

## Bon voyage by Dan Cornford

<b>Age:</b>	Teenagers / Adults
<b>Level:</b>	Intermediate +
<b>Time:</b>	60 minutes
<b>Objectives:</b>	To collaborate to understand and retell travel anecdotes; to tell personal travel anecdotes
<b>Key skills:</b>	Reading for detail and to infer information; speaking
<b>Materials:</b>	One copy of Worksheet A, B or C per student; one extension worksheet per student (optional)

### Procedure

Fold the worksheets along the dotted lines so the glossaries are covered.

### Timetable fit

This lesson combines well with travel or holidays topics, can be used to study past narrative tenses and can serve as a resource to help students better understand how stories and anecdotes are told.

### Group numbers

Group numbers for stages 2 to 4 are not too important, although they should be small enough for each student to be able to contribute. For stage 5, groups of three are preferable, consisting of one student from each original group.

### Monitoring

In stages 2 and 3, monitor closely to check students' answers as they're working. Don't check the answers in open class as this will reveal the anecdotes before the students have a chance to retell them.

### Procedure

- Optional lead-in: Tell students a personal travel anecdote, similar to those in the lesson. Question the students to encourage interaction. For example, *What do you think happened next? How do you think I felt? What would you have done in my situation?*
- Reading 1: Divide the class into three groups: A, B and C. Explain that each group will read a different story and then answer some questions. Hand out Worksheet A to each student in group A,

Worksheet B to group B, and Worksheet C to group C. Students read their story individually, then answer the questions as a group.

**Key:** (Note: Some questions require students to infer information from the texts or to give their own opinions, so more than one answer is possible.)

**Group A (Tom's story):** 1. that he'd got off at the wrong station and that his train left from a different station; 2. that he needed to get to the other station as quickly as possible; 3. because he threw his bags onto the platform and shouted; 4. students' answers

**Group B (Ben's story):** 1. to find someone to help with the car; 2. because there was no one around in the street and he knocked on her door; 3. because there was a mechanic in the village who helped with the car; 4. students' answers

**Group C (Ella's story):** 1. that the weather in the mountains was bad for skiing; 2. because the visibility was very low and the coach was skidding on the road; 3. because her coach looked like it might fall off the edge of the road into the valley; 4. students' answers

- Reading 2: Ask students to unfold their worksheet, read the glossary and double check their answers as a group. Monitor to check answers with each group.
- Speaking 1: Give students a minute to read their story again in silence. Ask students to cover their story and retell the anecdote to each other in their groups.
- Speaking 2: Mix the groups so each new group contains one student from each original group. Ask students to tell their anecdote to their new group and, as a group, decide which was the most difficult situation and why. In open class, discuss the groups' decisions.
- Speaking 3: Give students a minute to think of any similar situations they have experienced. Ask students to discuss their experiences in groups and, again, decide who experienced the most difficult situation. In open class, discuss some of the students' anecdotes and provide language feedback.
- Optional extension: Ask students to read all three of the anecdotes on the Extension sheet, to look up any new vocabulary and to write some example sentences using the vocabulary. You could also ask students to write down their or a classmate's anecdote.

**Bon voyage! Group A**

Read the story and answer the following questions with your group.

1. What did the member of staff tell Tom?
2. What did Tom tell the taxi driver?
3. Why did the other people on the platform look at Tom?
4. What do you think of the story? How do you think Tom felt?

**Tom's story**

'I'd been to visit a friend in Berlin and was travelling by train all the way back to Lyon, in France, where I lived. I had to change in Basel, so got off and walked down to the ticket office. I couldn't find my next train on any of the screens, so asked a member of staff, who informed me that I'd got off at the wrong stop and that my train left from the *other* station in Basel. Panicking, I raced out of the station to a taxi, explained my situation in very bad German and jumped in. We sped across the city and I thought I'd made it, only to find the train pulling out as I ran onto the platform. I remember getting some very strange looks from the people around me as I threw my bags on the floor and shouted in frustration. Luckily, I was able to get another train later on and eventually got home after a tiring sixteen-hour journey.'

Look at the glossary. Does it help to answer the questions?

member of staff (n) - an employee in an organization

race (v) - to move quickly

speed (v) - to move quickly

make it (v, informal) - to achieve a goal; to be successful

pull out (ph v) - (of a bus or train) to leave with its passengers

**Bon voyage! Group B**

Read the story and answer the following questions with your group.

1. Why did Ben's dad leave the car?
2. Why did Ben's dad speak to an old Greek woman?
3. Why was Ben's family lucky?
4. What do you think of the story? How do you think Ben felt?

**Ben's story**

'I must have been nine or ten, and was on holiday with my parents in Greece. We'd hired a car for a few days and were driving through a tiny mountain village when the engine suddenly cut out and we came to a stop. None of us knew anything about cars and we had no idea what the problem was so, in the end, my dad got out and went to find help. He said there was no one around so he resorted to knocking on a random door and then trying to explain the problem to an old Greek woman using hand gestures. As luck would have it, there was a mechanic in the village who she called to come and help us. He reckoned that the engine had overheated and that we just needed to wait. He was right – a few minutes later, we tried again and the car started straight away.'

Look at the glossary. Does it help to answer the questions?

cut out (ph v) - (of a motor or engine) to suddenly stop working

resort to something (v) - to do something extreme to resolve a difficult situation

random (adj) - chosen without method or conscious decision

reckon that (v) - think that; have the opinion that

overheat (v) - to become too hot

**Bon voyage! Group C**

Read the story and answer the following questions with your group.

1. What bad news did Ella hear when she got on the coach?
2. Why was Ella surprised that the driver didn't stop?
3. Why was Ella so scared when the other coach appeared?
4. What do you think of the story? How do you think Ella felt?

**Ella's story**

'Some friends and I were going skiing for the day. When we got on the coach that would take us to the ski resort, they told us that the weather was quite bad in the mountains and that it probably wouldn't be a very good day for skiing. We were halfway up the tiny, winding mountain road to the resort when it started snowing and the temperature plummeted. Suddenly, we could hardly see a thing out of the windows and the coach started to skid on the road but, unbelievably, the driver kept going. The worst part was when another coach appeared in front of us, coming *down* the mountain. In order to make space, our coach pulled over to the right and I could see part of the tyres were over the edge of the road – there was no barrier, just a sheer drop into the valley below. I've never been so scared in my life!'

Look at the glossary. Does it help to answer the questions?

plummet (v) - to decrease quickly

skid (v) - to slide on slippery ground, or after stopping or turning too quickly

edge (n) - the limit of a surface or area

sheer (adj) - vertical, or nearly vertical

drop (n) - a sudden, steep slope

**Bon voyage! Extension****Tom's story**

'I'd been to visit a friend in Berlin and was travelling by train all the way back to Lyon, in France, where I lived. I had to change in Basel, so got off and walked down to the ticket office. I couldn't find my next train on any of the screens, so asked a member of staff, who informed me that I'd got off at the wrong stop and that my train left from the *other* station in Basel. Panicking, I raced out of the station to a taxi, explained my situation in very bad German and jumped in. We sped across the city and I thought I'd made it, only to find the train pulling out as I ran onto the platform. I remember getting some very strange looks from the people around me as I threw my bags on the floor and shouted in frustration. Luckily, I was able to get another train later on and eventually got home after a tiring sixteen-hour journey.'

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