

Writing about yourself and your family

Topic: Writing / family vocabulary / *am* / *is* / *are* / contractions

Level: SfL E1/ Access 2 / CEFR A1

Time: 2.25 hours

Aims

- To develop students' ability to write a short text about family
- To learn and practise spelling family vocabulary e.g. *daughter*, *uncle*, *sister* etc.
- To practise using the verb 'to be' in positive sentences
- To form contractions of 'to be' in positive sentences, e.g. *I am* → *I'm*.

Introduction

This lesson presents an example text about family. Learners match sentence halves, and reorder jumbled sentences. There are exercises to review family vocabulary and practise the spelling, and to practise *am* / *is* / *are* and their contractions. Finally, the learners write their own text. Paper-based alternatives have been provided for some of the tasks. You might like to use these in a larger class so that all learners are involved in the activity.

The example text is also used in the reading module

(<http://esol.britishcouncil.org/beginners/question-words>) which you might like to do before this lesson, as it focuses on comprehension of the text.

You will need:

- Interactive whiteboard or projector to display the online module
- **Worksheet p1** (picture), displayed on whiteboard
- 2 large sheets of paper and 2 markers (optional)
- Mini whiteboard and dry-wipe pen for each learner
- **Worksheet p5 – 6** (writing frame and mindmap), one copy per learner, if needed
- lined paper.

For alternative paper-based activities:

- **Worksheet p2** (sentences), one per pair, cut into sentence halves
- **Worksheet p3** (text), one per learner
- Multiple pairs of scissors
- **Worksheet p4** (*am/is/are* gapfill), one copy per student.

Procedure

Warmer (5 mins)

- Show the picture of Rana from **Worksheet p1**.
- If students have done the reading lesson, elicit what they remember about her.
- If doing this lesson in isolation, invite predictions about her – her name, family, likes etc.

Task 1 – Text and vocabulary matching (5 mins)

- Display the text on the next slide.
- Play the audio and ask the learners to listen and read at the same time.
- Ask the class if their predictions were correct.
- Focus on individual words and elicit meaning as needed.
- Show **question 1** and ask the learners to work together to match the words and meanings.
- Drill the pronunciation and give further explanations as needed.

Task 2 – Matching sentence halves q2-3 (5 mins)

- Split the class into two teams and ask them to choose a name.
- Show **question 2** and ask four learners from the first team to come to the board one by one and match the four sentence beginnings and endings. The rest of their team can help them. Give the team two points if they complete the task successfully.
- Repeat with **question 3** and the second team.

Paper-based alternative:

- Give pairs the sentence halves from **Worksheet p2** and ask the students to match them.
- Give pairs the text from **Worksheet p3** to check, but explain that not every sentence from the text has been used.

Task 3 – Word order q4-7 (10 mins)

- For the next 4 questions, ask teams to take it in turns to send a volunteer to the board to drag and drop the words into the right order to make sentences.
- Give the team a point for every sentence they make correctly on the first attempt.

Paper-based alternative:

- Ask the pairs to cut one of the sentences into words
- Ask the learners to put the words in order and check with the text.
- Repeat with the rest of the sentences.

Differentiation – pair weaker students together, and make sure they keep the sentences separate. Pair stronger students together, and mix all the words from the three or four sentences.

Filler (optional) – Vocabulary game (10 mins)

- Ask the learners which people in her family Rana talks about (*husband, son and daughter*).
- Ask what other people there might be in her family, but don't let them tell you many.
- Give each team a large piece of paper and a marker.
- Set a timer for three minutes, and ask them to write as many family members as they can think of.
- Display their papers at the front of the class and award a point for every word listed which is correctly spelt, plus a bonus point for any word the other team didn't get, whether it is spelt correctly or not.

Task 4 – Vocabulary q8-9 (10 mins)

- Show **question 8** and ask four learners from the first team to take it in turns to match the words and meanings. Give them 2 points if they do this successfully the first time.
- Repeat with **question 9** and team two.
- You might want to elicit variants they might have heard, e.g. *granny, grandma, gran* etc.
- Show the next two slides and play the audio for learners to drill the pronunciation of the words chorally or individually.

Task 5 – Spelling q10–13 (10 mins)

- For the next 4 slides, play the audio and ask learners to write the word on their mini whiteboards.
- Ask them to discuss with their team which spelling they think is correct and hold it up.
- Award a point for each correct spelling.

Extension 1 - give teams more family words to spell

Extension 2 - ask learners to choose five words to practise using the 'Look Say Cover Write Check' method, then pairs give each other a spelling test.

Task 6 – am/is/are q14 (5 mins)

- Show **question 14** and elicit which word we use with 'I' (*am*).
- Show how to select this from the drop-down list.
- Ask teams to take it in turns to send someone to the board to select the correct word for the next six pronouns, and award a point for each correct one.

Task 7 – Contractions (10 mins)

- Show the next slide and talk the learners through how to make the contracted form.
- Elicit why the apostrophe is used.
- Ask the learners why they think Rana uses the short form.
- Discuss and answer the next two questions as a class.
- Show **question 17** and ask teams to write the contractions on their whiteboards, one per board if there are six people in the team.
- Ask them to hold up their boards and award half a point for each correct contraction.

Extension – do the same with negative forms (*I am not* → *I'm not* etc.)

Task 8 – am/is/are practice (5 mins)

- Show **question 18** and for each sentence ask teams to confer and write their answer on a mini whiteboard, and hold up for you to see. Award one point for every correct answer.

Paper-based alternative:

- Hand out **worksheet 4** and ask the learners to fill in the gaps and check with a partner.
- Invite a learner from each pair to type an answer into the box on **question 18**

Task 8 – Writing (20 mins)

- Give learners **Worksheet p5** and ask them to complete it with information about their own family.
- Tell learners who are single and / or have no children to cross through those sentences, but suggest they might like to write about a brother, sister or a friend.
- Then ask learners to write their text again on lined paper without looking at **Worksheet p5**, unless they need to.
-

Differentiation: Stronger learners might be able to write their text without a writing frame. Weaker learners can copy the writing frame. Some learners might find it useful to plan using the mindmap on **Worksheet p6**.

Cooler – Revision game (10 mins)

- Play ‘Smiley Face’ (a version of ‘hangman’). Draw a line of dashes on the board with a dash for each letter of one of the family words. Teams take it in turns to suggest a letter. If the letter is in the word, write it on the dash, if not, add to the team’s smiley face, in the order: face, eye, eye, nose, mouth, ear, ear, hair, hair, hair. If their face is drawn before the word is guessed, that team is out. The winning team is the first to guess the word.

Extension activities / Homework

- Mark the writing using a code, e.g. *sp*= spelling mistake. Take a sentence with an error from each piece of writing and type onto one sheet. Give a copy to each pair and ask the students to identify and correct the error. Discuss as a class. Then return the marked work and help the students self-correct. Give each learner a piece of praise and something you want them to improve next time, e.g. ‘*Good information. Next time, remember a capital letter after a full stop.*’
- Ask learners to bring a photograph of their family and make a class display with their texts and pictures.
- Complete the online module at home, to review.