

Born, Bread and Buttered in London

In this lesson students hear a man being interviewed about his life in London. He talks about the different parts of London he has lived in and how things have changed in these areas. The tasks focus students on learning more about London from Google Maps and images and the listening tasks focus them on reading between the lines of what the man says and understanding inferred meaning. Lastly, the lesson finishes with an optional grammar focus with a speaking activity based around 'used to' and 'didn't use to'.

Topic: London

Level: Intermediate

Aims:

- To develop students abilities to understand inferred meaning
- To develop students' listening skills
- To develop students' ability to use 'used to' to talk about past habits and states

Level: Low intermediate B1/B2

Procedure

Pre-listening

Put the name 'London' up on the board and tell your students to close their eyes and think about London and try to imagine it in their mind. Give them a couple of minutes to think in silence, then put them in pairs to describe what they 'saw' in their mind.

- Listen to what they are saying and then elicit any key vocabulary onto the board. Ask them what things they saw and what things they associate with London. The reactions of your students will vary depending on their age and experience. Some of them may have visited London, if so get them to tell the class a little about it and find out what parts of London they visited.
- Tell the students you are going to show them some parts of London and they should decide which they like best.
- If you have an internet connection and projector in your classroom go to <http://maps.google.com> and search for 'Islington' London. You could also try following this link: <http://tinyurl.com/24w4ljb> It should appear with images over the map. If it doesn't then go to the menu that says more, and click on photos.



- Click on the images and show them to your students. Get the students to create sentences to describe the pictures.
- (If you don't have a computer or Internet access in class, go to <http://maps.google.com/> before class and print up a map of the Islington area and collect some images of the places to show students in class.
- Next, ask the students if they can find these places on the map.

Islington (Yes)
 Regent's Park
 Bloomsbury
 Kings Cross (Yes)
 Hampstead Heath
 Tufnell Park (Yes)
 The Thames

Listening

- Once they have found them, tell the students that they are going to hear a man from London talking about where he lives. Tell them to listen and see which of the places he mentions.

- Play the audio clip and let them listen, then let the students compare what they heard. This will help to build their confidence a little. Ask which places they heard (the ones marked Yes above).
- Now ask them to look at these statements.
 1. There are too many foreigners here.
 2. I've lived in a lot of different parts of London.
 3. I think celebrities are great.
 4. I'm young and like going out a lot
 5. I've seen a lot of changes in my life.
 6. I enjoy being rich.
 7. Young people watch too much television.
 8. I really enjoyed living in America.
- Tell the students they should listen again and try to decide which of these statements could be the opinions of the man in the interview. Make it clear that he doesn't say any of these sentences, so they have to listen and try to justify their choices.
- Play the audio again and then give the students the chance to compare their answers and try to justify in pairs. They may need to listen twice as this is quite complex, so play the clip again before clarifying their answers.
- Once they have had time to listen again you can elicit the correct answers and get the students to justify. If they have found the task really difficult you could give them the script from the tape and ask them to read and justify their answers in the script.
 1. There are too many foreigners here. (False. He describes the area where he lives as 'diverse' so he probably feels positive about the different peoples living in that area.)
 2. I've lived in a lot of different parts of London. (True. He describes a number of parts of London he has lived in.)
 3. I think celebrities are great. (False. He says "I'm not into that sort of thing, so that passes me by".)
 4. I'm young and like going out a lot. (False. He talks a lot about the past and young people, so he is probably quite old.)
 5. I've seen a lot of changes in my life. (True. He describes London in the past.)
 6. I enjoy being rich. (Probably false. He describes a time when he had no washing machine.)
 7. Young people watch too much television. (Probably true. He is critical of the way young people speak and blames it on American films which he describes as rubbish.)
 8. I really enjoyed living in America. (False. He doesn't mention living in
 9. America and says he has always lived within a 7-mile area of London.)

Grammar focus

- Now tell your students that you would like them to complete these sentences about the text using 'used to' or 'didn't use to'. You might want to explain to them that 'used to' is used to describe a habit or state in the past that has finished. They might need to look at the script again to help them.

Example. He used to live in Kings Cross, then he moved to Tufnell Park.

You / buy / anything / Tufnell Park.
There / be / two dairies.
He / have / washing machine.
He / take washing home on the bus.
It / cost/ much money.
People / watch so many American films.

Answers:

You used to buy anything in Tufnell Park.
There used to be two dairies.
He didn't use to have a washing machine.
He used to take the washing home on the bus.
It didn't use to cost much money.
Tony Blair used to live in Islington.
People didn't use to watch so many American films.

Speaking activity

- Once the students have completed the sentences ask them to think back about their own lives 5 or 10 years ago and then think what things are different now.
- Ask them to make sentences about their own life using 'used to' and 'didn't use to'.
- Put the students in pairs and ask them to tell their partner what's changed in their life.
- Ask the students to think about their own town and get them to tell you what has changed in their town.

Transcript: Allen Roome

Interviewer: So, Allen, can you just tell me a bit about the part of the UK that you're from?

Allen Roome: Right, I come from London. I was born in the West End. I don't remember much about that because we moved on to Kings Cross then we moved up to Tufnell Park where I spent most of my life. I did move back to the West End when I was a bit of a younger man, you know – to see what was going on down there, obviously. And then I moved back to Tufnell Park and now I'm in Islington. I suppose in all those – I had moved within that area; I suppose, you could say that it's a seven-mile square area that I never moved out of.

Interviewer: Good heavens. And can you tell me about any changes in this area of, perhaps Tufnell Park in London where you were living most of the time?

Allen Roome: Well, yeah the Tufnell Park area, where I lived was just off of Tufnell Park. In your eyes what has changed greatly is the shops. There are all different types of shops there. You could literally buy anything you needed in general. Not furniture, but there's a couple of dairies there, a pub, off-licence, there was a laundrette – Westerns they were called. They was a big company when I was younger and we used to get what we called our bag washed there and I had to pick it up on a Thursday. Number ninety-seven was always wet; I remember that, yes.

Interviewer: You went and collected the wet laundry?

Allen Roome: We took it on Monday and collected it on Thursday and I can't remember how much it was. It was only sort of, in those days, coppers. It wasn't a great deal of money at all. But it was the sort of period of time when people never had washing machines and that was the ideal sort of thing to do.

Interviewer: Yeah. And would you say your area, perhaps the area that you're living in now – Islington; is that famous for anything?

Allen Roome: I don't think it's all that famous for anything. Not the part I live in anyway. The ex-prime minister lived there, Tony Blair. I don't know what you make of that if that's famous or not. But I did think on it and there are some little areas in there where I think there's a lot of, sort of, actors and actresses live. But I'm not into that sort of thing, so that passes me by.

Interviewer: And just tell me something about how people speak in your area of north London, would you say.

Allen Roome: Well, it's such a diversity there that you couldn't say anybody speaks, it's a general accent or a general theme. What I do notice is the young

people now, they have this type of speak where they use a lot of American phrases and things like this. I remember a kid a week or so ago. He was shouting out 'oh that is wickedly evil, man'. Which, that sort of terminology comes from the United States of America. And that's 'cause they watch this rubbish television.

Interviewer: What does that mean 'it's wickedly evil, man'?

Allen Roome: I think it's supposed to mean it's good, which it means obviously the opposite. But that's what they do. They do speak like that, you know.