

Want to feel like a teenager again? Just dig out the books you were forced to read at school

Level 3: Advanced

Article summary: The article gives the author's opinion about a nostalgic way to remember your teenage years.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Simple verb tense review (present, past, future)

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- a. This activity aims to allow students to be nostalgic about their favourite childhood or teenage books. Encourage them to recall basic information about the characters and plot for those who haven't read the same books. Then, ask them why they liked that book or why it resonated with them.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. You may wish to mention that *bursary* is a very British term. In the US, you're more likely to hear *grant* or *scholarship* though you will find the Bursar's Office on university campuses, which collects tuition and fees.

Key:

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. <i>ill-fitting</i> | 9. <i>brevity</i> |
| 2. <i>armpits</i> | 10. <i>idiosyncrasies</i> |
| 3. <i>braces</i> | 11. <i>hipster</i> |
| 4. <i>interminable</i> | 12. <i>fever dream</i> |
| 5. <i>nuance</i> | 13. <i>adolescence</i> |
| 6. <i>prose</i> | 14. <i>contraceptive</i> |
| 7. <i>depiction</i> | 15. <i>cutlery</i> |
| 8. <i>bursary</i> | |

- b. Before reading the article carefully, students use some of the key words to fill the gaps in the sentences to ensure that they understand and know how the words are used in other contexts.

Key:

1. *interminable*
2. *adolescence*
3. *cutlery*

4. *armpits*
5. *braces*
6. *prose*
7. *bursary*
8. *brevity*
9. *contraceptive*
10. *nuance*

3. Comprehension check

- a. Students answer the questions based on the information in the article. They may do this in different ways, e.g., in item 1, they may say, 'Her perception changed because of her life experiences as an adult, such as travelling to Russia and being part of a union' or similar.

Key (suggested answers):

1. *her awareness of political nuance, the simplicity of the prose, the descriptions of the English countryside*
2. *She's been to Russia, joined a union, attended local-government meetings, and worked on a building site.*
3. *She was able to read it on a ferry trip to Dublin. It's not a long book.*
4. *Animal Farm*
5. *the view out of her English classroom on to the dinner hall, the Virginia Woolf poster on the wall, and the strange and starchy way my skirt folded under her knees*
6. *A Christmas Carol*
7. *that of journalist*
8. *The books will mean something different due to life experiences.*
9. *For Cat on a Hot Tin Roof: living in a small flat, having a bad boyfriend, and getting the wrong medicine. For Lord of the Flies, kids starting school, working in an office where a colleague replaces the cutlery, and being married for 12 years.*
10. *You'll be able to 'travel through time' because it brings back very clear memories from your teenage years.*

4. Key language

- a. The activity gives students an opportunity to practise reported speech changing the tenses from the original phrase, as well as any prepositions, pronouns, etc.

Want to feel like a teenager again? Just dig out the books you were forced to read at school

Level 3: Advanced

Key: (suggested answers)

1. *She said (that) re-reading Animal Farm was like turning the page of an old photo album.*
2. *She mentioned (that) since that first reading, she had actually been to Russia.*
3. *She wrote (that) she had managed to re-read the whole thing during one ferry ride to Dublin.*
4. *The author said (that) Animal Farm was not the only book that had shocked her with its apparent brevity.*
5. *She pointed out that she had never really read any other Victorian literature*

5. Discussion

- a. Students discuss the statements from the article and provide reasons for their opinions, referring to their own experiences whenever possible.

6. In your own words

- a. Ask students to research best-selling novels for adults, teenagers, and children. Ask them to answer one or more of the questions.
- b. Students could then present their reports to the class or share in small groups. Encourage students to share their opinions, give reasons to support their answers and ask their classmates follow-up questions.