

## Telling a story

### Topic

Storytelling

### Learning outcomes

- Tell a story with more fluency
- Use a range of narrative tenses accurately

### Age and level

13-17, Adults (B1+)

### Time

Approximately 50-55 minutes + 30-minute optional follow-up / homework activity

### Materials

- Presentation OR Student worksheet

### Introduction

The use of narrative to tell stories and anecdotes forms an important part of our everyday communication. During this lesson students will have the opportunity to develop both their accuracy and fluency by creating and then telling a story. They will then have the chance to develop their understanding of a range of narrative tenses by focusing on both the meaning and the form of the structures.

A student worksheet is available for this lesson. Alternatively, teachers can use a presentation for a no-printing option.

**Procedure**

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| <b>Speaking task<br/>(Creating a story)<br/>(15-20 minutes)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show <b>slide 2</b> or refer students to <b>Task 1</b> in the student worksheet.</li> <li>• Ask students to read the questions and look for any words they don't understand. As students read through the questions, they will be forming a mental framework of the story they expect the questions to be about.</li> <li>• Check they understand three key words: wings, angels and priest. You can do this by making a quick sketch on the board and asking what they are.</li> <li>• Tell the students that the questions are all about a story, but you don't have the story and that they must invent the story for you. Put them in pairs to do this and tell them that they must do it together speaking, and not write anything down. If students really struggle, you could let them make brief notes, but emphasise that this is an oral activity.</li> <li>• Monitor and help out with any vocabulary that the students need e.g. writing it on the board. Tell students that they are going to have to tell their story to someone else, so encourage them to ask for any vocabulary that they might need. Remind them to use past tenses.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Speaking task<br/>(Telling a story)<br/>(15 minutes)</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Now ask students to change partners. In their new pairs, students tell their version of the story to each other.</li> <li>• When both partners have told their story, ask them which story they preferred.</li> <li>• Ask some questions from slide 2 / Task 1 around the class. Encourage students to look at the tenses in the questions, and to think about the tenses they use as they answer. For example:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How long <u>had it been raining</u>? It <u>had been raining</u> for three weeks.</li> <li>○ What <u>was Paul doing</u> when he first <u>saw</u> the old man? Paul <u>was looking</u> longingly out of the window when he <u>saw</u> the old man.</li> <li>○ What <u>did</u> Paul's wife <u>say</u> when he <u>told</u> her about the old man with wings? She <u>said</u> he was mad. Etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   |
| <b>Concept checking<br/>(10 minutes)</b>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show <b>slide 3</b> or refer students to <b>Task 2</b> in the student worksheet.</li> <li>• There are three example sentences. Ask students to read the sentences in pairs and match each one to the concepts, a, b, c. Check answers (1. b, 2. c, 3. a)</li> <li>• Ask students if they can identify the different verb tenses (1. past perfect continuous, 2. past continuous and past simple, 3. past simple). If necessary,</li> </ul>  |

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|  | <p>review how these tenses are formed. Explain that these tenses are often used when telling stories set in the past.</p>  |
| <p><b>Past tense review (10 minutes)</b></p>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show <b>slide 4</b> or refer students to <b>Task 3</b> in the student worksheet.</li> <li>• Ask students to complete the sentences in any way they like using the tenses from Task 2. Do the first sentence as an example: Jenny was coming home from work when she met her ex-boyfriend.</li> <li>• Students can work individually or in pairs. Walk around as students work. Help where necessary and encourage them to be creative.</li> <li>• When most students are ready, ask some to read out their sentences. Correct any errors with the use of the narrative tenses.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Follow up / optional homework (30 minutes)</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students to write the story that they invented in Task 1. They should check the use of narrative tenses. This can be done either in class or at home.</li> <li>• The stories can be displayed around the classroom or collated into a mini anthology.</li> </ul>  |

**Contributed by**

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