

The Pack

Produced quarterly by Learn Hot English
Help your students learn the English they need!

Level: Upper intermediate, B2. September to December 2018



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Welcome to *The Pack!*

This selection of material from Learn Hot English will provide you with ready-to-go lessons and help your students learn English!

Teaching ideas

Here are a few quick ideas on how to use the material in this pack in class. The practical lessons will get your students using lots of useful language and all the essential skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. A lot of these activities come with listening material. You can download the audio files from www.learnhotenglish.com/bookfiles and then load it onto your smartphone, tablet computer, etc. Please e-mail us with any other ideas you may have, or any comments in general: andy@learnhotenglish.com

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. Listen again to answer comprehension questions, this time pausing if/when necessary.
3. Listen a final time, but this time reading the script at the same time.

Also, 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!

7 superstitions from English speaking countries! [track 01]

Warm-up

Print off, write up or read out the unusual superstitions, sayings or beliefs from around the world. Students discuss them, say what they think they mean, and whether anything similar exists in their country.

- Find a penny, pick it up.
- A rabbit's foot will bring you luck.
- Bad luck comes in threes.
- Never open an umbrella inside.
- Never say “happy birthday” if it isn’t someone’s birthday.
- Give a penny if you receive something sharp.
- Don't go straight home after a funeral.
- Whistling indoors invites evil.
- Avoid sleeping with your head to the north.

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.

Important: for the first listening, play the recording once through 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, section or question to 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. Or, ask for volunteers to retell the information, using as much of the original language as possible (or even by heart if they can).

Debate it!

Hold a debate! Divide the class into two. Half the class believes in superstitions. The other half thinks superstitions are nonsense. In their groups (or in pairs or smaller groups), students prepare arguments either in favour of or against the proposal (even if they don’t agree with it personally). 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, etc. At the end (after a few minutes), hold a vote and 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.

Presentation

Students write notes for a one- or two-minute presentation on a superstition that they know about, they find out about, or they invent. 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.

Pronunciation problems with foreign words! [track 02]

Warm-up

Print off, write up or read out the questions about pronunciation. Remind students that they can answer any questions they like (and in any order), and that the objective of these questions is to get them talking. If a question appears a bit “personal”, they can just ignore it or invent the answer:

Discussion: pronunciation

- How could you improve your pronunciation?
- What are some of the hardest words for you to pronounce in English?
- What words are difficult to pronounce in other languages?
- What words are hard to pronounce in your own language?
- What problems do you encounter with pronunciation?
- What have you done to improve your pronunciation?
- How important is pronunciation when learning a language (compared to grammar, listening, writing, etc.)?
- As a topic, what does “pronunciation” cover? What does it involve?
- What differences have you noticed between British and American accents? Which do you find easier to understand?
- Have you had any communication problems as a result of mispronunciation?
- What are the differences between word stress and sentence stress?
- How important is intonation in a language?
- Are there any English words that look or sound identical to words in your language but which mean completely different things? Which ones?

Pronunciation

In pairs, small groups or as a class, students decide how to pronounce the following words. Then, they read or listen to the article to find out the answers.

- Queue
- Draught
- Chaos
- Subtle
- Height
- Debt
- Lettuce
- Cup
- Lead (to be first) / Lead (a metal)
- Wind (to go around) / Wind (air)
- To,
- Two
- Too
- There
- Their
- They're
- Leicester
- Greenwich
- Magdalene

Lesson activities

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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.

Story time

Students write a short story, trying to use all (or as many of) the words in the "Pronunciation" section of this lesson (queue, draught, etc.). When they're ready, ask for volunteers to read out their stories. Other students vote on the best or most interesting ones.

Dialogue

In pairs, students write notes for a dialogue between a language student and a native English speaker. The dialogue should include some misunderstanding due to pronunciation or language errors. 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 (using notes, not reading it out word-for-word). Other students listen and vote on the best ones.

How to promote a product with buzz marketing! [track 03]

Warm-up

Print off or write up the following brand quotes. Give your students a few minutes to read over them and discuss them. Then, remove the quotes. Read them out or write them up with gaps. Students have to remember the missing words. For example:

Teacher: "A brand is a voice and a product is a _____."

Student: "Souvenir"!

Etc.

- "Your brand is what other people say about you when you're not in the room." Jeff Bezos,
- "A brand is a voice and a product is a souvenir." Lisa Gansky
- "Loyalty is not won by being first. It is won by being best." Stefan Persson
- "You can't build a reputation on what you are going to do." Henry Ford
- "When people use your brand name as a verb, that is remarkable." Meg Whitman
- "Focus on building the best possible business. If you are great, people will notice and opportunities will appear." Mark Cuban
- "Be your own best customer. Live your customer's lifestyle." Milena Glimbovski
- "It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently." Warren Buffett
- "You have to stay true to your heritage; that's what your brand is about." Alice Temperley

Lesson activities

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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.

Discuss it!

In pairs or small groups, students think of a buzz marketing idea for any of the following products. When they're ready, students get together in new groups and share and discuss their ideas.

- Coca-Cola
- Toyota Prius
- Samsung Galaxy phone
- Mercedes-Benz car
- BMW car
- McDonald's hamburger
- Nike trainers
- Louis Vuitton bag
- Gillette razor for men
- Budweiser beer
- Kellogg's cornflakes
- Canon camera
- Land Rover vehicle

Presentation

As a follow-up to the previous activity, students write notes for a one- or two-minute presentation with an idea on how to promote a product using buzz marketing (or any other marketing technique). 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.

Ridiculous injury claims by the police! [track 04]

Warm-up

Print off or write up the following lawyer quotes. Give your students a few minutes to read over them. Then, remove the quotes. Read them out or write them up with gaps.

Students have to remember the missing words. For example:

Teacher: "If there were no bad people there would be no good _____."

Student: "Lawyers!"

Etc.

Alternatively, give them to students and discuss as a class.

- "Only lawyers and painters can turn white to black." Japanese Proverb
- "If there were no bad people there would be no good lawyers." Charles Dickens
- "A lawyer with a briefcase can steal more than a thousand men with guns." Mario Puzo
- "I busted a mirror and got seven years bad luck, but my lawyer thinks he can get me five." Stephen Wright
- "Lawyers are just like physicians: what one says, the other contradicts." Sholom Aleichem
- "A lawyer is a person who writes a 10,000-word document and calls it a 'brief'." Franz Kafka
- "The minute you read something that you can't understand, you can almost be sure that it was drawn up by a lawyer." Will Rogers
- "A Lawyer will do anything to win a case, sometimes he will even tell the truth." Patrick Murray

Lesson activities

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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.

E-mail

Students write an e-mail to their boss explaining about an injury. They should find a way to blame the company and demand some compensation. Tell your students to make the e-mail as funny, silly or serious as they like. When they're ready, ask for volunteers to read out their e-mails (using notes, not reading it out word-for-word). Other students vote on the best ones. Or, students "send" the e-mail to a classmate, who reads it and then reports back on the information, or who responds to it.

Dialogue

In pairs, students write a dialogue between a boss and an employee who is reporting an injury and trying to blame the company. 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 (using notes, not reading it out word-for-word). Other students listen and vote on the best ones.

Clowns – it's no laughing matter! [track 05]

Warm-up

Have a discussion about fear in general. Either print them off for students to ask in pairs, or ask them to students in general as part of a class activity. Remind students that they can answer any questions they like (and in any order), and that the objective of these questions is to get them talking.

- What were you afraid of as a child? Do you think most children have this fear?
- What nightmares did you have as a child?
- What films scared you as a child?
- What films have scared you as an adult?
- When was the last time a nightmare woke you up in the night? What do you remember about it?
- How have your fears changed over the years?
- Why do some people seem to enjoy the sensation of fear?
- Why are clowns often seen as scary when they're supposed to be entertaining?
- What areas of your town or city would you be afraid to visit alone at night?
- Have you ever overcome any fears? What were they? How did you do it?
- How do you react to fear? Do you freeze up, panic, run or confront it? Give examples.
- What types of people are you afraid of?
- What animals or insects are you afraid of?

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.

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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.

News report

Students write a news report related to a story that involves a clown. The news report should include information that answers the following questions: *who, what, when, where, why, how*. When they're ready, ask for volunteers to present their news stories. They should do this by using notes, not reading it word-for-word. Other students listen then ask questions, or the person presenting the news could ask them questions.

Dialogue

In pairs, students write up notes for a dialogue between a clown and someone else, with the clown trying to entertain the person (unsuccessfully, maybe?). 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.

Debate it!

Hold a debate! Divide the class into two. Half the class is in favour of the idea of banning clowns. The other half is against it. In their groups (or in pairs or smaller groups), students prepare arguments either in favour of or against the proposal (even if they don't agree with it personally). 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, etc. At the end (after a few minutes), hold a vote and 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.

Objective To improve your reading and listening skills.

Think about it What superstitions are there in your country? Which ones do you believe in? How superstitious are you? Which superstitions from this article exist in your country?

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

7 SUPERSTITIONS FROM ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES

Are you **superstitious**? Here are the origins of seven common superstitions from English-speaking countries.

If you break a mirror, you'll have seven years' bad luck

It was an ancient belief that mirrors could capture your **soul**, so breaking a mirror was like damaging your spirit. The only way to **counter** the bad luck is to **bury** the broken pieces in a hole and to cover them up with mud.

If you spill some salt, throw it over your left shoulder or you'll have bad luck

In the past, many people believed that **spilling** salt could lead to bad luck. The only way to stop this was to throw salt over your left shoulder, which is where they believed the **devil** was often **lurking**. The belief was that you could neutralise the bad luck by throwing salt into the devil's eyes.

If a black cat crosses your path, bad luck will follow

During the Middle Ages, people thought black cats were witches **in disguise**. And a black cat crossing your path was a sign that the devil was watching you.

It's good luck to find a horseshoe in an open field

If you find a horseshoe in an open field, you need to **pick it up** with your right hand, make a **wish**, then throw it over your left shoulder. The ancient Greeks considered the horseshoe a symbol of **fertility** and good fortune. In England in the Middle Ages people often hung an **upside-down** horseshoe on

doors to **frighten off** witches or demons.

Knock on wood to stop bad things from happening

If you're talking about something and you don't want it to happen, you need to knock on a piece of wood and say "touch wood!" For example, if you say, "I've never had an accident", you need to tap on a piece of wood so you don't actually have an accident yourself. This comes from an ancient belief that good spirits lived in trees. However, when the tree was cut down, the spirits inside would die and evil spirits would **take over**. By knocking on the wood, you could **drive away** the evil spirits, and prevent any **misfortune**.

The number 13 will bring you bad luck

In many English-speaking countries, the number 13 is considered unlucky. And Friday 13th is *the* day for misfortune. This superstition is so common that some hotels avoid having a 13th floor, and airlines don't give tickets for the 13th row. But why? Apparently, the origins are religious. At Jesus Christ's **Last Supper**, there were thirteen people around the table (including Christ and the twelve **apostles**); and Friday was the day that Christ was **crucified**. Fear of the number 13 (**triskaidekaphobia**) is a specifically-recognised phobia.

Walking under a ladder will bring you bad luck

The origins of this superstition are also religious. In Christianity, the triangle is a **sacred** symbol that represents the Holy

Trinity of the **Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit**. A ladder against a building forms the shape of a triangle. So, by walking under it, you "break" the triangle. Of course, apart from that, it also seems logical that if you walk under a ladder, something could fall on your head! ☺

GLOSSARY

superstitious *adj*
people who are "superstitious" believe in magic or things that aren't real

a soul *n*
the part of you that consists of your mind, character, thoughts and feelings

to counter *vb*
if you "counter" an action or process, you create an opposite effect and stop it happening (or reduce its power)

to bury *vb*
to put in a hole in the ground

to spill *vb*
if you "spill" liquid (for example), a bit of it falls from a container

the devil *n*
the most powerful evil spirit

to lurk *vb*
if someone "lurks" somewhere, they wait there secretly, often in order to do something bad

in disguise *exp*
if someone is "in disguise", they're wearing different clothes so you don't recognise them

to pick up *phr vb*
if you "pick something up", you take it in your hands

a wish *n*
if you "make a wish", you ask for something that you'd like

fertility *n*
the ability to reproduce and have babies

upside down *exp*
if something is "upside down", the top part is at the bottom, and the bottom part is at the top

to frighten off *phr vb*
to do something to frighten someone and to make them leave a place

to take over *phr vb*
if A "takes over" an area, A starts to dominate and control that area

to drive away *phr vb*
if you "drive someone away", you make them leave a place

misfortune *n*
something unpleasant or unlucky that happens

the Last Supper *n*
the last meal that Jesus had with his followers before he was crucified (see other entry)

an apostle *n*
a person who followed Jesus Christ and who told people about him and tried to persuade them to become Christians. The 12 apostles were the 12 people chosen by Jesus to carry on his work after his death

to crucify *vb*
if someone is "crucified", they're killed by being tied or nailed to a cross and left to die

sacred *adj*
"sacred" objects have a special connection with God

the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit *exp*
the Father (God), the Son (Jesus) and the Holy Spirit (Jesus' spirit after he died)

Answers on page 44

1 Pre-reading

Think of three superstitions from your country.

2 Reading I

Read the article once. Were any of your superstitions mentioned? Are they exactly the same in your country?

3 Reading II

Read the article again. Then, answer the questions without referring back to the article.

- How many years' bad luck will you have if you break a mirror?
- What should you throw over your left shoulder if you spill some salt?
- What should you do if you find a horseshoe in an open field?
- What are the origins of the "unlucky" number 13?
- What are the origins of the "walking under a ladder" superstition?

Objective To improve your reading and listening skills.

Think about it Which words do you find difficult to pronounce in English? Which words are difficult to pronounce in your language? What happens to foreign words in your language? How are they spelt? How are they pronounced?

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

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Answers on page 44

1 Pre-reading

Look at the list of words below. How are they pronounced? Try to say them. Then, compare your version with the ones on the audio file. You can listen to the correct pronunciation of the words at the end of the audio file for the article on this page.

1. susceptible
2. pronunciation
3. miscellaneous
4. deterioration
5. jewellery
6. philosophical
7. thesaurus
8. hospitable
9. onomatopoeia
10. anaesthetist

2 Reading I

What problems are there with English pronunciation in general? What do you think the “rules” are for pronouncing foreign words in English? Make notes. Then, read the article once to compare your ideas.

3 Reading II

Read the article again. Then, answer the questions.

1. What's the phonetic script for this word: *queue*?
2. How many vowel sounds are there in English?
3. What's a homograph?
4. What's a homophone?
5. How is the word “Magdalene” pronounced?
6. What's the English version of the Spanish city of “Sevilla”?

PRONUNCIATION PROBLEMS WITH FOREIGN WORDS!

The Spanish call it “londres”, the Finnish say “Lontoo” and the Dutch refer to it as “Londen”. England's capital, London, is different in almost every language, with a wide variety of pronunciations too. But what are the rules for pronouncing foreign words in English?

English pronunciation is never easy. For a start, there doesn't seem to be a logical connection between the written and spoken forms: *queue* is pronounced /kjuː/, *draught* is /draʊt/ and *chaos* is /'keɪɒs/. There are also problems with silent letters: *subtle* is /'sʌtl/, *height* is /haɪt/ and *debt* is /det/.

One of the main problems is that there are so many different vowel sounds in English. From five written vowels (a, e, i, o, u) there are 19 sounds. So, for example, the “u” in “lettuce” is an /I/ sound /'letɪs/, but an /ʌ/ sound in the word *cup* /kʌp/.

Then just to further complicate matters, there are homographs – words that have the same spellings but different sounds and different meanings. For example: *lead* (to be in first place) *lead* (a metal); or *wind* (to go around) and *wind* (a strong movement of air)

There are also homophones – words that have the same sounds but different spellings and meanings. For example: “to” = *to*, *two*, *too*; and “there” = *there*, *their*, *they're*.

Some words in English are just completely illogical. For example: *Leicester* is pronounced /'lestə/, *Greenwich* is /'ɡrenɪtʃ/ and *Magdalene* (as in Magdalene College, Cambridge) is /'mɑːdlən/.

So, what happens with foreign words in English? In many cases, the words are Anglicised – they're changed or adapted to make them

sound more “English”. For example, instead of the German “München” we say “Munich”. The same thing happens with Rome (which is “Roma” in Italian), Naples (Napoli), Milan (Milano), Vienna (which is Wien in German), The Hague (Den Haag in Dutch) and Seville (Sevilla in Spanish).

In other cases, the spelling is the same but the pronunciation is changed. For example, we say “Paris” instead of the French “Paris”. Other examples of this include *paella*, *villa* and *chili con carne* (instead of the Spanish *paella*, *villa* and *chili con carne*), *Volkswagen* (instead of the German Volkswagen) and *Renault* (or even Renault), *Michelin* and *chauffeur* (instead of the French *Renault*, *Michelin* and *chauffeur*).

How are foreign words pronounced in your language? *



HOW TO PROMOTE A PRODUCT WITH BUZZ MARKETING!

Answers on page 44

1 Pre-reading

You're going to read an article about some original ways to promote products. How would you promote the following things. Think of as many ideas as you can.

a horror film a TV series

a website for interns

a correction fluid product

2 Reading I

Read or listen to the article once to compare your ideas from the Pre-reading activity. Which idea is the cleverest? Why?

3 Reading II

Read the article again. Then, write the name of a film, product, etc. next to each statement.

- The site got half a million visitors.
- 74,000 people applied in the first 48 hours.
- A character from the video invites viewers to participate in the video.
- It made \$194 million worldwide.
- The campaign featured a Hollywood star.
- 42 alternative scenes were shot.
- You can download the finished product to your computer.
- It was only released in a small number of cities.

4 Language focus Conditionals

Look at the extract from the article on this page, "...If you wanted the movie to be shown..." The writer has used a conditional. Notice the use of the passive infinitive: *to be shown*.

One great way to promote a product is through **buzz marketing**. This involves doing something original or creative that **creates a buzz** – that gets people talking about it and sharing it. Here are four examples of buzz marketing.

1 Paranormal Activity

Paranormal Activity was a horror film that cost just \$15,000 to make. However, it earned nearly \$108 million at the US **box office** and \$194 million worldwide. A lot of its success was a result of a clever buzz marketing campaign. As part of this, the film was only released in a small number of cities. If you wanted the movie to be shown where you lived, you had to **sign** a **petition**. Once there were enough votes, the film would be shown there too. Restricting the availability of the film was a great way of generating interest in it.

2 Mad Men

For the third season of the TV series *Mad Men*, **cable channel** AMC launched *Mad Men Yourself*. This was an online **avatar**-creator that let you make a 1960s' version of yourself. The site got half a million visitors in the first week, and the Season 3 **premiere** of *Mad Men* saw record **ratings**. The avatar-creator lets you choose a background scene for your avatar, as well as your body shape, clothing, facial hair and eyes, all while listening to some cool 1960s jazzy music. And once you've finished, you can download it to your computer.

3 Internships.com

Hollywood star Charlie Sheen was paid over \$100,000 to send two **Tweets** to promote the website Internships.com. One of the Tweets read, "I'm looking to **hire** a winning **intern** with TigerBlood. Apply here." As a result of the Tweets, the internship website got 74,000 **applicants** in the first 48 hours, and over one million **unique visitors** during the campaign. Incidentally, TigerBlood is what Charlie Sheen thinks runs through his **veins**. According to the actor, it makes him **resistant** to the dangers of **addiction**.

4 Tipp-Ex

Correction fluid manufacturer Tipp-Ex came up with a clever idea to promote their **whiteout** *Pocket Mouse*. They launched a "choose-your-own-adventure" campaign on YouTube with a video called *A Hunter Shoots a Bear*. In the clip, a man is out camping when a bear suddenly appears behind him. He **grabs** a rifle, and his friend tells him to shoot the bear. However, the man says he doesn't want to, then picks up the Tipp-Ex mouse and **whites out** the word "shoots" from the title, inviting viewers to write another word or expression. For example, instead of "shoots", you could write "washes" or "plays football with". Then, you can watch a video of the hunter doing that thing with the bear. Forty-two alternative scenes were filmed, covering most people's **requests**. Within 36 hours, the video became a **viral hit**.

VIDEO

YouTube

Watch the Tipp-Ex ad. Search YouTube for "a hunter shoots a bear".

GLOSSARY

- buzz marketing** *n* a form of marketing that involves doing something surprising that makes people talk about it and get excited about it
- to create a buzz** *exp* to do something that makes people talk about something and get excited about it
- the box office** *n* the money a film makes at the "box office" is the money it makes from ticket sales
- to sign** *vb* if you "sign" a document, you put your name on it
- a petition** *n* a document signed by a lot of people with a request for the government to do something
- a cable channel** *n* a television network that you pay for. Your television is connected to it through cables
- an avatar** *n* a figure that represents you in a computer game, etc.
- a premiere** *n* the first time a film is shown in the cinema
- ratings** *n* the statistics that show how popular a television programme is
- a Tweet** *n* a message sent by the social network Twitter
- to hire** *vb* if you "hire" someone, you give them a job
- an intern** *n* a person who works in a company for experience (they aren't paid)
- an applicant** *n* someone who applies for a job – often by sending in a letter, etc.
- a unique visitor** *n* individual people who visit a website
- a vein** *n* the thin tubes in your body with blood flowing through them towards your heart
- resistant** *exp* if you're "resistant to" a disease (for example), you can't catch that disease
- an addiction** *n* if you've got an "addiction" to something, you really want/need that thing
- correction fluid** *n* a white liquid you can paint over writing to cover the writing so you can write again
- whiteout** *n* a white liquid you can use to paint over writing
- a Pocket Mouse** *n* a whiteout product in the shape of a mouse that you can put in your pocket
- to grab** *vb* to take suddenly and quickly
- to white out** *phr vb* to delete writing by putting a white liquid on it
- a request** *n* if there's a "request" for something, someone asks for that thing
- a viral hit** *n* something that is very popular on the internet

Objective To improve your reading and listening skills.

Think about it When was the last time you hurt yourself? What happened? Do you know anyone who has sued their employer? Why? Have you read any stories about people suing companies or others? What had happened? Did they get any compensation? Do you think the police should be able to sue over personal injury claims? Why? Why not?

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

⊖ TRACK 26: ENGLISHMAN & ENGLISHWOMAN

OW! IT REALLY HURTS!



Ridiculous injury claims by the police!

VIDEO

You Tube

Watch a news report on a police officer who made a personal injury claim. Search YouTube for "BBC News - Police officer sues garage over fall".

GLOSSARY

knife-wielding *exp*
a "knife-wielding" person has a knife in their hands and they're moving it around in an aggressive way, etc.
on duty *exp*
if a police officer is "on duty", he/she is working
entitled to *exp*
if you're "entitled to" something, it's your right to have it
personal injury *exp*
damage or injury to a person (not a building, car, etc.)
PC / WPC *abbr*
PC = police constable – the lowest rank for a male police officer; WPC = woman police constable
to sue *vb*
if you "sue" someone, you start a legal process against them in order to get compensation (money)
a siren *n*
a device on a car, ambulance, fire engine, etc. that makes a loud sound like an alarm
a riot *n*
when there's a "riot", a group of people act violently in a public place and break things, etc.
to sting *vb*
if a liquid "stings" your eyes, it hurts your eyes and you feel a sharp pain there
to squirt *vb*
when you "squirt" a liquid out of a container, you press the container and the liquid comes out
to award *vb*
if you're "awarded" money, you're given that money to help you pay for hospital bills, etc.
heavy-duty *adj*
a "heavy-duty" object, is very strong
an ankle *n*
the joint in your body between your foot and your leg
to trip *vb*
if you "trip", you hit something with your foot and fall over
stationery *n*
equipment used in the office: paper, envelopes, paper clips, etc.
to bend down *phr vb*
when you "bend down", you move the top part of your body downwards and forwards
a torn ligament *n*
a "ligament" is an area of strong tissue that connects bones in your body. If you "tear a ligament", you break the tissue
to flinch *vb*
if you "flinch", you make a small sudden movement, often when you're frightened or surprised
a confrontation *n*
an argument, fight or battle between two people or groups of people
to stamp *vb*
if you "stamp" on someone's foot, you push your foot down on their foot
a tray *n*
a flat, plastic or metal object for carrying drinks or plates of food

Answers on page 44

1 Pre-reading

What accidents could you have with the following things?

- a computer handcuffs
- hand gel a stapler
- a floor cable a hand drier
- a box of documents
- a tray of drinks
- a dog an office chair

2 Reading I

Read or listen to the article once. Which personal injury claim is the most ridiculous? Why?

3 Reading II

Read the article again. Then, answer the questions. Try to do it without referring back to the article.

1. Why was PC Whinge claiming £600?
2. What caused PC Sore's injuries?
3. What was PC Jones run over by?
4. What did WPC Wiggins drop on herself?
5. How did PC Flopston get the burns to his knee?
6. Where was WPC Woolly when she banged her head?
7. Why did the dog bite the police trainer in the mouth?

Police officers often find themselves in dangerous situations:

face-to-face with an armed robber, a **knife-wielding** drunk or a crazed killer.

And if they're ever injured **on duty**, they're **entitled to** compensation. But some police claims for **personal injury** are completely ridiculous, as these examples clearly show.

PC Whinge claimed £600 after he injured his back while reaching across a desk to switch on a computer.

WPC McDeftly sued for £500,000 after claiming she'd developed a fear of **sirens** following a **riot**-training exercise.

PC Sore won £108,000 after he was injured by handcuffs on a safety course.

PC Jones injured his foot after being "run over by an out-of-control office chair". He put in a claim for £500.

PC Slipston suffered "**stinging eyes**" after accidentally **squirting** hand gel into his face. He was **awarded** £750.

WPC Wiggins put in a claim for £500 after a **heavy-duty** stapler fell from a desk onto

her ankle, causing minor damage.

PC Flopston was awarded £10,600 after receiving burns to the right knee after **tripping** over a cable.

WPC Brakely sued the force for £400,000 after hurting her back lifting boxes of **stationery**.

WPC Woolly sued for £900 after banging her head on a hand drier in the toilets after **bending down** to "collect paperwork from the floor".

PC Sturdy was left with **torn ligaments** in his foot during flinch training (an exercise to teach officers not to **flinch** during a **confrontation**) after the instructor accidentally **stamped** on his foot.

WPC Carryon sued the force for £700 after she made three cups of tea and dropped them as she tried to carry them all at once "without a **tray**".

A police dog trainer sued the force for £900 after he was bitten on the mouth by a police dog that jumped at him in order to "retrieve a ball".

You'd expect a bit more from the men and women who have chosen to serve us! ☆

QUIRKY NEWS

Unusual news stories from around the world.

CLOWNS – IT'S NO LAUGHING MATTER!

DO YOU THINK
I'M FUNNY?

NASTY CLOWNS

The Killer Klowns from Outer Space

This film is a 1988 American sci-fi horror comedy about a race of clown aliens who come to Earth to catch humans.

Pennywise the Dancing Clown

"Pennywise the Dancing Clown" appears in Stephen King's horror novel *It*. He's an evil creature who takes the form of a sadistic clown. The book was made into a TV mini-series that was shown in 1990.

Krusty the Clown

Krusty the Clown is a cynical, miserable cartoon character from the animated television series *The Simpsons*. He's the host of Bart and Lisa's favourite TV show, *The Itchy & Scratchy Show*.

John Wayne Gacy

John Wayne Gacy was a serial killer who murdered more than 30 people. He often performed as Pogo the Clown, appearing at parades, parties and charitable events.

VIDEO

YouTube

Watch this trailer for a "scary" clown film. Search YouTube for "**Killer Klowns from Outer Space (1988) Old & Classic Movie Trailer**".

GLOSSARY

to fall *vb*
if numbers "fall", they decrease or go down

to get into *exp*
if you "get into" a profession (for example), you start working in that profession

a decline *n*
if numbers "decline", they go down or decrease

to blame *vb*
if you "blame" someone for a bad situation, you say that they're responsible for that bad situation

the media *n*
you can refer to television, radio, newspapers and magazines as "the media"

to fuel *vb*
if something "fuels" a situation, it makes it worse

a serial murderer *n*
someone who kills several different people at different times. They often kill for pleasure

to get away with murder *exp*
to do something bad and not to suffer any negative consequences

sceptical *adj*
if you're "sceptical" about something, you don't really believe it

it's rubbish *exp informal*
it's a lie / it isn't true

cool *adj*
fashionable

paintball *n*
a game you play with two teams. Each player has a gun that shoots little balls that are filled with paint

a themed-party *n*
a party in which everyone has to dress the same way: a wild west party, a pyjama party etc.

a booking *n*
if someone has a "booking", they're paid to do a job at a certain time

a shopping mall *n*
a large building with many shops in it

to hire *vb*
if you "hire" someone, you pay them to do a job for you

a choir *n*
a group of people who sing together

Answers on page 44

1 Pre-reading

Use the following words (or any others) to describe what a clown looks like and what they do: **big shoes, painted face, red nose, red hair...**

2 Reading I

You're going to read an article on the decline in popularity of clowns. Why do you think this is happening? Make notes. Then, read or listen to the article once to compare your ideas.

3 Reading II

Read the article again. Then, answer the questions.

1. What does CI stand for?
2. By how much did numbers at the World Clown Association fall by between 2004 and 2014?
3. What does "coulrophobia" mean?
4. Why does Blue Brattle mention Santa?
5. How old are the children that clowns entertain at parties these days?
6. Why are more and more choirs providing entertainment in shopping malls?

Clowns International (CI), a professional clown organisation, has seen its membership **fall** from almost 1,000 in the 1980s to little over 100 in recent years. And numbers at the World Clown Association have dropped from 3,500 in 2004 to 2,500 in 2014.

To make matters worse, few new clowns are coming into the profession. "Most clowns **get into** it because their mum or dad is involved," Blue Brattle, the former chairman of CI, explained in an interview with The Daily Telegraph. "There are still clowns coming through, but not in the numbers they once were," he added.

So, what's the reason for this **decline** in popularity? Many **blame** the **media**. "There's a very negative view from Hollywood, with films like *It*, and characters like Krusty the Clown from the *Simpsons*. These clowns are so negative. They don't look at the positive," Brattle added.

Others say that it's down to an increase in clown phobia (otherwise known as "coulrophobia"), with clowns having now become an object of fear. This has been **fuelled** by cases of real-life "killer clowns", such as the **serial murderer**

John Wayne Gacy who worked as a clown in his spare time. He once admitted that he liked dressing up as a clown because "a clown can **get away with murder**."

Others are more **sceptical**. "Ten years ago, I'd never heard of clown phobia. It's **rubbish**," Brattle said. "Children might be nervous, but they get scared of Santas and mascots too," he added.

Whatever the reason, it's clear that there's less work for clowns now. "It used to be **cool** to have a clown at a party, but now it is all DJs, **paintball** and **themed-parties**," another clown explained. "A few years ago, I would have provided entertainment at 10-, 11- and 12-year-olds' parties, but now, when I do **get bookings**, it's for 3-, 4- or 5-year-olds. It's the way of the world. Children are growing up quicker," he added.

The depressed state of the economy isn't helping things either. These days, fewer **shopping malls** **hire** clowns as a form of entertainment. Instead, they use community **choirs**, which are often cheaper or even free.

It seems that beneath the smiles, there isn't much to laugh about! ☺