

Bringing humour into the English classroom with ‘the IT Crowd’

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Duration: approximately 2 hours

Topics tackled in this lesson:

Safety at work

Numbers

Effective email writing (formal/informal)

Lesson plan:

A. Introductory PowerPoint slide show: “Fire!”

- What should you do in case of a fire?
- Emergency telephone numbers
- What are the main parts of a fire extinguisher?
- What are the various types of fire extinguishers?
- How should you use a fire extinguisher?
- The P.A.S.S. method

B. 2 extracts from the British TV sitcom 'The IT Crowd'

Context: *The office is set on fire because of Moss's negligence in using the soldering iron; however, he cannot remember the new number used to call the emergency services (01189998819991197253). Failing that, Moss sends an email to the fire brigade.*

C. Follow up: oral work

- Student A: You are the company safety officer. Be ready to make a 5 minute presentation to a group of employees about the appropriate use of fire extinguishers.
- Student B: You are attending a presentation in your company about the appropriate use of fire extinguishers. Prepare some questions to ask the safety officer.

1)

DVD: IT Crowd Version 1.0, episode 3, scene 1, from 00.50 to 02.15

or

<http://fr.truveo.com/new-emergency-number-very-funny/id/36028846972479214>

Has this... ever happened to you?

Newsreader: From today, dialling 999 won't get you the emergency services. And that's not the only thing that's changing. Nicer ambulances, faster response times and better-looking drivers mean they're not just "the" emergency services - they're "your" emergency services. So, remember the new number:

[*singing number*] 0118 999 881 999 119 725... 3

Old lady: Hello? I've had a bit of a tumble...

Moss: Well that's easy to remember!

0118 999 881 999 119 725.....3!

Roy: I don't know why they just couldn't keep it as it was!

How hard is it to remember 911?

Moss: You mean 999...

Roy: I mean 999!

Moss: That's the American one!

Roy: Yeah!

Moss: You berk!

2)

DVD IT Crowd Version 1.0, episode 3, scene 4, from 12.34 to 15.06

or

<http://fr.truveo.com/FIRE-FIRE-The-IT-Crowd/id/3843575705>

Moss:

Oh four! I mean five! I mean fire!

Now let's see what we have here. [*bends over to read fire extinguisher*]

"Stand upright." [*stands upright*]

Now, I can't read it... Oh, not me! I am a giddy-goat! Okay.

"Remove safety clip."

- Don't look at my feet!

- Fire?

-Fire... No...?

"Aim nozzle at base of fire."

Oh, that is typical!

Why has it done that? [Made in Britain]

I'll just put this over here, with the rest...of the fire.

011 53... No. 011 huh...0118 999.....3!

Hello? Is this the emergency services?

Then which country am I speaking to?

Hello? Hello?

I know! Yep.

Okay.

"Subject: ...fire!

Dear Sir, stroke, Madam.

I'm writing to inform you of a fire which has broken out at the premises of..."

No. That's too formal.

[*deletes text, starts again*]

"Dear Sir, stroke, Madam. Fire, exclamation mark. Fire, exclamation mark.

Help me, exclamation mark.123, Carendon road.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

All the best,

Maurice Moss."



Find a title for this scene:

Complete the following:

_____ this... ever _____ to you?
_____ today, _____ won't get you the _____.
And _____ that's changing.
_____ ambulances, _____ response times, and _____
_____ drivers mean they're not just _____ emergency services, they're
_____ emergency services.

What is the new number?

What is Moss's reaction to the change?

Roy: I don't know why they just couldn't _____!

How _____ is it to remember _____?

Moss: You mean _____...

Roy: I mean _____!

Moss: That's the _____ one!

Roy: Yeah!



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How _____ is it to remember _____?

Moss: You mean _____...

Roy: I mean _____!

Moss: That's the _____ one!

Roy: Yeah!



Find a title for this scene:

Moss: Oh _____! I mean _____! I mean _____!

What are the instructions on the fire extinguisher?

-
-
-

What happens to the fire extinguisher?

Why has it done that?

Where does Moss put the fire extinguisher?

What does he do next?

“Hello? Is this the _____?”

Then _____ am I speaking to?”

What does he decide to do after that?

Write the beginning of his message down:

Why does he delete the text and start again?

What’s the final version of his message?