

Weddings: Teachers' notes and tips – elementary

1 Pre-reading tasks

- a Write *I do* on the board. When is this little phrase very important for some people? Elicit: during a wedding ceremony. What do other cultures say?
- b Then, if possible, show a wedding scene from a film or TV series. Pick a scene where something unusual happens and ask students to guess / remember what comes next.
- c You could talk about films that show wedding scenes – how realistic are they? Did the sun always shine?!
- d Or perhaps if you come from a different country from your students bring some photos of a wedding you've been to (your own?) and encourage students to ask you questions about the day. It could also be the wedding of a famous person, perhaps royalty.

Tip: use the video to create interest

For example both *The One with Ross's Wedding* from *Friends* (season 4) and *Four Weddings and a Funeral* have scenes where something goes wrong in the church.

Tip: motivate the students

This is a huge topic. It's really worth spending at least 10 minutes on weddings before students start doing the reading tasks, they'll then be much more interested in the content. Opportunities to personalize the topic helps too – most people love talking about their wedding day!*

2 First reading tasks

- a Ask students what *to scan a text* means. Clarify that it is to read a text quickly to find particular information. A good example is the world weather in a newspaper. If you want to know what the weather is like in Zimbabwe you don't look at the information about Algeria, Brazil or Cuba first. You go straight to Zimbabwe.
- b Tell students they're going to read about six women who describe a special custom that happens when people get married in their country. The task is to scan the texts and to find the names of seven countries *only*. There is no need to read the information. Give a prize to the first student who answers correctly.
- c Feedback (from the student of course): Germany, Colombia, Turkey, Kenya and Tanzania, China, the US.

Tip: encourage different reading skills

Students are often asked to scan something without knowing what this means or why they have to do it. Think of some other examples where scanning skills are important (the cost of a show, the time a film starts, a name in a newspaper article...)

3 Second reading tasks

- a Then explain to students that the last line from each paragraph is missing. Handout the worksheet. Students read the texts and match a sentence with a paragraph. Get them to compare their answers with another student.
- b Feedback: d f a e b c

4 Third reading tasks

- a Ask students to look at question 2. Get them to correct the sentences which are false, and as always to compare their answers with another student.
- b Feedback: **a** false, they're all married **b** false, everyone has a civil wedding **c** true **d** false, they write in the bride's shoes **e** false, it goes to her husband **f** false, they give hankies with ducks on **g** true

Tip: encourage students to react to the text

Which sounds the most romantic? The most fun? The silliest? Do they approve of being able to get married so quickly?

5 Post-reading tasks – vocabulary

- a Ask students to look through all the texts – how many words or phrases can they find connected to weddings? Who can find the most words?
- b Get students in small groups to check that they now understand all the words.

Tip: think about revising vocabulary

Using the words in the writing task helps, but think of other ways to revise new words. Perhaps a word game for the next lesson, a crossword puzzle for example. Or you could ask married students who have photos of their weddings to show the class and talk about the big day using the new vocabulary of course! (*Make sure this is not a repeat of the previous lesson though).

6 Post-reading tasks – writing

- a Students look at the table that has been filled in with information about a traditional wedding in the UK. Do tell students though that many couples choose just to have a civil wedding (in a registry office) and that different religions will have different kinds of ceremonies.
- b They then fill in the table for their own country. Point out that they are just making notes at this stage so they don't need to go into a lot of detail.
- c Finally, perhaps for homework, students write a paragraph about weddings in their country using the notes they made in the table.

7 Post-reading tasks – speaking / listening

- a Put students in pairs and ask them to take it in turns to read out and listen to each other's paragraphs. They should listen and ask questions to get further information. If they are from the same culture they can listen out for any differences.