

New Year's resolutions

Topic

New Year's traditions and resolutions

Learning outcomes

- Use 'be going to' to describe future plans and intentions
- Read a text about New Year celebrations in the UK and identify key information
- Talk about personal New Year traditions and celebrations

Age and level

13-17 (B1)

Time

60-75 minutes

Materials

- Presentation or student worksheet

Introduction

Many people around the world make resolutions at the start of a new year. This lesson focuses on New Year's resolutions and other New Year traditions and celebrations in the UK. The lesson begins with an activity to introduce vocabulary related to common resolutions young people make. Learners then read a text about the way three teenagers celebrate New Year in the UK. This is followed by a discussion about New Year traditions, and learners end the lesson by writing imaginary resolutions for other / famous people.

You can use a student worksheet for this lesson, or a presentation for a no-printing option.

Procedure

Lead-in (5-10 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show slide 1 of the presentation or write the topic 'New Year's resolutions' on the board. Ask learners to say what a 'resolution' is or give a definition (a decision or promise to do or not to do something). • Explain that many people around the world make resolutions at the start of a new year. Ask learners to say what they think some typical New Year's resolutions might be about e.g. exercise, health etc. They can do this as a whole class or in pairs / small groups. <p>Note: 'New Year's Day' in this lesson refers to January 1st.</p>
Task 1: Common New Year's resolutions (10-15 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show slide 2 or refer learners to Task 1A in the student worksheet. • Ask the class to compare their ideas from the Lead-in activity to the list. Ask a few learners: Are there any that they thought of that are not included? • Tell learners to read through the list again, and to tick resolutions they'd like to make. Help with any unfamiliar vocabulary. • Show slide 3 or refer to Task 1B. Ask learners to write three resolutions. Read the example, and if necessary give some examples of your own. Explain that it's easier to stick to a resolution if we make it specific e.g. one new dish each month. • If necessary, explain / remind learners that we use the structure 'be going to' + an infinitive verb to talk about future plans and intentions. • Invite some learners to share their resolutions with the class if they'd like to. Some learners may like to keep them private.
Task 2: Pre-reading activity (10 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell learners that making New Year's resolutions is just one of the New Year traditions in the UK. Explain that they will read a text about some other traditions. • Show slide 4 of the presentation or refer learners to Task 2 in the student worksheet. • In pairs, small groups or as a whole class, learners say how they think the words relate to New Year traditions or celebrations in the UK. • Help with vocabulary but don't comment on ideas at this stage. Learners will find the connections in the text.

Task 3: Reading (15 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show slides 5/6 of the presentation or refer learners to Task 3A in the student worksheet. Give everyone a few minutes to read the text. • Ask learners to say how the words in Task 2 relate to New Year traditions and celebrations in the UK. <p>Answers</p> <p><i>party – many people go to parties on New Year’s Eve</i></p> <p><i>midnight – some people sing a song, some people listen to chimes at midnight, there are fireworks at midnight in London</i></p> <p><i>a Scottish song – some people sing a Scottish song called ‘Auld Lang Syne’ (at midnight)</i></p> <p><i>a tall man with dark hair – in Scotland, it’s good luck if this is the first person to enter your home at New Year</i></p> <p><i>Big Ben – many people listen to Big Ben’s chimes at midnight (or watch on TV)</i></p> <p><i>fireworks – many people watch the London fireworks on TV</i></p> <p><i>beach / fancy dress– some people swim in the sea on New Year’s Day; some are in fancy dress</i></p> <p><i>laser light show – there is a laser light show in Newcastle (with music)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now show slide 7 or refer learners to Task 3B in the student worksheet. In pairs or small groups, learners answer questions 1-6 to see what they can remember. They can check their answers with the text, before you check with the whole class. <p>Answers: 1. Ben, 2. Sophie, 3. Alice, 4. Ben, 5. Sophie’s, 6. Alice’s</p>
Task 4: Discussion (10 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show slide 8 of the presentation or refer learners to Task 4 in the student worksheet. • In pairs or small groups, or as a whole class if you have a small group, learners discuss questions 1-4. If learners discuss in pairs / groups, ask some pairs / groups to share their answers with the class.
Task 5: Writing New Year’s resolutions (10-15 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show slide 9 or refer learners to Task 5 in the student worksheet. • Tell learners they should write some resolutions for the people in the list. They can choose who they write them for, and they can write serious or funny resolutions. This can be a fun activity to end the lesson!

- Before they begin, write one or two examples on the board and remind learners to use the structure 'be going to' + the infinitive verb, e.g. My brother's going to join a gym and he's going to go twice a week.
- Give learners a time limit to write some resolutions individually or in pairs. Walk around and help where necessary.
- Ask learners to share some of their resolutions with the class – especially the funny ones! Correct any problems with using 'be going to'.

Adapted from a lesson contributed by

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