

Getting to know Wales

Topic

Life in Wales

Aims

- To develop learners' knowledge of Wales
- To develop learners' ability to listen to and extract information from a difficult authentic listening
- To develop learners' intensive listening

Age/level

Teenagers and adults
CEFR level B1/B2

Time

60 minutes +

Materials

Worksheet with transcript
Audio files: the interview and five extracted sentences for intensive listening

Introduction

This lesson is part of a series of plans based on interviews with people from around the UK. It focuses on developing learners' knowledge of a part of the UK, as well as practising their vocabulary and listening skills. It also aims to help their ability to take notes while listening to quite a challenging audio script.

Procedure

1. Reading activity

Tell your learners they are going to learn about Wales. Put them into small groups to share what they already know about Wales with the other learners in their group. You could show them a picture of Wales on the map such as <http://tinyurl.com/6ecp2yk> or an image from <http://www.flickr.com/search/?q=wales&w=all>.

Now hand out page 1 of the worksheet. Ask the learners to read the facts together and decide which one they find the most surprising. Ask each group to report back to the class on the most surprising fact.

Now tell the learners that not all the facts are true. Ask them to try to decide which five of the facts they think are false. Once groups have decided, ask for their ideas.

You could make this a competition and give points for correct answers, or you could get the learners to go on the internet to find out the answers and more information themselves.

Answers

1. *False – Snowdon (in Wales) is 1085 metres high. Ben Nevis (in Scotland) is 1344 metres high.*
2. *True – Sir George Everest was a famous Welsh traveller and explorer.*
3. *False – It has its own language but uses the same money as the rest of the UK and has no independent army.*
4. *False – The Welsh flag is a red dragon on a green and white background. The Scottish flag has a white cross on a blue background.*
5. *True – Wales has its own national rugby team that competes with much larger countries from around the world.*
6. *False – The capital city is Cardiff.*
7. *True – Welsh choirs are famous around the world and famous singers include Tom Jones, Charlotte Church and Shirley Bassey.*
8. *True*
9. *False – Welsh Rarebit is made from cheese on toast.*
10. *False*
11. *True – This Welsh town actually exists and its name translates as ‘The church of St Mary in the hollow of white hazel trees near the rapid whirlpool by St Tysilio’s of the red cave’.*

2. Listening activity

Now tell the learners that they are going to listen to an interview with a man from Wales. On their worksheet there are three of the questions he will be asked in the interview. Tell the learners they will need to listen and make notes about his answers.

Play the audio file for your learners and let them make notes.

Give them time to compare their notes with a classmate and then let them listen a second time.

Give them time to compare again and monitor to see how much information they have managed to understand. Don't worry too much if they haven't got all the information, as it is quite a hard activity.

You might want to let the learners listen a third time and this time let them read along with the transcript (on page 2 of the worksheet) as this will help them to understand the accent.

Answers

1. *rugby, industry, farming*
2. *more built-up and industrialised, lots of fields have been built on, more people in the community that they don't know, more commuters who don't work in the area, more vibrant school with English kids learning Welsh*
3. *male voice choir, rugby players*

3. Intensive listening activity	<p>Once you have completed the listening task above, take back the transcripts and tell the learners they will do some intensive listening. Tell them they will listen to five sentences from the interview and that they should listen and count the number of words in each sentence.</p> <p>Play each sentence through twice and give the learners a few moments to think and write down their answers.</p> <p>Then tell them how many words were in each sentence and see if they were correct.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Answers</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 16 words 2. 16 words (counting contractions as two words) 3. 12 words (counting contractions as two words) 4. 13 words 5. 15 words <p>Once they know the number of words, ask them to listen again and write the sentences down as they hear them. They may need to listen again once or twice to do this. Again, be sure to give them time to write after listening to each sentence and the opportunity to compare with a partner.</p> <p>Once they have finished listening, get the learners to dictate the sentences to you and write them up on the board.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Answers</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A lot of the fields I remember when I was a child have been built on. 2. They're commuters, so they don't play a big part in the community any more. 3. I suppose we've produced quite a few rugby players as well. 4. Everybody in Wales takes part in music of some sort during their life. 5. A lot of the people speak Welsh and that makes the accent a lot stronger.
4. Writing activity	<p>Put the learners in small groups and ask them to write a list of ten facts about their area, town or country.</p>
5. Follow-up activities	<p>Ask the learners to do some online research and find images of Wales. Then ask them to write a short summary of what they know about Wales. If you have a school blog or website, you could post these online.</p> <p>If learners would like to hear more Welsh accents and find out more about people who live in Wales, they can find video clips at http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/arts/yourvideo/queries/videonation.shtml. Some of these video clips deal with more adult themes, so be sure to choose ones that are suitable for the level and age of your learners.</p>

Contributed by

Nik Peachey