails or texts.

8b. Can you think of the word that is needed to make each blend word?

- a. Emoticon = _____ + icon
A symbol which represents a feeling

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- b.** Brunch = breakfast + _____
A late breakfast
- c.** Japanimation = Japan + _____
A particular style of cartoon that comes from Japan
- d.** Aquarobics = Aqua + _____
A type of stretching and movement exercise that you do in water
- e.** Smog = _____ + fog
Air pollution that you can see
- f.** Fantabulous = _____ + fabulous
Wonderful and excellent
- g.** Docudrama = _____ + drama
A documentary that uses actors and drama techniques to tell its true story
- h.** Ginormous = gigantic + _____
Very big

DISCUSSION

9. Discuss these questions with your partner.

- a.** Are you ever a bit of a muppet?
- b.** Have you had any fantabulous news recently? Or, done or seen anything fantabulous?
- c.** Have you ever done aquarobics? What exercise do you do?
- d.** Have you seen an interesting documentary or docudrama recently?
- e.** Does your city ever suffer from smog?
- f.** Have you ever seen any Japanimation?
- g.** Which emoticons do you often use? **J**
- h.** Do you ever go out for brunch?