

Teaching phrasal verbs using equivalents/definitions

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Many phrasal verbs can be said or written another way. This can be a Latinate one-word equivalent (to *put out a fire* is to *extinguish a fire*) or by a series of words (to *get on well with* someone is to *have a good relationship with* someone). Whether it is one or several words, many learners of English tend to favour the non-phrasal verb equivalent. This often makes them sound formal (“*Can I remove my shoes?*”) and sometimes inappropriate (“*Just a minute, let me extinguish my cigarette*”). It is important to point out to learners that phrasal verbs are often a more informal way of saying something, and as such they are more common in spoken English than in written English. When teaching phrasal verbs according to their equivalents, it is not enough just to have a simple matching exercise. There must be some opportunity to use the language. In this lesson the phrasal verbs and their equivalents are all personalised with a **Find Someone Who** activity.

Level: Intermediate and above

Aim: To present and practise 12 phrasal verbs

Stage One:

Distribute the worksheets and explain the **Find Someone Who** activity. The learners must go around the class asking each other questions to find a person who fits one of the sentences. When they find that person, they write their name in the space. Write the first two sentences on the board and elicit the question for each (*Do you recover from illnesses very quickly? Do you often begin arguments with strangers?*) Tell them that they cannot have the same name written down more than two times during this exercise. Instruct everyone to stand up and begin the activity.

Stage Two:

After five to seven minutes, stop the activity and ask learners to sit down. Do some feedback on the activity, asking what learners found out about each other. Tell them that today they are going to learn some phrasal verbs related to the **Find Someone Who** activity they have just completed.

Stage Three:

Distribute the second worksheet. Ask learners to match the phrasal verb to its equivalent. To help them, each phrasal verb is listed with some common collocations (words that go with other words). Tell learners that they can look at their original **Find Someone Who** worksheet for more help.

Answers: a) 8 b) 1 c) 2 d) 7 e) 9 f) 12 g) 10 h) 3 i) 4 j) 11 k) 6 l) 5

Stage Four:

Write on the board the following phrasal verbs: bump into, get over, launch into, get on well with, give back, put out, talk over, bring up, put off, take off, look into, take down. Tell learners to rewrite the completed sentences from the first worksheet using the phrasal verbs on the board. **Tell them that they must try to do this without referring back to the second worksheet.**

Answers: ____ gets over illnesses very quickly; ____ often launches into arguments with strangers; ____ borrows things but sometimes doesn't give them back; ____ has looked into changing jobs/schools recently; ____ gets on well with his/her brothers and sisters; ____ was brought up in the countryside; ____ puts everything off until the last minute; ____ likes to talk things over before making a decision; ____ never takes down notes in class; ____ bumped into an old friend last week; ____ has put out a fire; ____ doesn't take off their socks when they go to bed

Stage Five: Ask learners to write an original sentence about themselves using each of the phrasal verbs in their notebooks. Learners could do this for homework.

Find someone who...

_____ recovers from illnesses very quickly. He/she is a very healthy person.

_____ often begins arguments with strangers.

_____ borrows things but sometimes doesn't return them.

_____ has investigated changing jobs/schools recently.

_____ has a good relationship with his/her brothers/sisters.

_____ was raised in the countryside.

_____ postpones everything until the last minute.

_____ likes to discuss things before making a decision.

_____ never writes notes in class.

_____ met an old friend by chance last week.

_____ has extinguished a fire.

_____ doesn't remove their socks when they go to bed.

12 PHRASAL VERBS

A. Look at the phrasal verbs below. Each phrasal verb is followed by a word or words that commonly go together with it. Can you match the phrasal verb in the first list to the equivalent word in the second list? Look back at Worksheet #1 to help you.

1. **Get over** an illness, a broken heart
2. **Launch into** an argument, a discussion
3. **Give back** some money, a library book
4. **Look into** a problem, a crime, a decision
5. **Get on well with** your family, your boss
6. **Bring up** a son, daughter
7. **Put off** homework, a decision
8. **Put out** a cigarette, a fire
9. **Talk over** a problem, an important decision
10. **Take down** notes in class, personal information about someone
11. **Take off** your shoes, clothes
12. **Bump into** an old friend

- a) ___ extinguish
- b) ___ recover from
- c) ___ begin
- d) ___ postpone
- e) ___ discuss
- f) ___ meet by chance
- g) ___ write
- h) ___ return
- i) ___ investigate
- j) ___ remove
- k) ___ raise
- l) ___ have a good relationship with

B. Now rewrite the sentences in worksheet #1 using the phrasal verbs you have learnt.