



Teacher's page

Practical jokes for new employees!

Level: Upper intermediate (B2) to Advanced (C1)

Audio: Yes

In this fun lesson, your students will discuss the topic of pranks. This practical class will get your students using lots of useful language and all the essential skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. Here are some ideas for doing it in class. Good luck!

Warm-up

Discussion: practical jokes

Students read over the following ideas for practical jokes and comment on them in pairs or small groups. When they've finished, ask them to share any interesting ideas or points of view. See the **Resource Sheet** in this pack.



Lesson activities

Go through the activities for the lesson on the sheet: 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.

Remember, for the first listening you should play the recording once without stopping so students get the gist of it. For the second listening, 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.

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.

Dialogue

In pairs, students write up notes for a dialogue between a manager and an employee. The manager is reprimanding the employee because he/she has been playing a lot of

practical jokes in the office. Tell your students to make the dialogue as funny, silly or serious as they like. When they're ready, ask for volunteers to act out their dialogues (from memory or by using notes, not reading it out word-for-word). Other students listen and vote on the best ones.

Scene re-enactment

In pairs or small groups, students write and perform a dialogue between a practical joker and the victim. This could be just at the moment when the victim has been pranked! Tell students to make the dialogue as funny, silly or serious as they like.

Invention & presentation

Individually or in pairs, students invent an idea for a practical joke. Then, they write notes for a one- or two-minute presentation on it, explaining what it is, what it's called, how it works, how to carry it out, top tips for ensuring it's successful, etc. When they're ready, ask for volunteers to give their presentations (using notes, not reading it out word-for-word). Other students vote on the most interesting ones.

Debate it!

Hold a debate! Divide the class into two. Half the class is in favour of the idea of playing practical jokes. The other half is against it. In their groups (or in pairs or smaller groups), students prepare arguments either in favour of or against practical jokes (even if they don't agree with them personally). As part of their arguments, students should explain examples of practical jokes that are either harmful or harmless (depending on their point of view).

When they're ready, allow representatives from each group to stand up and present their arguments. When both sides have finished, open up the debate so anyone can make comments, respond to previous points, ask questions, etc. At the end (after a few minutes), hold a vote to see which idea is the most popular. Tell students they can vote either way and that they don't have to vote according to their initial group and the stance that they were representing.

Resource Sheet – Discussion

Practical jokes

Read over the following ideas for practical jokes and comment on them.

- Which practical jokes from below are the silliest? Why?
- What other practical jokes have you heard of?
- Which ones had you heard of?
- Which ones have you played on someone? What happened?
- Which one/s would you never use? Why?
- Are you a practical joker? In what way? Give details and examples.
- Is it right to play practical jokes on other people? What are the possible negative consequences of doing things like this?

Practical jokes

- Hide a toy snake around the house or office.
- Take a needle and poke a bunch of holes in the cups by the water cooler at work.
- Print out a horrifying image of a killer clown. Then, leave it in a co-worker's desk drawer so they get a shock when they open it.
- Paint a bar of soap with clear nail polish so it won't lather.
- Tape a small package of pasta beneath a toilet seat: When someone sits down, the crunching sound will make it sound like they've broken it.
- Write a co-worker's name on the waistband of a pair of underwear and then leave them somewhere at work (in the meeting room, for example).
- Glue a coin, note or credit card to the ground and watch as people try to pick it up.
- Use a piece of paper or some tape to block a mouse sensor so the victim's mouse won't work.
- Change the text shortcuts on someone's phone so they appear to be illiterate fools:
 - Are = our
 - Is = are
 - It's = its
 - Their = there
 - Then = than
 - They're = there
 - Where = wear
 - Dear = deer
 - By = buy
 - To = two

