

The Noughties

This week's lesson looks at the last decade: the positives and the negatives.

Level

Pre-intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level A2-B1 and above)

Comment

Although at first this text may appear challenging for pre-intermediate students, many will be familiar with (some of) the content, making it more accessible.

Procedure

- 1 Write up *2000-2009* on the board. Pre-teach the words *noughties* and *decade*. Ask students what important events happened in this period. If possible, come prepared with one or two visual examples of well-known events, to stimulate ideas. Elicit one or two more examples from students. Put students in pairs or threes to brainstorm other important world events of this decade.
 - 2 Listen to some of their examples. At this stage clarify and write up any words students mention which also may help them with the reading text, e.g. recession.
 - 3 Students complete the questions in exercise 1. Tell them they will only have four minutes to do this (allow a little more time if necessary, once they are on task). Take feedback.
 - 4 Let students do the vocabulary pre-reading task in exercise 2. Check this together.
 - 5 Students complete exercise 3. This task requires them to read the text again, this time more carefully. Let students use dictionaries if appropriate, allowing them to look up a maximum of four more words. Students compare answers in pairs before class feedback. In feedback, try to get students to expand on the text, e.g. *why have social networking sites changed our world so much?*
 - 6 Dictate the questions below, or write them on the board. Give students five minutes to think and make notes alone, before sharing ideas in groups of three, for later feedback.
 - a *Are there any important events not in this text? Which ones? Why should they be included?*
 - b *Which events were important for your country in the noughties?*
 - c *What about you? What important events or changes happened to you?*
 - d *What do you think will happen in this new decade? Think about the areas looked at in the text.*
- 7 You could follow this up by asking students to write an account of the noughties and their own country; their own perception of which events were important; or the noughties from their own personal perspective (questions b and c above).

Answer key

Exercise 1

- 1 It is likely that students may also mention events such as the 2004 tsunami; events closer to home, etc.
- 2 c

Exercise 2

invasion = d
 concern = f
 prejudice = a
 telecommunications = e
 climate = c
 event = b

Exercise 3

- 1 They thought the millennium bug would cause serious problems.
- 2 The UN Climate Change Conference, which discussed how to protect the environment and included all different countries, including rich and poor.
- 3 The invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, then more terrorist attacks in other cities.
- 4 They have less money to live on, so life is harder.
- 5 The economy grew, so that some of its people grew richer; it also meant that the country started to be more open in some ways.
- 6 News can now be passed from person to person very quickly, informally, reaching a large audience. We no longer get news from restricted, formal sources of information (everyone who has access to a computer or mobile phone can be a giver of news or publicize opinions).
- 7 He is the first black US president; he seems to be more aware of the importance of environmental issues.

Related websites

The following websites might be useful, for either yourself or your students:

<http://search.time.com/results.html?Ntt=the+last+decade&x=10&y=13>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/8403366.stm>