

## Left handers

### Topic

Being left-handed: advantages, disadvantages and prejudice

### Aims

- Raise awareness of the issues related to being left-handed, and consider prejudice in general
- Develop the skills of reading for gist (multiple matching) and specific info (true/false)
- Encourage students to justify/back up their answers to true/false questions.
- Review defining and non-defining relative clauses and look at reduced relative clauses and clauses using present participles instead of a relative clause.
- Develop listening skills through an optional video lead-in
- Develop writing skills and practice using relative clauses accurately and appropriately through an optional writing activity.

### Age / level

Adults or older teens at CEF level C1 or C2

### Time

45-60 minutes

### Materials

- Worksheets 1 and 2, optional video [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AbnMSk\\_G9BM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AbnMSk_G9BM)

### Introduction

Designed to fit in with Left-Handers' Day on August 13<sup>th</sup>, but usable at any time of the year, this lesson explores what it is like to be left-handed- the advantages, the disadvantages and the prejudice they may face.

The lesson begins with an optional video about difficulties left-handers face, and then leads into a reading text in the style of an online article. The article is pitched at C1 level, both in terms of language and length. Students carry out two exam-style tasks- matching summaries to paragraphs and identifying if statements about the text are true or false.

After some discussion of the content of the text, students focus on some grammar showcased in the article- relative clauses, reduced relative clauses and present participle clauses. This should review what students already know and add a little more to their understanding of the area.

If time, students can then go on to write about another group who often experience prejudice, using relative clauses where appropriate.

**Procedure**

<b>1. Lead-in (2-3 minutes or up to 10 if video is used)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If appropriate for time of year, explain that August 13<sup>th</sup> is <i>Left-handers' Day</i> and ask students why left-handed people might want a day like this. Alternatively, you could ask how many members of the class are left-handed, or if they have any friends or relatives who are left-handed. Be sensitive to cultural norms - some people might not want to talk openly about being left-handed.</li> <li>• [Optional video lead-in] Tell students that you are going to play them a video about being left-handed, and you would like them to note down all the difficulties in being left-handed that are mentioned, or that they see. The video is called '13 struggles all left-handed people know to be true.' (though I don't think there are 13 shown)</li> <li>• <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AbnMSk_G9BM">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AbnMSk_G9BM</a></li> <li>• Key: sport equipment being designed for right-handers (here a mit)/ smudging as you write/people asking you all the time 'Are you left-handed?'/using a tin opener/dying ten years earlier (apparently)/ using a tape measure/clashing elbows/playing musical instruments (a guitar here)/ using a computer mouse/using scissors.</li> <li>• After the video, ask if anyone was surprised by any of the points made. If anyone is happy to talk about their experience ask them if they'd encountered similar issues.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Reading for gist. (5-10 minutes)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell students they are going to read an article about left-handedness. Give out Worksheet 1 and ask them to read through the summary statements in ex 1. (they shouldn't start reading the text yet). Check any vocabulary queries, then ask them to read the article fairly quickly and match the summary statements with the paragraphs (one statement is not used).</li> <li>• Monitor, let students check in pairs and then check as a class  <b>Answers:</b> A-9, B-6, C-4, D-10, E-1, F-8, G-5, H-3, I-2 (7 is not used)</li> </ul>
<b>3. Reading for specific information (10 minutes)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask the students to read the article again and decide if the statements are true or false. They should correct any statements which are false.</li> <li>• Check in pairs and as a class. Elicit some corrections to the false statements and ask students where they found the evidence for their answers in the text.</li> </ul> <p><b>Answer key:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. False- it was in 1992. The Left handers' Club was formed in 1990.</li> <li>2. False- this is true of left-handed men, but not women. It isn't clear why.</li> <li>3. True- according to the AA (para B)</li> <li>4. False- it's the right side of the brain (according to the text)</li> <li>5. 5 False- this is true in many language around the world.</li> <li>6. True- we know this because someone tried to force him to become right-handed, see para H.</li> <li>7. False- see para I. This is tricky because there are more people who identify as left</li> </ol>

	<p>handed, but the article says this is because they feel more comfortable to admit it, rather than that numbers have actually increased.</p>
<p><b>4. Discussion (5-10 minutes)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In small groups or as a class, ask students to discuss the following questions (You could write them on the board, or ask them in turn). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do you think it is generally a positive thing to be left-handed? (why/why not?)</li> <li>- Do you think people are still generally prejudiced against left-handers? Why/why not?</li> <li>- What other kinds of prejudice against different groups can you think of? Which do you think is the most/least serious? Why?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Grammar focus (15 minutes, depending on level)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give out worksheet 2 and ask students to work through exercises 1a and 1b. At this level (C1/C2) this should just be revision.  <b>Answer key:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1a</b> - the first sentence is a defining relative clause, using the relative pronoun 'when'.</li> <li>Non-defining relative clauses are marked out by commas.</li> <li>Only in non-defining relative clauses.</li> </ol> <b>1b</b> - 'which' could be missed out. If the relative pronoun refers to the object of a sentence (here the emails), it can be omitted. </li> <li>• Ask students to work through exercises 2a and 2b. The idea of reduced relative clauses may be new to them. The relative pronoun and the verb to be (or a similar verb such as seem, appear, look) can be omitted when we have be + an adjective phrase, a prepositional phrase, a past participle or a present participle. See <a href="https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/quick-grammar/relative-clauses-defining-relative-clauses">https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/quick-grammar/relative-clauses-defining-relative-clauses</a></li> </ul> <b>Answer key:</b> <p><b>2a</b></p> <p>some of the difficulties <b>which are</b> faced.</p> <p>In a world <b>which is/has been</b> designed for right-handed people.</p> <p><b>2b</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cars left here after 11pm will be locked into the car park.</li> <li>2. The man driving the car was arrested.</li> <li>3. The chair, made in France in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, was undamaged.</li> <li>4. Did you see the girl wearing the orange dress?</li> <li>5. I can only eat food made without wheat.</li> <li>6. The students taught by him all passed their exams.</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finally, show the students the three examples in exercise 3 and make sure they</li> </ul>

	<p>are aware that a present participle can replace present simple as well as present continuous. Ask students to rewrite the sentences using a relative clause.</p> <p><b>Answer key:</b></p> <p>...it may simply be the difficulties and dangers of living in a right-handed world, <b>which is leading/which leads</b> to more accidents.</p> <p>The word sinister, <b>which means</b> harmful or evil, comes from the Latin for left.</p> <p>The left hand is often considered unclean, which <b>makes</b> life very difficult for those who would naturally use it to eat.</p>
<p><b>6. Optional extra writing activity (15 minutes +)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students to write about another group who experience prejudice. Depending on time, this could be a couple of paragraphs or an essay. Ask them to try to use some different types of relative clauses and participle clauses.</li> </ul>

### Contributed by

Rachael Roberts