

MI6 – British Secret Intelligence Service

Topic

MI6, Spies

Aims

- To learn lexis related to spies
- To practise reading skills
- To practise question formation
- To practise speaking skills

Age group

12- adult

Level

B1 / B2

Time

60 – 90 minutes

Materials

1. MI6: British Secret Intelligence Service student worksheet and Identity cards
2. Internet links: <https://www.sis.gov.uk/> MI6's official website
<http://www.youthonline.ca/spykids/aa041001c.shtml> - For more codes
<http://www.007.com/> - Official Bond site

Introduction

This lesson offers a variety of activities based on MI6, The British Secret Intelligence Service, which celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2009. Task 1 is a warm up activity that introduces the topic of spying. Task 2 is a quick quiz about the world of spying which introduces some of the vocabulary from the text in task 3. In task 3 students read a text about MI6 and match headings to paragraphs. In task 4 students correct false information to check their comprehension of the text. Task 5 is an information gap activity where students ask questions in pairs to complete a secret agent identity card. Students try to crack codes and then make a coded message in task 6. Task 7 is a discussion activity for higher levels.

Procedure

1. Missing words	Ask the students to guess the missing 3-letter word by looking at the clues around the square. <i>Answer: spy</i> Ask the students if they can add any more 'spy words' to the ones around the square (e.g. gadget, James Bond, code, double agent).
2. Task 2 – Quiz	Do the quiz as a whole class activity with a lower level. Ask for a show of hands to see who thinks which option is correct. Higher levels can do the quiz in pairs then check answers as a class. <i>Answers:</i> <i>1b, 2a (lemon juice reacts to heat and becomes visible), 3b, 4a(in 2009), 5c (KGB is Russian, CIA is American)</i>
3. Task 3 – MI6: Read	Tell the students that they are going to read about MI6. Set a time limit of 4 minutes for students to read the text and match the headings with the paragraphs. Have them compare answers with a partner before checking answers as a class. <i>Answers:</i> <i>1 What is MI6?, 2 How old is MI6?, 3 Where is MI6?, 4 MI6 agents, 5 Secret messages, 6 MI6 online</i>
4. Task 4 – MI6: False information	Tell the students that sentences 1-5 all contain some incorrect information. Ask them to try to correct the information before reading the text again to check their answers. Check the answers as a class. Fast finishers can work in pairs to write two more sentences with incorrect information.

	<p><i>Answers:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 <i>The Secret Intelligence Service is MI6's real name.</i> 2 <i>The British government officially recognised MI6 in 1995.</i> 3 <i>The present chief of MI6 signs documents with a 'C' in green ink.</i> 4 <i>MI6 sent coded messages to agents during the Second World War.</i> 5 <i>Anyone can access the MI6 website.</i>
<p>5. Task 5 – Secret agent identity card</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell the students that you are going to give them some information about a secret agent and that they need to ask their partner questions to find out more information. Write the following on the board: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Real name</i> 2. <i>Code name</i> 3. <i>Age</i> 4. <i>Nationalities</i> 5. <i>Family</i> 2. With a higher level class have the students tell you what questions they need to ask to find out the above information. For lower levels put the following questions on the board and have students match them with the above items (Real name etc): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>What's his/her real name?</i> 2. <i>What's his/her code name?</i> 3. <i>How old is he/she?</i> 4. <i>What are his/her nationalities?</i> 5. <i>What languages does he/she speak?</i> 6. <i>Is he/she married?</i> 7. <i>Has he/she got any children?</i> 8. <i>You might also want to revise 'How do you spell it?'</i> 3. Put students in pairs and give each member of the pair either an A or a B card from the sheet. Insist that all students keep their information hidden. Students can now take turns to ask questions and complete their secret agent identity card. For lower levels demonstrate the activity first with a student. Students compare their cards to check they have the correct information when they have finished. You should move around the class checking that students are speaking rather than showing their cards. 4. If students enjoyed this activity they could invent their own spy identities and draw a picture or cut out photos from magazines to make a poster wall display of secret agent ID cards.
<p>6. Task 6 – Secret codes</p>	<p>Put students in pairs and ask them to try to work out what the messages mean. Walk around and offer help as needed. Hand out the answer sheet as soon as the students have finished or start to get frustrated. Have the pairs use one of the codes to make another secret message. Demonstrate this on the board first if necessary. Pairs can then</p>

swap messages with a different pair and try to decode the new message. Alternatively they could write their code on a post-it note then stick it on the board for others to read and decode. You may need to remind students that they can only use language that is suitable for the classroom!

Answers:

1 THE FIRST LETTER OF EACH WORD IS WRONG. A random letter replaces the first letter of each word.

2 THIS MESSAGE LOOKS VERY STRANGE. All the vowels are removed.

3 WRITING BACKWARDS IS DIFFICULT. This is written backwards.

4 WHAT IS YOUR NAME? Use the grid below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

**7. Task 7 -
Discussion**

These discussions questions are suitable for higher level classes. Ask the students to discuss the questions in pairs or small groups.

Contributed by

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