

# The articulate hand

(Length: 4:43)

## Language

hand and body language  
communicating with hand gestures

## Level

Pre-Intermediate; A2

## Programme details

Video: [www.wellcomecollection.org/whats-on/events/the-articulate-hand.aspx](http://www.wellcomecollection.org/whats-on/events/the-articulate-hand.aspx)

Andrew Dawson's website: <http://www.andrewdawson.info/>

This video is from the Wellcome Collection website. Wellcome Collection is a museum in London which holds exhibitions and events exploring the connections between medicine and art and 'what it means to be human'. The museum and website are part of the Wellcome Trust, a charity whose mission is to support and promote research to improve the health of humans and animals.

## Comment

This is quite a long video and the activities use different sections of the video. If you have limited time available or feel the second half of the video is too challenging for your students, then you could use only exercises 1–6 and then 10–11. A PDF copy of the transcript is available from the web address above.

## Before you watch

- 1 Give students copies of the worksheet and ask them to do exercise 1 in pairs. As they are doing this, write the title 'The Articulate Hand' on the board.
- 2 Check the answer to exercise 1 and then focus on the video title on the board. What do the students think the video is about? Make a note of their suggestions on the board.

## While you watch

- 3 Mute the sound and ask students to watch the first part of the video (0:00–0:45) with no sound. As they watch, students should describe what they see to their partner. Then invite them to share their ideas with the rest of the class. Make sure students understand that the man in the video is telling a story using his hands.
- 4 Explain that you're going to play the next part of the video without sound. Students watch and do exercise 4 in which they choose the story being told in the video. Play the next part of the video (0:45–1:30) with no sound. Take a vote to find out which option is the most popular choice with students.
- 5 Now play the video again, this time with sound (0:00–1:30) to check answers to exercise 4. If you want, you can play the first section (0:00–0:30) again and ask students if they know why the audience is laughing. (The commentary says 'they

## Video e-lesson

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are travelling faster than any man has ever travelled' but for the man the movement is very slow.)

- 6 Ask students to do exercise 6 in which they order the events in Andrew Dawson's life. Play the next part of the video (1:30–2:50) to check answers. Make sure students understand what a 'hand model' is. (A hand model is usually used in TV commercials or print advertisements when there is a close-up of a person's hands.)
- 7 The next part of the video is more challenging than the rest, so with lower levels you could jump to exercise 10. With higher-level students, ask them to match the sentence halves in exercise 7. Draw their attention to the glossary on the worksheet.
- 8 Then watch the video (2:50–3:40) to check answers.
- 9 Students watch the final part of the video to answer the three questions in exercise 9.

### After you watch

- 10 Students now work in groups of four. Ask them to look at exercise 10. Allow them time to think of some examples and then ask for their help to write a quick list on the board.
- 11 In their groups, each student chooses a different situation from exercise 11 and uses his or her hands to communicate the message. Students then have to think of another situation. They must write the information they need to communicate on a piece of paper, using the sentences in exercise 11 as examples. Students then communicate with their hands in their groups of four. Invite some students to present their mimes to the rest of the class. How articulate are their hands?

### Answer key

**1**

c good at expressing her thoughts and ideas clearly

**4, 5**

b The Apollo 11 moon landing

**6**

1 d

2 f

3 b

4 e

5 a

6 c

**7, 8**

1 e

2 c

3 f

4 a

5 b

6 d

**9**

## Video e-lesson

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- 1 He mentions the following things: do up your shirt buttons, travel on the Tube, build a bridge, work on the internet, create magic, draw, play the piano, play a musical instrument.
- 2 Holding his wife's hand.
- 3 He's wearing a ring.

**10** (suggested answers)

attracting attention in a restaurant or bar  
requesting a bus to stop  
waving hello or goodbye