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B2 First for Schools / C1 Advanced: vocabulary and speaking

Description

Students extend their vocabulary range with similes, using the structure *'as adjective as + noun'*. They match an adjective to a noun and then explain why they think that comparison fits. They then recall the items in a gapped task and use some of them in a freer speaking activity. (Some of the items provide a C1 level of challenge.)

Note to teachers: *You can use the lesson plan as a starting point and create your own PowerPoint slides to support the lesson. If you are teaching with an online platform, use the functionality that you have available to you.*

Time required:	*60 minutes (can be extended or shortened as required)*
Materials required:	▪ prepared presentation/PowerPoint ▪ student worksheet

Aims:	▪ *to develop students' awareness of similes* ▪ *to encourage discussion of the lexical items and cross-cultural comparison*

Procedure

Lesson Stages	Online options
Welcome students – ask them say hello to confirm they can see and hear you.	If your platform allows you to see your students, ask them to also wave and check everything is working as it should be.
Lead-in Play the short video from the link here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4qp_fNwIIOk** Elicit what the animal is and what it is doing. *Confirm: the animal is a hare. A hare is like a rabbit, but it is slightly larger and*	Responses can be typed or spoken.

with longer ears. Normally hares are quiet animals, and are difficult to see in the countryside, but in spring, mating season, their behaviour changes, and they can be seen running round the fields, jumping and fighting. Because this is such a huge change in behaviour, people say that hares in March are mad – and so someone can be described with 'as mad as a March hare'. Elicit the form (*as adjective as + noun*).	
Lesson focus Tell students that you will be looking at how English uses the structure *'as +adjective + as + noun'* (technically: a simile) to describe people. In the lesson, students will be building their range of descriptive vocabulary.	
Task Show students the worksheet and ask them to read it. (see below) Ask students to check unfamiliar words using the online dictionary **https://dictionary.cambridge.org/** (possible checking: a rake, a beetroot, stubborn, a post)	Students can type answers in the chat box or if you have sound, you can nominate individuals to give an answer
Students complete the task individually first, then peer check their answers.	Students can type answers in the chat box or speak up if your platform allows you to hear students. If your platform has breakout rooms, students can be put into pairs to discuss before sharing their answers. Time limits can also be set in the breakout room.
Feedback/checking as whole class Ask the students for some synonyms to develop the meanings: as good as gold = well-behaved; as cool as a cucumber = calm and relaxed in manner, unaffected by pressure). Encourage some critical thinking: why 'as deaf as a post'? why 'as good as gold'? (because of the duplication of the sound; same in 'pretty as a picture'.) (Mono- or multilingual classes: what simile does your first language use to express the same idea?)	Prepare the answer key on a presentation slide.
Practice 1 To help students use the newly-learned items in context, give them students some gapped sentences to complete. Show these one at a time. Compare answers to each one before moving onto the next: 1) Your nephew's as _____. Is he eating enough?	Students can write answers on a blank paper and hold up to the camera. Or you could use an online whiteboard like Padlet.

2) You'll need to speak up for grandma: she's _____. 3) I promise not to disturb you if I come in late. I'll be _____. 4) His suitcase wasn't heavy: it was _____. 5) Maria was so embarrassed, her face turned as _____.	
Practice 2 Ask students to engage with the rest of the similes by discussing the vocabulary at a personal level (see below). Encourage them to expand answers and ask their partner(s) questions.	Can be in a breakout room in pairs or threes.

Reflection and further study
 	
 Ask students to reflect on this activity.
 	
 o   What similes were new to you?
 	
 o   Which ones are particularly memorable and why?
 	
     Direct students to other online sites for practice of similes, for example
 	
     https://www.englishgrammar.org/simile/
 	
     https://speakspeak.com/english-grammar-exercises/intermediate/similes	

Worksheet: using similes. Describing people using 'as... as...'

Match the words in Column 1 with the words in Column 2 to make a comparison like '*as* mad *as* a March hare'. Try to find an explanation for each comparison: why have the items been paired together?!

Column 1	Column 2
a) as quiet as	i. a bird
b) as light as	ii. gold
c) as free as	iii. a mule
d) as thin as	iv. a cucumber
e) as cool as	v. a post
f) as stubborn as	vi. a feather
g) as deaf as	vii. a rake
h) as old as	viii. clockwork
i) as good as	ix. a beetroot
j) as pretty as	x. the hills
k) as regular as	xi. a picture
l) as red as	xii. a mouse

Speaking

Now, use the questions with a partner.

o   Tell me about someone you know who is ….

as old as the hills

as cool as a cucumber

as stubborn as a mule

o   Tell me about something that happens ….

as regular as clockwork

o Tell me about a place that you think is …..

as pretty as a picture

Teacher material

KEY

o *as quiet as A MOUSE*
o *as light as A FEATHER*
o *as free as A BIRD*
o *as thin as A RAKE*
o *as cool as A CUCUMBER*
o *as stubborn as A MULE*
o *as deaf as A POST*
o *as old as THE HILLS*
o *as good as GOLD*
o *as pretty as A PICTURE*
o *as regular as CLOCKWORK*
o *as red as A BEETROOT*