

Ready-to-go lessons from Learn Hot English

Ridiculous emergency services calls!

Level: Intermediate (B1) to Upper Intermediate (B2)

Audio: Yes

Here's a fun lesson for you to do in class with your students. This practical lesson will get them using lots of useful language and all the essential skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. Click below for a PDF with the Teacher's Notes, Resource Sheet and Ready-To-Go Lesson.

CLICK HERE FOR THE TEACHER NOTES, RESOURCE SHEET, AND READY TO GO LESSON

CLICK HERE FOR THE AUDIO FOR THIS LESSON

Top tips

Other levels

Although we've set this lesson at a certain level, you could easily use it with other students too. For example, for higher-level students, you could make it more difficult by offering less support through the Pre-listening activities, or by getting them to listen to it completely and then answer the comprehension questions. Or, for lower-level students, you could help them with any new words, do more pre-listening or reading activities, or stop the audio more frequently and check their understanding.

Listening

For students with listening difficulties, use our "stop-start" method. This involves playing small sections of the audio file for students to try to capture the meaning of.

Remember, as part of the Learn Hot English method, we recommend three rounds of listening / viewing:

1. Listen once **without stopping** for a general understanding (listening for gist).
2. Then, listen again to answer comprehension questions, this time pausing if/when necessary.
3. Finally, listen again but this time read the script at the same time.

Speaking

Remind students that any discussion questions are simply a means to get them speaking. Students are free to invent information if necessary, or if they think the question is too "personal". The questions are simply there to get students speaking. The actual information is secondary.

For lots more great material like this, we recommend The Pack for Teachers. Click here for more details: <https://learnhotenglish.com/product/ready-to-go-photocopiable-english-lessons-for-busy-teachers/>

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Lesson: *Ridiculous emergency services calls!*

This is a quick, easy, ready-to-go lesson that will inspire your students. It'll also give them opportunities to improve their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. This lesson comes with Teacher's Notes, a Resource Sheet, a PDF of the lesson, and an audio file. Simply follow the lesson ideas for a fantastic class that'll really motivate your students.

1 Warm-up

Film descriptions

In pairs, students play a game. They take turns describing one of the films on the Resource Sheet. Their partner has to name it. Or, you could write the film titles on the board. Students take turns describing one of them. Other students listen and identify the film.

2 Lesson activities

Go through the activities for the lesson on the sheet **at the end of this document**: the Pre-reading, Reading I and Reading II activities. You could do this lesson as a *listening* activity. In order to do this, tell your students to turn over the sheet so they can't see the text as they do the exercises.

If your students' listening level is low, stop the recording after each paragraph and check their understanding.

After finishing that, and if you've done this as a listening activity (not a reading), let your students read the text as you play the recording again. This is good for developing their listening skills as they can see the connection between the written and spoken language.

3 Follow-up activities

Retell it!

Assign a paragraph (or two, etc.) to each student. Students have a minute or two to try to remember the text. When they're ready, students try to recount the information, using as much of the language as possible. Or, ask for volunteers to retell the information, using as much of the original language as possible (or even by heart if they can).

"Emergency" phone call

In pairs, students write a dialogue of a phone call between the emergency services and a member of the public. The person taking the call should find out as much about the emergency as possible, asking questions using *who, what, where, why, when, how*. Tell your students to make the interview as funny, silly or serious as they like. They can base it on a genuine emergency, or a more ridiculous one. When they're ready, ask for

volunteers to act out their dialogues (using notes, not reading it out word-for-word). Other students listen and vote on the best ones.

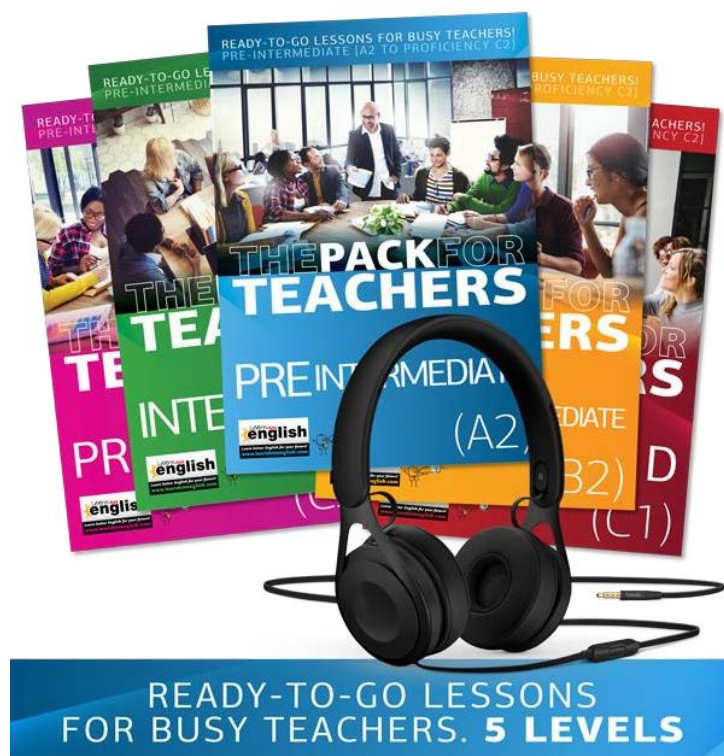
Dialogue

In pairs, students write a dialogue of an interview between a reporter and someone involved in one of these emergency stories. The reporter should ask questions using *who, what, where, why, when, how* to get as much information as possible. Tell your students to make the interview as funny, silly or serious as they like. When they're ready, ask for volunteers to act out their dialogues (using notes, not reading it out word-for-word). Other students listen and vote on the best ones.

Discussion – Danger

Students ask and answer these questions in pairs. Or, you could write them up on the board.

- Have you been in danger? When? What happened?
- Have you ever seen a fire? Where was it? When? What happened?
- Have you ever had a minor fire at home? What happened? How did you put it out?
- Have you ever witnessed a natural disaster (a storm, wildfire, flood, earthquake...)? What happened?
- Have you ever been confronted by a dangerous wild animal? Where? When? What happened?
- What dangers are there in your town or city? How do you avoid them?
- Have you ever called the emergency services? Why? What happened?



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Resource Sheet

Look at the objects below. They're all related to ridiculous phone calls that members of the public make to the emergency services. What kind of emergency could be associated with each item? Think and make notes. Then, discuss your ideas with a partner.

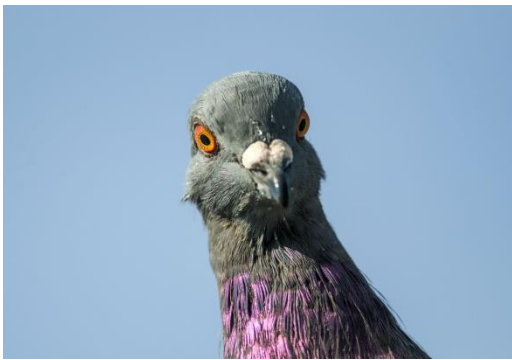
For example: *Someone could lose their glasses and then phone the police to report this incident.*



A pair of glasses



A battery



A pigeon



A spot



A hamster



A fire

Objective To improve your reading and listening skills.

Think about it What's the emergency services number in your country? What do people use it for?

Exams This reading and listening activity will help prepare you for English exams such as FCE, IELTS and TOEFL.



CAN YOU SEND AN AMBULANCE FOR MY HAMSTER?



RIDICULOUS EMERGENCY SERVICES CALLS

Answers on page 44

1 Pre-reading

Think of six reasons to call the emergency services.

2 Reading I

Read the article once. Were any of your ideas from the Pre-reading task mentioned?

3 Reading II

Read the article again. Then, write **T (True)** or **F (False)** next to each statement.

1. The elderly man from Bridgeport couldn't find his car.
2. The man from the east Midlands wanted some advice on what to do about his dog.
3. One caller from Birmingham phoned up to say that he was feeling sleepy.
4. A young man from Manchester had a question about a spot on his face.
5. The man who called up about his pet hamster was sentenced to 180 hours unpaid work.
6. One woman made up to 200 calls threatening to smash up police cars.
7. One man alerted the emergency services to a fire, but it turned out to be a false alarm.

If there's an emergency in the UK, you can dial 999. And within minutes, a police car, an ambulance or a fire engine will be on its way to help you. However, some people don't appear to understand the meaning of the word "emergency". Here are some examples of ridiculous and **hoax** emergency service calls.

An **elderly** man from Bridgeport phoned up the emergency services because he'd dropped his glasses in the street and couldn't find them.

Another called to ask for instructions on how to change a **battery** in a **remote control**.

One man in the East **Midlands** called the emergency services to say that his pet pigeon was having difficulties **breathing**.

And another caller rang police 23 times asking for a **lift** from Hartlepool to Stockton. He was eventually prosecuted.

One caller from Birmingham phoned up to say that he was feeling **drowsy** as he hadn't slept for two days.

And a young man from Manchester called up to ask what he could do about a

spot he had on his face.

In south Wales, a young man phoned for an ambulance, **complaining of** stomach pains. However, on arriving at University Hospital Cardiff, he ran off shouting, "Thanks for the lift, **mate**."

In Hampshire, a young man called police up to seven times a day about his pet hamster. He was eventually sentenced to 80 hours' unpaid work. During his trial, he agreed that he had "far too much **time on his hands**".

In north Staffordshire, the emergency services received 100 calls from a woman who **threatened to smash up** police cars. The calls were made over a period of six days. They were eventually **traced** to the home of an unemployed young woman who said she did it because she was bored. She was given a 24-month **community order**.

One man called up to say that there was a fire in his neighbour's house. Three fire-engines, an ambulance and several police cars were **dispatched**, but it **turned out** to be a hoax. The man, who was later arrested by police, admitted that he'd done it because he "liked to see

ambulances, police cars and fire engines."

Some people! ☺

GLOSSARY

- a hoax** *n*
a trick; an action that's designed to make someone believe something which isn't really true
- elderly** *adj*
an "elderly" person is over the age of 65 (more or less)
- a battery** *n*
a small device that provides power for electrical devices such as radios, toys, mobile phones, etc.
- a remote control** *n*
a small device that you can use to control a television: change the channel, switch it on, etc.
- the Midlands** *n*
a region in the middle of England
- to breathe** *vb*
when you "breathe", you take air into your lungs (the two large "bags" in your body) and then let the air out again
- a lift** *exp*
if you give someone a "lift", you take them somewhere in your car
- drowsy** *adj*
if you're feeling "drowsy", you're feeling a bit tired
- a spot** *n*
a small mark on someone's face often caused by excess oil / grease
- to complain of** *exp*
if you "complain of" a stomach pain (for example), you tell someone that your stomach is hurting
- mate** *exp* *inform*
friend
- time on your hands** *exp*
if you've got "time on your hands", you've got a lot of free time
- to threaten** *vb*
if someone "threatens" to do something bad, they say that they will do that bad thing
- to smash up** *phr* *vb*
if you "smash up" a car (for example), you break it and destroy it
- to trace** *vb*
if you "trace" a telephone call, you discover who made the call
- a community order** *n*
a type of punishment for someone who has done something bad. As part of the punishment, the person can't leave home, has to clean the streets, etc.
- to dispatch** *vb*
if a police car (for example) is "dispatched" to an area, it is sent there
- to turn out** *phr* *vb*
the way that something "turns out", is the way that it is in the end