

# Weekend

## Fay Weldon

### Teacher's Notes

This is a revised version of the original 2004 kit based on Fay Weldon's story, 'Weekend'.

The revision takes into account the evolving methodology of the BritLit project plus requests from teachers to make the journey through the materials easier. In the original kit, teachers were presented with around 35 hours of classroom material and were invited to select the pieces they wanted to use with their classes. In reality, it seems that many teachers were rather daunted by the prospect of choosing between some 45 pages of activities, worksheets and projects.

This revision offers a considerably shortened version of the kit, and consists of some pre-reading activities (considered the essential activity by the project team), some 'while reading' questions to consider, two follow up activities after the full text has been read and finally a rounding off or consolidation activity. All of this (excluding the reading of the text itself) should take between one and two hours to complete.

The wealth of additional materials from the original kit has not been lost, however. Most of this has been regrouped, revised and refreshed in the 'Supplementary Materials' file, which has its own Teachers Key. Teachers who wish to spend more time working with their students on the materials can dip into this resource and pull out what they require.

'Weekend' Activities kit:

1. **Pre-reading** (4 linked activities)
2. **While Reading** (textual intervention at 3 points)
3. **After Reading** (2 activities)
4. **Consolidation** (2 activities)

'Weekend' Supplementary Materials

1. **Pre-reading** (4 activities)
2. **After Reading** (6 activities)
3. **Consolidation** (3 activities)
4. **Next Steps** (Part of complementary story by Weldon)
5. **Word Work** (6 grammar and lexical activities, including **glossary**)
6. **Teachers key**

We are always pleased to hear from teachers suggesting changes and improvements. Contact [brit.lit@pt.britishcouncil.org](mailto:brit.lit@pt.britishcouncil.org)

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Porto  
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## KEY

### 1. Pre-reading

1. Clearly the author is making a link between Martin's 'sporty' car and Martha's 'old estate car' and the owners. Martha seems to accept the association on one level. Generally the positive adjectives would be associated with Martin (in this context) and the more negative ones with Martha. (Remind students that this isn't their interpretation of the description that matters but what Martha probably thinks about herself)

Martin: Clever, Extrovert, Friendly, Funny, Interesting, Popular, Quick, Witty

Martha: Complaining, Dull, Introvert, Paranoid, Slow, Worried

(Lonely doesn't appear to fit anywhere).

2. 'Martha, you can't not want roses' Roses and grass and books.

Martha is more concerned with the work that roses, lawns and books bring than their aesthetic charm.

The rest of the family laugh at Martha and think she is being silly.

3. This is a student lead activity with no right or wrong answers. This should lead onto a discussion about women working.

4. Students are invited to imagine the next part of the story with the evidence they are given, both in the form of what they already know of the main characters, and the questions they have to answer (imagination only!) 4a) – 4g)

### 2. While Reading

1. (first question) Speculation. Is Katie to be trusted in the kitchen?

(second question) Martha feels a little threatened by Katie, while she doesn't think highly of her. Martin is somewhat enchanted – and jealous of his friend.

2. Speculation

3. Perhaps Martha is seeing her daughter become herself, and she remembers her mother's dark influence. Wife, mother, friend could refer to Martha and to Jenny.

## CONTEXT

**Are You Sexist?** This is a simple quiz, which could be done either individually or asking answering questions in pairs. A variation on either way is for each member of the class to predict what the result for another will be, and then to compare prediction with reality. A useful follow up exercise is to work out what each question is trying to find out.

**Key:** Score as follows:

1/ a-15 b-10 c-5

2/ a-15 b-10 c-5

3/ a-15 b-5 c-10

4/ a-15 b-10 c-5

5/ a-10 b-15 c-5

6/ a-10 b-5 c-15

7/ a-15 b-10 c-5

8/ a-15 b-10 c-5

9/ a-15 b-10 c-5

10/a-5 b-15 c-10

125-150 points. Oh dear! You need to take a look at male and female stereotypes.

Remember you can be chivalrous without being sexist.

75-120 points. Confused? Aren't we all! You have good instincts but need to think things

through more carefully. 50-70 points. No worries – you must be sensitive to both female and male points of view. Do you have a lot of brothers and sisters.

**Further follow up questions:** was this quiz originally designed for men or women or both? Why? Can you improve on the questions asked – what is missing?

### It's All in the Mind

How much of the brain is taken up with (e.g.) football? Is it a male or a female preoccupation? Students to link to the appropriate brain (or both) and draw an area that proportionally represents the amount of brain used for this activity. Students can add up to two more FOR THE OPPOSITE SEX

The follow-up questions are an attempt to focus rather more serious thinking about the differences between male and female thinking. The final question "Why do women live longer than men?" can be either a class discussion or set as homework composition. You might like to feed in the following (controversial?) ideas:

*Differences in physical structure*

*Men's greater participation in military combat*

*Men enjoy taking part in much more dangerous sports*

*Men have more financial and economic pressures*

*Far more men work in heavy industry*

*Women do not take on dangerous jobs like mining, construction etc*

*Men do not manage retirement well and just 'give up'*

The writing activity is best done in small groups in class.

## Consolidation

1. 1. b 2. c 3. b 4. b 5. c 6 a

2. 1. **NOT** sensitive / thoughtful  
 2. 1 (arguably) T 2 T 3 F 4 T 5 F  
 3. 1. b 2. c 3. d 4 d  
 4. 4