

Hair: Teacher's notes and tips - upper intermediate

1 Pre-reading tasks

- a Ask students to each draw a picture of a young girl. Tell them it can be very simple - they have one minute to do this. When they have finished they turn the drawing over so no one can see it.
- b Meanwhile write the following list on the board and ask students, when they have done their drawings, if they know what they are:
- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>a bob</i> | <i>a mullet</i> |
| <i>an Afro</i> | <i>'short, back and sides'</i> |
| <i>a crew cut</i> | |

Tip: use pictures to bring the topic alive

If you can get pictures of each of the above hairstyles, that would be great - you can then ask students to match a name with a picture. Use different styles if you want.

- c Feedback: they are all hairstyles. Briefly explain what they look like. If students are interested, they can look the images up on the web.
- d Now ask students to turn over their drawings and to compare them. How many students drew the girl with long hair? Is long hair associated strongly with girls? Why or why not? Get students to consider these questions in pairs or small groups.
- e Ask for a short feedback on comments.

Tip: prepare students for the type of text they're going to read

Students will understand the text more if they've thought about the topic appropriately before hand.

- f Give each student a copy of the task sheet and make sure they are working in small groups. They need to look at the list of people and decide if they are associated with long or short hair and to add **L** or **S**. If there are problems with vocabulary, encourage them to ask each other first.
- g Get students to compare their answers with another group before doing a very quick feedback (but make time if there are any disagreements!).
- h The reading is full of information and ideas. Ask students to look at the second question - they need to spend a little time deciding what the writer will say about long or short hair in terms of religion, politics and culture. Refer to the list of people they put **L** or **S** beside, and their drawing of the young girl, too. Put students into small groups to share and discuss ideas.
- i Ask students to read a few sentences out and see if the others in the class agree.

Tip: encourage students to predict content

A magazine with this kind of article usually has pictures, captions and subheadings that give clear clues to the opinions expressed. In the absence of these, students can be helped to predict content through key words and ideas. Ask them to relate the topic to their own culture.

2 First reading tasks

- a Give each student a copy of the reading. They need to read as quickly as possible and see if their ideas are featured in the text.

Tip: provide appropriate first reading tasks

By looking out for their own ideas students will try to understand the main points made without stopping at unknown words.

- b Feedback: perhaps a pair who had all three of their ideas mentioned in the text could read those ideas out.

3 Second reading tasks

- a Students read the text again more slowly and answer question 3. They can either work individually and then compare their answers, or work in pairs.
- b Feedback: **a** obviously / I assumed / seemed to suggest **b** not an orange robe / not a monk / not incense sticks / not meditating **c** rejection (of worldly goods, looking sexually attractive/sex, vanity) **d** rebellion **e** shame / humiliation (loss of power) **f** because it's strange that the reason for hippies having long hair is the same as for skinheads having a shaved head (a rejection of traditional values) **g** because it's strange that the reason for Sikhs having long hair is the same as for monks having a shaved head **h** students' own answers.

Tip: provide tasks that aid rather than test comprehension

These questions help students to understand the comments put forward in the reading.

4 Post-reading tasks - speaking

- a Students, in small groups, answer the final questions on the task sheet.

5 Post-reading tasks - using the Internet

- a Those students who are interested in what the hairstyles mentioned at the start of the lesson look like can look them up on the web and bring them to show the others next class.
- b Perhaps students could find out about beards - the groups of people who have them and what is says about their religion, politics and culture.

Tip: choose post-reading tasks that are most appropriate for your class

If you have a younger class, they may be interested in finding out about Rastafarians and their dreadlocks, Punks and their spiky mohicans etc or what the latest pop star/football player hair fashions are called.