

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Contemporary English usage I. Teacher: Kathy Reina.

"It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge". With this beautiful quote by Einstein on the board she started her first lesson. As a teacher, she is not only sensitive but she has also sense of humor and has a clear way of conveying ideas, perfect combination.

We started working on the following **phrasal verbs**:

Be caught out by- shocked, surprised by a difficult situation.

To wrestled with someone over something or to wrestled with something - Trying to come to a decision, struggling to make a difficult decision. Try hard to deal with a problem.

To tussle over- used when there is a strong conflict over something. Used when there is a big disagreement. **A tussle** is a big fight; it could be during break time in the playground.

To grapple with- try hard to understand something. It could be used in any context.

To pour over- it is used when someone is struggling to understand a difficult text.

In addition to that I also learnt that **to chuck someone** is a not nice way to say that you finished a romantic relation.

*Distinguish between **receptive** and **productive use** of vocabulary: the vocabulary you want your students to understand and the vocabulary you want them to use.*

Contemporary English usage II. Slang language used in British schools.

After reviewing the phrasal verbs, with a warm up activity, we made four groups; each one got an object related to the teacher in certain way. We had to guess what the connection was between the objects and her family.

Then we went straight ahead to the main aim of the lesson: slang language used by children in the U.K. that we were most likely to hear in the schools.

She asked us to debate about why young people should use slang. The conclusions: to get a sense of identity, to be different from the parents and grown up people, to keep a sort of secret language...

She gave us a piece of advice: the more you work with a word, the more likely it will stick.

POSITIVE WORDS
<p>Like a boss- expression used by children, meaning they did something really good.</p> <p>Legit, epic or sick- are used when something is really gut!</p> <p>Bunter- it is used after a clever exchange of sarcastic jokes, at the end of it all. It can be used in this other way: we have been buntering = kidding. Or you can say “Just bunter” just kidding, meaning that it was not meant to hurt, was not seriously.</p> <p>Savage- it means that the previous comment was harsh, but fun.</p> <p>Fit. Used for an attractive girl or boy.</p> <p>Lush- used for someone or something attractive.</p> <p>YOLO- it is an acronym for You Only Live Once.</p> <p>Bro-a boy’s best friend.</p> <p>Like a boss – well achieved.</p> <p>Dece- cushti – kooshty- all they mean decent.</p> <p>Naughty- means good.</p>
NEGATIVE WORDS
<p>Runk! = jank! When something is really disgusting = gross!</p> <p>Cocky –means conceited, big-headed, as opposite to humble or modest.</p>

Contemporary English usage III.

Slang words for technology, which has become an enormous area.

<p>An earworm – a catchy song that continually runs through your mind</p> <p>To photobomb – to spoil a picture by unexpectedly appearing in it as a joke</p> <p>To rip a CD – to copy songs from audio CD to a hard disk</p> <p>An internet troll – someone who upsets people by posting unpleasant messages</p> <p>BTW- By the way</p> <p>LOL- Laugh out loud</p> <p>IM me – Instant Message me</p> <p>A selfie stick – An extendable metal stick that lets you take a photo of yourself by positioning the camera beyond the normal range of your arm.</p> <p>Computer savvy – Someone who has a good knowledge of computers</p> <p>A computer geek/nerd/ a techie/ a tech-head-Someone who is really interested in computers and is seen by others to be socially inept. Pejorative.</p> <p>A silver surfer- An elderly person who is a regular and enthusiastic user of the internet</p>

We practiced several activities for revising the vocabulary from the previous lesson. And some new words are introduced:

Daredevil: a person who likes to do risky, dangerous things. Someone brave. You can say: **Get some nuts** to someone if he/she needs to be brave. Or say: “*You got nuts!*” If what someone did was brave.

To abseil down- to go down a vertical wall in a mountain with the help of a rope.

Exploring ways of disagreeing diplomatically

First, she asked us to find in small groups different ways of disagree in a formal, polite way. And then she said that we had to nominate someone in each group to write a phrase on the board.

<i>I think we slightly differ on this subject.</i> <i>Actually, I have a slightly different opinion.</i> <i>I see it differently.</i> <i>I am not entirely sure.</i> <i>I wouldn't say that.</i> <i>On the other hand...</i>	<i>I just can't agree on/about that with you.</i> <i>I wonder if your opinion is correct.</i> <i>With all due respect, I must disagree.</i> <i>I wouldn't say exactly that.</i> <i>I am afraid I don't really agree with you.</i> <i>We have to agree to disagree.</i>
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- **Strategy one.** A typically British strategy to disagree is **saying something in a roundabout way**, using circumlocutions: *I want to make the point that...*
- **Strategy two.** Three elements are extremely useful if you want to be diplomatic and you can use the three of them if you want to be really British.

Actually / I'm afraid / really Actually, I'm afraid that I don't really agree with you.

- **Strategy three.** You can also use a **disarmer** if you'd like to have a nice meeting at have way. Start the sentence with something positive before introducing the less attractive part of it:

I do get what you are saying, but...

Debate to practice polite disagreement: “Should tablets be used in the classroom with children from the age of six?” Pros and cons.

Ways of expressing preferences. First, we elicit ideas in a brainstorming.

Strongly like	Strongly dislike
I love it! / I adore it! Awesome! Terrific! It's wonderful It's brilliant! What an outstanding piece of work! How lovely! I really like it! Marvelous! It's gorgeous! It's breathtaking!	I loathe it. / I hate it. I can't stand it. Disgusting! I dislike it. How horrible. It's nasty. The painting doesn't speak to me at all. It's an eyesore. It's hideous. It gives me the creeps –makes me feel uncomfortable, scary.

And then we learnt some new expressions for giving opinions about Art through the following activity.

Make the following into complete statements:- For example:- /not/cup/tea. = It's not really my cup of tea.	Expressions to use when you love a painting...
Expressions to use when you loathe a painting...	1) The painting/speaks/me. 2) /strikes/chord/me. 3) /into/style/Art. <i>The painting speaks to me.</i> <i>It strikes a chord with/in me.</i> <i>I am really into this style of Art.</i> <i>It falls into my style of Art.</i>
4) /leaves/cold. 5) /doesn't/anything/me. 6) /doesn't/float/boat. <i>It (really) leaves me cold (stone).</i> <i>It doesn't say anything to me at all.</i> <i>It doesn't do anything for me.</i> <i>It doesn't (exactly) float my boat.</i> <i>It's music for my soul!</i>	Expressions to use when neither love nor hate a painting... 7) /ambivalent/about 8) /find/insipid <i>I am ambivalent about it.</i> <i>I find it insipid.</i>

Some prepositions and phrasal verbs

The teacher **hands out**/ gives homework while the students **hand in**/back homework.

Speaking over –when the teacher has to raise the voice because the students are loud.

I most enjoyed **learning about** prepositions on this course.

I am very **different from** my siblings.

Come up with new ideas.

It must **depend on** the wether.

I **think about** my friends the most.

Time's up! Pens down, please.

Just **on** occasional basis

What **are** you **up to**?

Go **for** it!

Open up a topic = bring up a topic.

Pay in pound.

Talking about stress

The teacher marks the stress on the sentence by **snapping** her **fingers** –like music-. The teacher can also point at the syllables that have the stress on written sentences on the board or underline the syllable with the stress or **humming**...

There is primary and secondary stress in any sentence and it depends greatly on what the speaker wants to emphasize, but it also depends on the context. The stress should be on the word that carries the meaning.

Example: *I do get what you I saying, but I'm afraid I don't really agree with you.*

Visual expressions as pronunciation hints

The teacher uses visual expressions in order to help her students remember the different sounds. For example, the 'cow pat' sound in 'word' or the 'pout sound' in 'job' or the 'fake smile' sound in 'yob'*. This should be explained in a really exaggerated way, so that students can understand the difference between the different pronunciations.

ɜː	ʊː	dʒ	j
Skirt	Sword	Jump	yellow
Girl	Warm	Judge	yes
Bird	More	Jock	you

* **Yob**- Formed by spelling boy backwards. the antithesis of what a good boy should be. Yobbish behaviour is a British slang for destructive behaviour, like the hooligans'.

While working on these words the teacher use an elastic band to show the difference between a long and a short sound.

iː	I
Deed	did
Neat	knit
Sheep	ship
Been	bin
Cheap	chip
Feet	fit

The teacher asked us to memorize a funny sentence and walk around saying to someone else until finding our partner, because she had prepared pair of sentences using a pair of those words, so there were always two that matched in meaning. First the teacher demonstrated how the activity worked, then she asked checking questions and then we started with it. Example: "He's so fit! I wish I could go out with him!" and "But remember he has very smelly feet".

/d/	/t/
Bead	beat
Feed	feet
Food	foot
<i>It is a voiced sound</i>	<i>It is an aspirated sound</i>

The recognition of the sounds will take place first; then the production.

A mumble drill- Each one in the class practice the learnt words at the same time but at their own pace, but just loud enough for him/her to practice pronunciation and memorize the new vocabulary. It is different to a drill, when all students repeat the same word aloud and at the same time.

Vocabulary related to politics

Before a reading exercise you can work with the students the **key words** close to the topic, those they need to complete the task.

The stress changes in the three words: Politics Political Politician

Match the words on the left with a definition on the right by drawing a line from each number to a different letter.

Political Vocabulary

Political Vocabulary	Meaning	
1. Political Landscape	a) A person or a thing having the characteristics of a former time	5
2. A seismic shift	b) A rich or upper class person; this word has a negative connotation	7
3. A spin doctor	c) The transfer of power to a lower level	9
4. A hardliner	d) A person who opposes giving more powers to the European Union	10
5. A throwback	e) A change with highly significant consequences	2
6. A firebrand	f) This describes what is happening politically, in a broad sense, across a country	1
7. A toff	g) A member of a political group who adheres rigidly to a set of ideas or policies	4
8. An anti-monarchist	h) A spokesperson employed by a political party to give a favourable version of events to the media	3
9. Devolution	i) An opponent of the idea of having a Royal family	8
10. A Eurosceptic	j) A radical	6

Don't try to teach too many words! Just 6 to 8 at best in a single class.

Students need listen, read write and to repeat words before they stick in the long term memory.

Big writing using VCOP Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation. Those are the key ingredients for boost writing skills. This technique is used in British schools. [Here](#) you can find materials related to use in class.

Example: a bag with the words "Once upon a time" full with balls that contain different topics. You could use dice with images.

Nice and interesting expressions learnt during the classes

She does things on the spur of the moment... - She does things spontaneously.

You saved my bacon! - You saved me.

To have one's head in the clouds –not paying attention

Don't throw the baby out with the bath water – Take the good out of everything, it's not necessary to start from scratch.

Different straws for different fox it is the same as horses for courses - Not everybody likes the same things.

You can take the horse to the river, but you can't make it drink - You can present someone with an opportunity, but you cannot force him or her to take advantage of it.

When life gives you lemons, make lemonade! - To encourage optimism.

By the skin of our teeth – Something achieved just barely, by the smallest margin.

Can of worms – a troublesome situation; an issue that you know will bring problems and you may better not “open” it. Pandora's box is a synonym.

What's cooking here? - What's up?

It's quite nerve wracking – Something that is really distressing and irritating to the nerves.

This is slippery - it is a delicate situation.

A loophole - is a twist to avoid legal difficulties, a way around to avoid breaking the law.

A queue jumper - It is someone that doesn't respect the queue.

Apathetic is someone that doesn't bother easily.

Uncluttered- kept simple, without distractions.

Brexit stands for “British exit”, Britain out of the European Union and it is a slang word.

Nobody should take the blame for this - take the heat.

Keep a lid on something – to maintain control over something, to keep it secret.

To look down on someone - When a person thinks he/she is better than the rest.

On the plus side... on the minus side... - Positive and negative aspects.

Related to Education

I'd like to bring you together - Used by the teacher when she wanted us to come closer and be quiet.

We are going to *team up* in four different groups.

Think along with me! Join me in this!

Giving instructions is one thing different from *given directions*, which it is what you ask for in Great Britain when you are lost.

You have to *push yourself* and go for it!

Go the extra mile - do your best.

It is a very easy task = it is a piece of cake = it is a duck soup.

Give me a hint - Give me a clue.

To double check – to inspect again something.

You'll get the hang of it – you will get familiar with it.

Many students slip through the net - fail in the system.

Schools try to *narrow the gap* of learning and opportunities with disadvantaged pupils.

A **test** is an internal, informal exam, while an **exam** is a more formal assessment. A teacher designs an exam. A student prepares for an exam. *A student can sit/take/do an exam.*

Ready, steady, go! Off you go!