“A day without laughter is a day wasted.”

*Charlie Chaplin*

We’ve all had that teacher–the one who speaks in a monotone voice and reads aloud from the textbook. And we’ve all had the opportunity to not be that teacher. We’ve even had our moments, recognizing that flash of interest in our students’ eyes, smiling as the bell rings because the energy is so high and no one wants the lesson to end. How do we extend these moments? How do we create an environment that keeps students stimulated more? How do we have more fun?

One of the simplest and most effective ways to prevent boredom is to have fun yourself. If you are having a good time, chances are your students are too.

**How to Have More Fun Teaching**

1. Discover new things together.

It’s much more fun for both parties when students and teachers learn new things together. Your job is, of course, to educate, but why can’t that process include the joy of shared discovery?

2. Incorporate mystery into your lessons.

Learning is the most fun when it’s surprising. Highlight the weird, the unusual, the unique. Ask questions. Start with a curious detail that can only be addressed by diving into the background of the subject and thoroughly exploring it. Pose a mystery at the beginning of the course and let your students work towards solving it throughout the term.

3. Be goofy; show you care.

Let loose; laugh; make fun of yourself. Don’t worry about sacrificing your authority. In fact, the latest research says authority stems from showing you care about your students, and making them laugh and feel good is one way to do that.

4. Participate in projects.

Stepping down to your students’ level and actually participating in an activity you assign yourself makes students more engaged in the task

5. Avoid “going through the motions.”

If you feel yourself slipping into a rut, spending the same hours exactly the same way each day, stop and reassess your teaching process. It’s so easy to let it all become automatic, especially after twenty-plus years in the field, and to use the same lessons and techniques year after year with different students. But if it’s not fun for you, it won’t be fun for your students either. Make an effort to be fresh, try new things, take risks, make mistakes, enjoy the moment.

6. Share your passions.

Show students how you have fun. Passion is contagious. If you’re having a good time, chances are your students will too.

7. Laugh at your students’ jokes.

The best teachers I’ve ever had got a genuine kick out of their students. It’s one of the best ways to ensure teachers and students have fun: enjoy one another.

8. Replace lectures with conversations.

Why should teaching be so passive? Engage your students in a casual conversation like you would have with a good friend. This doesn’t necessarily mean asking more questions, but it does require a stylistic shift whereby you and your students are actively exchanging ideas–not just responding to them.

9. Enjoy yourself.

People with high confidence–people we respect and listen to–tend to have one important trait in common: they enjoy themselves. Your students will have a better time, too.

10. Make yourself available.

Keep your doors open after the bell rings at the end of the day. Make yourself available online for part of the evening.

12 Try being a student again.

Take a seat in the audience and let your students teach you for the day..

13. Don’t take yourself–or your subject–too seriously.

Students have to balance assignments and material from several courses at once. This doesn’t mean loosening your rules. It means acknowledging that students have interests and priorities that might not line up with yours. Try to be understanding, and even express interest in other courses students are taking. Think of it as an opportunity to strengthen students’ grasp of your subject by relating it to other disciplines.

**Some techniques which can be used in working with authentic listening materials**

**Before listening/watching**

Ask some questions about the title, the performer. For Queen’s classic ‘We are the champions’:

* ‘What is a champion?’
* ‘What kinds of champions are there in the world?’
* ‘What activities have champions?’

Such questions tend to work really well as conversation starters, so group three or four learners together and then get feedback from each group on their thoughts

Prior to having listened to the song you can teach a couple of words.

Give three or four words from the song and ask to them to listen out for the words that rhyme with them.

You could also brainstorm possible rhymes before listening.

**While listening/watching activities:**

Fill in the missing words or phrases. / You can make cut-out strips of selected missing words and again make a lyric worksheet as a gap fill; this time learners match the word strips to the gaps as they listen./

Guess the meaning of the unknown words from the context.

Put the jumbled sentences into order.

Give a heading.

Count the number of a particular word (e.g. Christmas)

**After listening activities**

Answer the questions

True/False sentences

Multiple choices

Complete the sentence

Find synonyms/antonyms in the text

Find a particular grammar phenomenon ( Present Simple/ Present Continuous), explain its usage.

Virtually every song centers on a particular verb tense. Start with questions such as these:

* How many examples can you find of the past simple in the lyrics?
* Why did the writer of this song choose this verb tense?

This acts as a springboard for discussing the function of a specific tense, as well as examining its form. Furthermore, it often tends to raise awareness of grammatical flexibility and ‘poetic licence’ in the construction of song lyrics.

**Focus on vocabulary, idioms and expressions**

It’s useful to focus on the creative and artistic use of vocabulary we encounter in lyrics. Start with questions like these (again, for Queen’s classic song ‘We are the champions’):

* What does ‘I’ve paid my dues’ mean?
* What does ‘my share of’ mean?
* What does ‘I’ve taken my bows’ mean?

Go through the meanings, illustrating with other examples if necessary. Songs often serve as really good contexts for phrases and idioms, but it’s good to make sure that the meaning is clear.

Explain/ translate some fragments from the song or film.

**Round things off with some creativity**

You might want to try finishing things off with an activity that stimulates creative thought. Here are a few examples of it:

* Write a new verse of the song., ( maintaining the same mood and style as the original or not) This can be done individually or in groups. These new lyrics can be presented to the rest of the class. Perhaps several groups can work on this to come up with a completely new set of lyrics for the whole song.
* A song tends to give you the perspective of the singer. Write a response (this can be a paragraph, i.e., not necessarily in lyric form) from the point of view of the person the song is being sung about.
* Have the learners plan a music video for the song. In groups they decide the location, the characters, and what happens. Then each group explains their idea to the rest of the class and the learners vote on the best one.
* Write a diary entry for a character in the song. Get learners to examine the thoughts and feelings that inspired the story being played out in the lyrics.

The results can be surprising, as students frequently come up with an interpretation that hasn’t even occurred to you!

**Practice**

***“Birds Flying High”***

1 Before listening.

How are you feeling today? When do you feel good? What might happen so that you feel bad?

2 While listening.

Fill in the gaps.

Birds flying high You know how I feel  
Sun in the 1\_\_\_\_\_\_ You know how I feel  
2\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ driftin' on by know how I feel  
It's a new dawn. It's a new day. It's a new life for me  
And I'm feeling good I'm feeling good  
  
3\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the sea You know how I feel  
River running 4\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ You know how I feel  
5\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_on a tree You know how I feel  
It's a new dawn It's a new day It's a new life for me  
And I'm feeling good  
  
6\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ out in the sun you know what I mean, don't you know  
7\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ all havin' fun you know what I mean  
8\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in peace when day is done That's what I mean  
And this old world is a new world And a bold world for me, for me  
  
9\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ when you shine You know how I feel  
10\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_of the 11\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ You know how I feel  
Oh 12\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_is mine And I know how I feel  
It's a new dawn It's a new day It's a new life  
  
It's a new dawn It's a new day It's a new life  
It's a new dawn It's a new day It's a new life It's a new life For me  
  
And I'm feeling good I'm feeling good I feel so good I feel so good

Answer the questions.

1 How does the singer feel?

2 What images does he see in his imagination?

3 Which line shows that he feels good not only at dawn but at sunset?

4 When do you feel good?

Find the opposites in the text.

Bad, low, new, dawn, to be bored, war.

Creative work.

Now let us write new verses to this song

My students’ variants.

Raining all day. You know how I feel

But I’m at home. You know how I feel

Mama brings tea. You know how I feel

It’s a new day…..

Drummers play drums. You know how I feel

Guys’re singing song. You know how I feel

Sound is strong ! You know how I feel

It’s a new day……..

My variant.

WiFi is strong. You know how I feel

I am at comp. You know how I feel

Coffee’s in the cup. You know how I feel.

It’s a new dawn, it’s a new day, it’s a new life for me, and I’m feeling good.

***“Englishman In New York"***

Before listening

Discuss the questions

What is an alien? Have you ever felt like an alien? When and why? How did you feel then?

While listening

Fill in the gaps.

I don't drink coffee I take 1\_\_\_\_\_\_\_my dear  
I like my 2\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ done on one side  
And you can hear it in my 3\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ when I talk  
I'm an Englishman in New York  
  
See me walking down Fifth 4\_\_\_\_\_  
A walking cane here at my side  
I take it everywhere I 5\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
I'm an Englishman in New York  
  
I'm an alien, I'm a legal alien  
I'm an Englishman in New York  
I'm an alien, I'm a legal alien  
I'm an Englishman in New York  
  
If "Manners maketh man" as someone said  
Then he's the 6\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the day  
It takes a man to suffer ignorance and 7\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
Be yourself no matter what they say  
  
I'm an alien, I'm a legal alien  
I'm an Englishman in New York  
I'm an alien, I'm a legal alien  
I'm an Englishman in New York  
  
Modesty, propriety can lead to notoriety  
You could end up as the only one  
8\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, sobriety are rare in this society  
At night a candle's 9\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ than the sun  
  
Takes more than combat gear to make a man  
Takes more than a 10\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for a gun  
Confront your 11\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, avoid them when you can  
A gentleman will walk but never 12\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

If "Manners make the man" as someone said  
Then he's the hero of the day  
It takes a man to suffer ignorance and smile  
Be yourself no matter what they say [3x]  
  
I'm an alien, I'm a legal alien  
I'm an Englishman in New York  
I'm an alien, I'm a legal alien  
I'm an Englishman in New York

After listening

Find in the text the typical signs of being an Englishman

Find a proverb, guess its meaning from the context and explain it.

Find words that rhyme with: society, walk, sun…

Explain the line “A gentleman will walk but never run”

Creative work variants

Write a diary entry for a character in the song.

Write a new verse of the song

My and my student’s version

I drink coffee in Starbucks, my dear!

I can’t believe it’s Empire State!

You can hear it in my accent when I talk

I am Ukrainian in New York.

See me walking around the Times Square,

Central Park is just ahead.

Pinch me, am I dreaming or not?

I’m Ukrainian in New York!

Making pictures on the Brooklyn Bridge,

Crowds of people are having fun,

I want to be a part of it

Ukrainian will walk but never run.

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