

English in Mind Second edition

Level 4 Unit 3

Lesson Plan

Tomorrow's world today: How far are we from the invisibility cloak?


AIMS

- to read extensively and study a text related to the Unit theme 'Time travellers'
- to help students to identify literal and idiomatic language
- to help students to discuss the importance of inventions and express their opinions
- (further work) to prepare a short presentation

Total time (approx): 1 hr 30 mins

(Note: Some exercises can be set for homework)

Lead-in

- 1** Tell students they are going to read an article about inventions. Before looking at the article, introduce them to its theme by inviting them to consider which inventions of the last fifty years they think are the most important. Divide them into pairs and ask them to choose one that they agree on and to justify its significance to the group. If some students are lacking in ideas, you might write up on the board a few key inventions to consider.

Examples: the Internet; digital technology; mobile phone; high-speed transport; Sat Nav; wind-up radio; memory stick

Time: 10 mins

- 2** Pre-reading task. Hand out the article and worksheet. Ask students to look at the title and say what they think an 'invisibility cloak' could be used for. They could come up with both 'good' reasons (solving crime) and 'bad' ones (committing crime). If necessary, you might prompt them by asking them to consider the following areas: fighting crime; espionage; security; observing animals; observing teachers!

Time: 5 mins

Vocabulary (1): words in context

- 3** The article is lengthy with a lot of complex or potentially unfamiliar vocabulary that students

might find daunting. To pre-empt any difficulties, tell them that they are going to focus on some of the challenging words and phrases in the text. First, get students involved and focused on the reading process by asking them to read the first five paragraphs of the article quickly (i.e. skim for gist) and to answer question (a) on their worksheet, to check their general understanding.

Key: The American military and intelligence agencies.

Time: 10 mins

Now ask them to read the first five paragraphs again and complete (b). They should compare their findings with a partner.

Key:

- | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| 1 | to achieve (para 1) | = pull off |
| 2 | written (para 1) | = penned |
| 3 | stimulated (para 1) | = piqued |
| 4 | to make or cause (paras 2 & 3) | = render |
| 5 | hidden (para 3) | = concealed |
| 6 | item of clothing (para 3) | = garment |
| 7 | difficult to understand (para 5) | = hard to grasp |
| 8 | a small part of something bigger (para 5) | = the tip of the iceberg |

Time: 15 mins

Reading comprehension (1): expressing opinion

- 4** Tell students that the author uses the article to present his opinions on a variety of gadgets and technology, some of which are in use today, others which are being developed or are as yet pure fantasy. To help them focus on the author's views about them and to distinguish between real and imagined technology, ask them to read the paragraphs relating to the inventions in the table and then fill it in. Emphasise that they may need to put a tick ✓ in more than one column for each invention. Invite students first to compare answers in pairs and then ask the class to provide evidence for their answers from the text.

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THE INDEPENDENT

Key:

	Thinks it has a serious application	Is already in existence	Exists in science fiction only
X-ray Specs	x		x
Robot Servants	x	x	
Rocket Boots		x	
Videophones		x	
Tractor Beam	x	x	
Food Pills	x		

Time: 15 mins

Key:

LITERAL	IDIOMATIC
<i>flowing around</i> = moving like a liquid or gas	<i>grabs headlines</i> = causes press interest
<i>move beyond</i> = go further	<i>take the gold medal</i> = win the competition
<i>launched</i> = started	<i>take-up</i> = commercial sales
<i>striding</i> = walking with long steps	<i>get customers flocking</i> = cause many people to buy
<i>leaping about</i> = jumping energetically	<i>don't approach the horror</i> = are not nearly as terrible
<i>deflected</i> = turned aside	

Time: 20 mins

Vocabulary (2): literal and idiomatic expressions of movement

- 5 The article contains several expressions describing movement that are used literally or idiomatically. Idiomatic language occurs frequently in natural language, particularly in informal and spoken contexts, and it is important that students understand that language is often non-literal. Again, emphasise the challenge of this task. To sensitise the students to the task (and ensure they understand the meaning of 'idiomatic' and 'literal'), ask them to find the following two expressions and tell you what they mean. Are they being used literally or idiomatically in the text?

Key:

pull off (para 1) = to achieve (a difficult thing) – IDIOMATIC
bending (para 2) = forcing something from a straight to a curved line – LITERAL

Now ask students to look at the expressions in the left-hand column of Exercise 5 and find them in the article (they are in italics for ease of location). They should try to guess their meaning from context before attempting to match them with the meanings in the right-hand column.

Key: c 8, d 13, e 10, f 2, g 3, h 1, i 11, j 6, k 9, l 4, m 12

Students should now try to categorise them as either LITERAL or IDIOMATIC and complete the table.

Reading comprehension (2): true or false?

- 6 To encourage a more detailed reading of the article for specific sense, ask the students to look at the statements on their worksheets and decide if they are true or false. They should compare their answers in pairs and give evidence from the text.

Key:

- a True (para 1: ... *some of these futuristic gadgets or processes* ... *have piqued the human imagination sufficiently for extensive research* ... *to be done into their viability*.)
 b True (para 10: *The Holy Grail, for some reason, is to develop a robot that's as humanlike as possible*.)
 c False (para 12: ... *it's hard to believe they were originally intended for use by the Russian army*.)
 d False (para 14: ... *most people revert to the cheaper option* [i.e. standard calls].)
 e True (para 17: ... *one of the grimmer examples* ... *would be the inevitable consequence of the overpopulation of the planet*.)

Time: 15 mins

Discussion

- 7 To enable students to build upon what they have learned in the lesson and talk about their reading more broadly, ask them in pairs or small groups

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to evaluate the significance of the other human inventions listed on their worksheets. They should (i) discuss the importance of the inventions, and (ii) order them in terms of their importance. The phrases provided on their worksheets will help them to present their opinions and agree/disagree more confidently (you may need to explain the more informal phrases). Allow a couple of minutes at the end to compare ideas.

Time: 10 mins

of it as 'The Greatest Invention of All Time'. These presentations could be given in a future lesson. Invite the class to vote on which invention they consider to be the greatest.

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Further work

- 8** Ask the students to choose one of the inventions in Exercise 7, or another of their choice, and to prepare a three/four-minute presentation in support