

Tattoos

Topic

Tattoos, art

Learning outcomes

- Explain why people have tattoos and some of the issues of having tattoos
- Identify gist and specific information in an article about tattoos
- Participate in a role play and use expressions to convince others

Age and level

13-17, Adults (B1+)

Time

Approximately 75 minutes

Materials

- Presentation OR Student worksheet (alternatives are suggested for using neither)
- Reading text

Introduction

This lesson is about tattoos. Please note that this may be a sensitive topic for some students, so choose and adapt activities depending on your teaching context. In the lesson, students consider why tattoos are popular, and go on to read an article about trends and tattooing as art. They discuss questions around this topic, then prepare for and perform a role play based on a tattoo dilemma.

Teachers can use either a presentation or student worksheet for this lesson. Alternatives are suggested for using neither. Teachers will need to provide / display the reading text.

Procedure

Before the lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optional: Find pictures of the tattoos of celebrities that are familiar to your students; or find pictures of different tattoo designs (for lead-in activity).
Lead-in (10 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 1: Display pictures of the tattoos of celebrities that are familiar to your students. Can students say who the tattoo belongs to? To help, you could write different celebrities' names on the board for students to choose from. • Option 2: Display some pictures of different tattoo designs. What do students like / dislike about the designs? • Option 3 (no pictures): Ask students to say if they have tattoos, or if anyone they know has tattoos. Ask them to describe what the tattoos look like. As they describe, draw – or have students draw – the tattoo(s) on the board. <p>Note: The topic of tattoos may not be appropriate for some students / contexts. Adapt activities accordingly.</p>
Discussion (10 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show slide 2 or refer students to Task 1 in the student worksheet. Alternatively, if you are not using either, write these questions on the board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Are tattoos popular in your country? Which ones are most popular? ○ What do you think are some of the problems of having tattoos? ○ Why do you think some people have tattoos? • In pairs, small groups or as a whole class, students discuss the questions. If they discuss in pairs / groups, ask some to share their thoughts with the class. <p>Suggestions:</p> <p><i>Some of the problems might be: pain, infections and allergic reactions; they're permanent and removing them is difficult (e.g. if poor quality / circumstances change); may impact on getting a job; not always culturally acceptable.</i></p> <p><i>People may have tattoos because they can express their personality, values, beliefs, experiences; to remember loved ones; as a sign that you belong to a certain group; to cover scars; because they like the design.</i></p>
Reading for gist (10 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show slide 3 or refer students to Task 2 in the student worksheet. • Alternatively, if you are not using either, write the title 'Tattooing: art of the people' and the following list on the board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ history of tattooing ○ popular trends and designs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ society's attitudes towards tattoos ○ becoming a tattooist ○ personal stories ○ future of tattooing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that students are going to read an article with the title 'Tattooing: art of the people'. Ask them to guess which of the topics in the list will appear in the article. • Show slide 4 or hand out / display the Reading text. Give students a couple of minutes to scan the article and to see if their ideas are correct. • If you are using the presentation, give students a minute to quickly look at slide 4, then show slide 5 for a minute. • Show slide 3 again or refer students to the list in Task 2 again. Ask which topics appear in the article. <p><i>Answers: popular trends and designs, personal stories. It could be argued that society's attitudes towards tattoos are also discussed in the article.</i></p>
<p>Reading and discussion (15 mins)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give students time to read the article again. If you are using the presentation, allow more time for everyone to read the slides. • Review any vocabulary that is preventing students from understanding key points in the article (e.g. words to describe the designs). • Show slide 6 or refer students to Task 3 in the student worksheet. Alternatively, write the following questions on the board. You could write these while students are reading the text: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have you seen any examples of the designs mentioned in the article? 2. Do you agree that tattoos are merely a decoration for the body? 3. Do you agree that a tattooist is also an artist? 4. What do you think about people having tattoos (e.g. tribal patterns, religious symbols, traditional designs) from other cultures? 5. Do you think a tattoo is a good way to remember something? 6. Why do you think some people want to get rid of their tattoos? • In pairs, small groups or as a whole class, students discuss questions 1-6. If they discuss in pairs / groups, ask some to share their answers with the class.

Role play (20 mins+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to imagine a scenario in which somebody wants to get a tattoo, while others might be opposed. Write them on the board and brainstorm a few viewpoints to give students ideas. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ older teenager (wants to have matching design with friends) / parent or carer (worried teenager will regret decision & impact on future jobs) ○ adult (wants to represent life experience e.g. a new baby / death of parent) / partner (worried about appearance & judgement from friends / family) ○ employee (to express personality / individuality) / employer (worried about impact of visible tattoos on clients and company image) ○ cultural enthusiast (wants a symbol from another culture) / cultural insider (thinks person doesn't understand the significance of the symbol) ○ holiday-maker (wants to get a tattoo as part of the holiday experience) / friend (worried about health risks / quality & thinks friend will regret the decision) • Explain that students will role play one of the scenarios. The whole class could choose the same one, or pairs could choose different scenarios. • Students make pairs and choose the role they will play. They prepare for their role, noting as many arguments as they can. It may be useful to write some useful phrases on the board that students can use to convince e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Have you thought about...?</i> ○ <i>If you ..., then ...</i> ○ <i>The best part is that...</i> ○ <i>I understand, but...</i> • Walk around and help as students prepare. • When they're ready, students role play their scenario in pairs. If they feel confident, they can perform their role plays in front of other pairs or the class.
Homework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students can write the dialogue for the scenario that they role played or a different scenario.

Adapted by Kim Ashmore from a lesson contributed by

Jo Budden