

Film and TV

Film / Thrillers

Teacher's notes



Age: Teenagers/Adults
Level: Pre-intermediate (A2)
Time: 90+ minutes (plus an optional writing exercise for homework)

- Activity:** In this lesson, students will:
1. practise speaking about feelings related to stress and excitement;
 2. improve listening comprehension of real-life English from a film trailer and a film clip;
 3. focus on useful new vocabulary related to fear, danger and crime;
 4. utilise new language from this lesson in order to invent a plot for a thriller.

Language focus: speaking, listening, vocabulary, reading, writing

Materials: one copy of the worksheet per student, a computer or projector, an internet connection in the classroom (students may wish to use smartphones to find the titles of certain movies in their own languages)

students know that they shouldn't worry if they find the lesson challenging or if they hear certain words that they don't understand.

3. This lesson contains exercises which focus on listening, speaking, reading and vocabulary. If you wish to maximise class time for listening and speaking, you could ask students to complete the reading and vocabulary exercises as preparatory homework before the lesson. It would then only be necessary to quickly correct these parts in class. The exercises which could be done as preparatory homework are marked with a symbol:

1. Vocabulary (5 minutes)

Aims: to create interest in the topic of the lesson, to provide students with vocabulary to describe feelings which arise from watching thriller films.

Procedure: Ask students to look at the two images on the worksheet. Elicit an adjective to complete the sentence for the first image (e.g. 'Susan is feeling nervous'). Then give students about a minute to speak in pairs and brainstorm as many adjectives as possible to describe the two images. Monitor the class as they do this and help weaker students by providing some of the beginning letters for possible adjectives. Elicit suggestions from the class and write them on the board. If students have only had limited suggestions, add in a few of your own. The suggestions should highlight the difference in mood between the two images (unpleasant emotions vs pleasant emotions). Focus on the correct pronunciation of the suggested adjectives.

Key (suggested answers):
Susan is feeling: nervous/worried/anxious/scared/unhappy
Isaac is feeling: excited/glad/thrilled/happy/enthusiastic

2. Speak (10 minutes)

Aims: to personalise and develop interest in the topic of the lesson (thriller films and feeling nervous/excited), to provide spoken practice, to identify target language related to thrillers that students might already know

Procedure: Ask students to discuss the questions in pairs. Monitor their responses. If there are students who have not seen any thrillers, encourage them to talk about a thriller novel or perhaps about a situation from their own lives when they had to deal with nerves and stress. At the end

Notes:

1. **WARNING:** This lesson refers to two online videos related to thrillers. The first video (a trailer for the film *Non-Stop*) contains some mildly graphic content: we see a very brief glimpse of a man who has been murdered and a gun appears at various points throughout. You should watch the trailer before the lesson to judge whether it is appropriate for your particular group of students.
2. This lesson is aimed at lower-level learners (approximately A2). However, certain vocabulary from this lesson would typically belong at higher levels. This is because the videos referred to are authentic and therefore not graded for language learners. You may wish to let students know that a small number of words from the lesson (e.g. 'to hijack', 'to stalk') are from a higher level. Let





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of the activity give some feedback, drawing attention to good language which students used. Focus particularly on language that was used which will be useful for the lesson (film vocabulary, feelings).

3. Vocabulary, listen and speak (25 minutes)

Aims: to study crime-related vocabulary which will help students to understand a short video, to provide listening practice, to understand a basic film plot, to provide speaking practice on topics related to crime, thrillers and stress

Procedure: Ask students to work in pairs. Give them a few minutes to complete 3a, the vocabulary task. Monitor as they do this and help weaker students. Finally, elicit the correct answers and focus on pronunciation of new words.

Key:

Vocabulary	Definition
1. an air marshal	(5) to rescue
2. to kill	(3) a false situation which makes a good, honest person seem bad and dishonest
3. a set-up	(4) to take control of an aeroplane/ train/car (this action is a crime)
4. to hijack	(1) a police officer who works as a security guard on aeroplanes
5. to save	(6) a person who has broken the law
6. a criminal	(2) to end the life of somebody or something

Ask students to read the five True/False sentences in ask 3b. They should do this in pairs and help each other to understand the sentences. Play the video ('Non-Stop – Trailer: Universal Pictures' www.youtube.com/watch?v=nODrjQUR5YU) and ask students to briefly compare answers to the five questions. Play it again and let students decide their final answers. Finally, elicit the answers.

Key:

- a. True – he says that he hates flying
- b. False – the criminal says that he/she will kill a person every twenty minutes
- c. False – the criminal wants one hundred and fifty million dollars

d. False – the criminal wants the money to go to the air marshal's bank account.

e. True – the FBI think that the air marshal has hijacked the plane

Ask students in pairs to discuss the questions in Task 3c. Give feedback. Focus on ideas students have mentioned that will be relevant to the following activity (related to film plots and crime).

4. Read and vocabulary (15 minutes)

Aims: to understand short film blurbs, to revise and expand vocabulary related to crime and stressful situations

Procedure: Tell students that they are going to read short blurbs about different thrillers. Their task will be to match the film title* to the blurbs. For students who are not familiar with these films, tell them that some of the titles themselves contain enough information to make a guess.

(*Note: Students may wish to know the movie titles as they were marketed in their own countries. If teaching a class with shared L1, you could do a Google search and show the translated film titles on the board. If teaching a class with diverse L1s, students could use their smartphones to find the translated film titles.)

Give students a few minutes to match the titles. Tell the students not to worry for now about difficult vocabulary from the blurbs (this is the focus of Task 4b). Monitor and help weaker students. Once completed, ask students to compare their answers in pairs. Finally, elicit the answers and focus on correct pronunciation.

Key:

Film 1: The Silence of the Lambs, Film 2: Get Out, Film 3: Jaws, Film 4: Black Swan, Film 5: The Girl on the Train

Now ask students to look at Task 4b. Tell them that they have about five minutes to complete the table. Remind them that all the answers come from the blurbs in 4a. Monitor and help weaker students by telling them which blurb they will find each word in. Finally, elicit the answers and focus on correct pronunciation.

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Key:

Definition	Word/Expression from the blurb
to find a solution	(to) solve
a fictional character, e.g. in a film, book or play	role
the red liquid in the bodies of humans and animals	blood
somebody who has killed more than one person (in separate crimes)	(a) serial killer
a big, dangerous animal that lives in the sea and eats other animals	(a) shark
somebody who thinks in a strange way and who is usually dangerous	(a) psychopath
very dangerous, possibly causing death	deadly
right now, with no waiting	immediately

5. Vocabulary, listen and speak (25 minutes)

Aims: to study vocabulary (for relationships and crimes) which will help students to understand a short video, to provide listening practice, to understand a short film scene, to provide speaking practice on topics related to crimes and thrillers

Procedure: Ask students to work in pairs. Give them a few minutes to complete 5a, the vocabulary task. Monitor as they do this and help weaker students. Finally, elicit the correct answers and focus on pronunciation of new words.

Key:

1. end, 2. leave, 3. watch, 4. tell, 5. find, 6. has

Ask students to read the five True/False sentences in Task 5b. They should do this in pairs and help each other to understand the sentences. Play the video* ('Gone Girl – Nick at Desi's House Clip: 20th Century Fox' www.youtube.com/watch?v=GldhXAc7atE) and ask students to briefly compare answers to the five questions. Play it again and let students decide their final answers. Finally, elicit the answers.

(*Note: When playing the video, make sure to stop at the end of the scene (when the time is at 1:00). After this, the video goes into a brief general promotion for the film which includes a mildly aggressive scene.)

Key:

- a. False – they have already met at a volunteer centre
- b. False – he found the address in a letter that the man had written
- c. False – they were together for two years
- d. True – the woman says that the blonde man stalked her and threatened her
- e. True – the husband says that he has come to the man's house because he thinks there might be another side to the story

Ask students in pairs to discuss the questions in Task 5c. Explain, if necessary, the meaning of 'spoilers' (information that gives away the plot of a story to those who might not know it). Give feedback, perhaps focusing on the correct use of new words from previous tasks.

6. Speak and write (10 minutes, plus optional short writing homework)

Aims: to consolidate new language from the lesson, to provide spoken and written practice of language related to thriller films movies, to create a written piece which will aid long-term recall of language from the lesson

Procedure: Divide students into groups of three or four. Ask students to read the worksheet instructions for Task 6a. Elicit a brief example of an imaginary plot (example: 'Let's say the film is going to happen in a prison. There's a psychopath. What should we call the psychopath? Ok, let's call him Harold. Who is going to be Harold's victim?', etc). Give the groups a few minutes to come up with ideas for their imaginary plots. Monitor as they do this to make sure they have understood the task correctly and to help with language.

Ask the students to individually write the blurbs for their invented thriller plots. They should do this for homework to be handed in for correction in the next class. Remind them to include new language they have studied in this lesson.

If your students write any blurbs which are particularly original or well-written, encourage them to share them on social media, using the hashtag #onestopthrillers. Make sure they come to our attention by mentioning @onestopenglish on Facebook or Twitter.



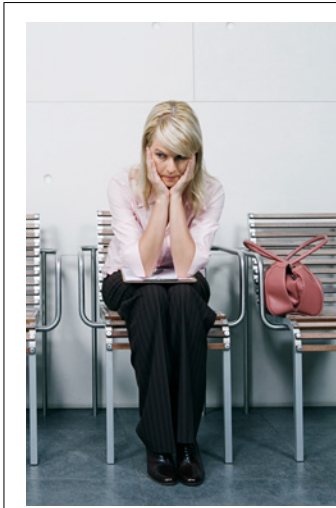
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Worksheet

1. Vocabulary

Look at the two pictures. Suggest some words to complete the sentences.



Susan has an important exam today.

She is feeling ...



Isaac is going on holiday to Thailand tomorrow.

He is feeling ...

2. Speak

Discuss the questions below with your classmate.

a. Which of these situations make you feel nervous? Explain.

- doing an exam
- giving a presentation or a speech
- travelling a long distance
- meeting somebody for a romantic date
- going to a big party or social event
- doing a job interview

b. A *thriller* film is usually about a crime or a dishonest plan. It makes the audience feel nervous but also excited. Can you think of an example of a thriller film? Explain the story.

c. Why do many people like watching thrillers?



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Worksheet

3a. Vocabulary

In a moment, you will watch a trailer for a thriller. To help you to understand the video, first match the vocabulary to the definitions.

Vocabulary	Definition
1. an air marshal	(5) to rescue
2. to kill	() a false situation which makes a good, honest person seem bad and dishonest
3. a set-up	() to take control of an aeroplane/train/car (this action is a crime)
4. to hijack	() a police officer who works as a security guard on aeroplanes
5. to save	() a person who has broken the law
6. a criminal	() to end the life of somebody or something

3b. Listen

Watch this trailer for the movie *Non-Stop* (2014). This is a thriller about an air marshal who discovers a big problem while he is working on an aeroplane.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=nODrjQUR5YU

Listen carefully. Decide if the sentences below are True or False.

- The air marshal doesn't like travelling by aeroplane.
- If the criminal doesn't receive money, he/she will kill the pilot.
- The criminal wants to receive one hundred million dollars (\$100,000,000).
- The criminal wants the money to go to a secret bank account.
- The authorities think that the air marshal is responsible for the problem.

3c. Speak

Discuss with your classmate:

How do you usually feel when you travel by plane?

Have you seen any other films about aeroplanes? If so describe the story.
(e.g. *Alive* (1993); *Air Force One* (1997); *Snakes on a Plane* (2006); *The Aviator* (2014); *Sully* (2016))

Why do you think it's common to make films about travelling by aeroplane?



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Worksheet

4a. Read

A blurb is a short text which describes the basic idea of a movie. Read the five blurbs below and match them to the correct film titles.

Film titles:

Jaws (1975) / The Girl on the Train (2016) / The Silence of the Lambs (1991) / Black Swan (2010) / Get Out (2017)

Film 1: _____

Some women have disappeared in the state of Baltimore (USA). To find information, a young, female agent from the FBI needs to do interviews with a famous **serial killer**. This man is very intelligent, but also a **psychopath**. Can the agent **solve** the mystery before another woman dies?

Film 2: _____

A young man travels to the countryside with his girlfriend to meet her parents. He is African-American and she is white. When they arrive at her parents' house, he notices that the parents seem to treat African-American people in an unusual way. He thinks that perhaps he needs to leave this strange house – **immediately!**

Film 3: _____

It's the middle of a long, hot summer on Amity Island when the police find a dead body on the beach. It seems that there's a **shark** in the water. Three men go to sea to try to catch the **deadly** animal. But when they finally see the shark, they quickly realise that they're going to need a bigger boat ...

Film 4: _____

A young dancer is very excited when a director chooses her to play an important **role** in a famous ballet. However, the role requires her to show both her good side and her dark side. When the director tells her that she needs to show more of her dark side, she becomes obsessed and she begins to lose control of her life.

Film 5: _____

A woman travels to New York every day for her job. While travelling, she passes her ex-husband's house and watches him and his neighbours. One morning, the woman wakes up covered in **blood**. She was drinking alcohol the night before and can't remember anything. She then hears on the news that one of the neighbours has disappeared ...



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Worksheet

4b. Vocabulary

Look at the words/expressions in bold in the blurbs above. Now match each word/expression to its definition below.

Definition	Word/Expression from the blurb
to find a solution	(to) <i>solve</i>
a fictional character, e.g. in a film, book or play	
the red liquid in the bodies of humans and animals	
somebody who has killed more than one person (in separate crimes)	
a big, dangerous animal that lives in the sea and eats other animals	
somebody who thinks in a strange way and who is usually dangerous	
very dangerous, possibly causing death	
right now, with no waiting	

5a. Vocabulary

In a moment, you will watch a scene from a thriller. Complete the definitions below with the correct verb from the box.

Verbs:	tell	leave	end	has	watch	find
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1. to *break up* = to end a romantic relationship
2. to *dump* somebody = to _____ your boyfriend/girlfriend/husband/wife
3. to *stalk* somebody = to secretly follow or _____ somebody in an obsessive way
4. to *threaten* somebody = to _____ somebody that you will hurt him/her
5. to be *missing* = nobody can _____ you
6. 'there's another side to the story' = 'the situation _____ different interpretations'



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Worksheet

5b. Listen and speak

Watch this scene from *Gone Girl* (2014). This is a movie about a woman who disappears. In this scene, her husband visits her ex-boyfriend to try to find information.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=GldhXAc7atE

Listen carefully. Decide if the sentences below are True or False.

- This is the first time that the two men have met.
- The husband found the blonde man's address on the internet.
- The wife and the blonde man were in a relationship for five years.
- When the relationship ended, the blonde man reacted very badly.
- The husband doesn't believe everything that his wife has told him.

5c. Speak

Discuss with your classmate:

How do you think the story continues in the movie *Gone Girl*? (If you have seen the movie, describe it a little – but no spoilers!)

Describe some reasons why people disappear.

Can you think of any examples of people who have disappeared? (This could be a news story from your country or a story from a movie/TV.)

6a. Speak

Work in small groups. Imagine that you are Hollywood producers. Each group needs to invent an idea for a new thriller. Select one item from each column in the table below. Then decide the basic story of the film.

The film happens:	The story includes a:	The main victim is:	The main hero is a/an:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> on a plane in a small town at sea in a prison on a train 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> hijacking psychopath shark stalker missing person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an old man a young woman a group of passengers the president of a country the ex-husband 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> police officer air marshal wife little dog ballet dancer

