

Level: Intermediate (B1)

Age: Teenagers

Time: This lesson can be divided up in various ways to suit the time you have with your students. Below are two time options you can choose from depending on the length of your class. However, these are just suggestions and there are plenty of other ways you could divide the lesson up.

90 minutes – Complete all activities in The 1900 house and The 2150 house.

45 minutes – Complete all activities in The 1900 house or The 2150 house.

Summary: This lesson is divided into two sections: The 1900 house and The 2150 house. Students will (depending on the length of the lesson):

- 1 read about life in the year 1900;
- 2 compare the past, present, and future.

Key skills: Reading, speaking, writing

Subskills: Comparatives; important areas of life; talking about the past, present, and future

Materials: One copy of each worksheet per student

THE 1900 HOUSE

1 Ask students to think about how a house in 1900 would have been different from a contemporary house. Have the students suggest differences, and write their ideas on the board. For example, *open fires instead of central / electric heating*.

2 Hand out the 1900 house worksheets and refer students to the Phrasebook. Go through the language with them. Put students in pairs and tell them to discuss what they would miss if they lived in a 1900 house. They should come up with a list of the three things they would miss the most, using the language from the box to aid their discussion. Then, ask each pair to present some of their ideas, again using the new language.

3 Tell students they are going to read a text about a house from the past. They must read the first section of the text (The television series) and answer questions a to c from Activity 1.

Key: a. a television series in which a family had to live in a 1900 house; b. They got up at 5:30 and tried to light fires and do chores. In the evenings, they played games by gaslight; c. Mrs. Bowler: soft toilet paper, shampoo, detergent, the washing machine; Mr. Bowler: the telephone, comfortable clothes; Joe: sweets, video games; Kathryn: cosmetics, pop music

4 Check over the answers together. In the final question, see if the things the family missed are the same as the things the students said they would miss. Has the text made them change their minds?

5 Tell students that before they read the next section of the text, they must predict how life has changed since 1900 in the following areas (which are reproduced on the worksheet). Students can discuss their predictions in pairs or as a whole class:

- life expectancy
- types of illnesses
- size of families
- number of cars
- climate
- problems in schools

6 If students worked in pairs, ask them for feedback on their predictions. Students then read the next section of the text about life in 1900 (What was life like in 1900?) to see if their predictions were correct. They complete the table on the worksheet with the changes mentioned in the article.

Key: **life expectancy** – 1900: men 45; women 49; **types of illnesses** – 1900: tuberculosis and pneumonia / influenza; today: heart disease and cancer; **size of families** – 1900: 4.6 people; today: 2.4 people; **number of cars** – today: 70 percent of households have a car; **climate** – today:

average temperatures in southern England are higher: snow in London is rare; **problems in schools** – 1900: classes too large; shortage of trained teachers; high levels of truancy

7 Tell students to cover their worksheets. Test their memories on how life has changed in the listed areas.

THE 2150 HOUSE

1 Students work in pairs or small groups to design the house of the future. They can write a description of the house and could include a picture. When they have finished, ask them to present the house to the others in the class, explaining the features, appearance, and so on.

2 Refer students to Activity 2 on the worksheet. Then, go through the Phrasebook with them, which gives them ways to talk about the past, present, and future. Now, tell them to discuss the opinions in small groups, making use of the language provided.

HOMEWORK TASK

Set up a class project about the area the students live in. Students find out about different aspects of the place they live in from a hundred years ago and compile the information in the form of a wall display or book. Give each student or pair of students one or more areas to research – you can use the list from Activity 1.

THE 1900 HOUSE



PHRASEBOOK

Expressing preferences

- Life would be tough / hard without ...
- There's no way I could live without ...
- ... is something I definitely could not do without.

Things you could live without

- I wouldn't miss ...
- ... makes life more comfortable, but I could live without it.
- I don't think I would have any problem adapting to life without ...

1 Read the first section of the text (The television series). Answer the questions.

a What was *The 1900 House*?

b How did the Bowler family spend their mornings and evenings?

c What did they miss?

2 Read the second section of the text (What was life like in 1900?). Make notes on how life has changed since 1900 in the following areas.

life expectancy	
types of illnesses	
size of families	
number of cars	
climate	
problems in schools	

THE TELEVISION SERIES



The 1900 House was the title of a television series in which a family had to live in the past for three months to compare life in 1900 with life in the present.

Living on a budget of £4 per week, the Bowler family got up at 5:30 each morning and spent most of their time trying to light fires and do household chores, including spending hours preparing meals. There was no electricity, so they had to spend the evenings playing games by gaslight.

At the end of the experiment, they were asked what they missed most about modern life and the answers were revealing: Mrs. Bowler chose soft toilet paper, shampoo, detergent, and the washing machine; her husband, Paul, chose the telephone and comfortable clothes; Joe (age 9) went for sweets and video games; and Kathryn

(age 16) chose cosmetics and pop music. None of them, however, chose television!

WHAT WAS LIFE LIKE IN 1900?

In 1900, men in Britain could expect to live only to age 45, while for women it was 49. There have also been significant changes in the types of illnesses that people die from. Tuberculosis and pneumonia or influenza killed the most people in 1900; today, the killers are heart disease and cancer.

People now live longer and are wealthier, but families have become smaller. In 1900, with larger families and with servants, the average household in Britain contained 4.6 people, compared with 2.4 people today.

Another feature of the 20th century has been the growth in car ownership and usage. The first British car appeared four years before the century began. Seventy per cent of households now have at least one car.

The climate has also changed. Average temperatures in southern England have risen dramatically, and snow in London is now rare.

As for education, concerns at the turn of the century included unacceptably large class sizes (many schools had more than 50 pupils in each classroom), an acute shortage of trained teachers, and high levels of truancy!

THE 2150 HOUSE

1 A lot has changed since 1900. Look at the list below and think of how life has changed in each of the different areas over that time. Then, try to imagine: what will a 2150 house be like?

- communications
- education
- employment
- entertainment
- environment
- exploration
- fashion
- finance
- food
- health
- home and family
- human rights
- medicine
- politics
- science
- technology
- travel
- world conflict

NOTES



PHRASEBOOK



Talking about the past, present, and future

The past

- Back in the year 1900, ...
- In the olden days, ...

The present

- Nowadays, ...
- These days, ...

The future

- In a hundred years' time, ...
- Looking ahead, ...

2 Discuss the following opinions.

Life now is better than it was a hundred years ago.

Progress is always positive.

Young people face more problems now than they did a hundred years ago.

People don't change.

Life in the future will be easier than it is now.

