

# Lesson plan 55: Junk email

## Language

Internet vocabulary; phrasal verbs

## Level

Intermediate to upper intermediate (equivalent to CEF level B1–B2)

## Comment

This lesson is about the problem of unwanted – and often dangerous – email, which is referred to as either ‘junk email’ or ‘spam’. The lesson should give your students challenging reading practice and also raise their awareness of phrasal verbs and give them useful communicative practice in some of the more common ones.

## How to use the lesson

- 1 Introduce the topic of junk email / spam. For example, you could read out to the class an example of a spam email you have received. Ask them to tell their partner(s) if they have received any and what they do about it.
- 2 Give out the worksheet. Students read the text to complete exercise 1. Encourage them to read quickly to improve their skimming skills. In feedback, consider asking students to summarise the main points of each paragraph.
- 3 Exercise 2 gives students detailed reading practice. Encourage them to check the answers carefully, to use the glossary and to compare answers with their partner(s) when they have finished. In feedback, ask students why the answers are true or false.
- 4 Exercise 3 focuses on a large number of common phrasal verbs which appear in the text. If students are not familiar with phrasal verbs, use one or two examples in the text to show them that a phrasal verb is made up of a verb and an adverb or preposition. Sometimes, as with the first example (*interest someone in something*), the meaning is easy to guess; but quite often, as in the second example (*let someone down*), the meaning is different from the words used alone. The exercise shouldn't be difficult and its main purpose is to raise their awareness of how common phrasal verbs are. In feedback, point out that some phrasal verbs can have more than one meaning – for instance, *make up a story* means ‘invent’, *make up an amount* means ‘reach a total’ and *be made up of* means ‘consist of’. Encourage students to notice the whole phrase, including the subject and the object, because it will help them learn the right meaning – for example, *he made up a story* can only mean that he invented something that didn't really happen.
- 5 Exercise 4 focuses on the meaning of 10 of the phrasal verbs from exercise 3. Encourage students to look at the context in the article to help them understand the meaning. In feedback, ask students to explain the examples of these phrasal verbs in the articles. If you wish, as a homework exercise, students could find the meanings of the other 10 phrasal verbs and write their own example sentences.
- 6 Exercise 5 helps students consolidate their understanding of the phrasal verbs in exercise 4 by using them in communicative contexts. If necessary, explain that *fake* in question 2 means ‘false’.

- 7 Exercise 6 allows students to use these phrasal verbs to express their opinions about the issues in the article. They can do this in pairs or small groups. You could organise this as a mingling discussion. Copy the 10 questions onto pieces of paper and give each student one piece of paper containing a single question. They ask another student their question and the other student asks the question on their paper. Encourage each student to ask a follow-up question, eg *Why do you say that?* When each student has asked their question, the students exchange pieces of paper and then repeat the exercise with a new partner.
- 8 As a follow-up project, in the next lesson students could be asked to report back on any spam email they have received and / or any news story they have seen or heard about the issue. Remind the students of the advice at the end of the article!

**Answer key**

**1**

- |          |          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1 para 5 | 3 para 2 | 5 para 1 | 7 para 4 |
| 2 para 6 | 4 para 7 | 6 para 3 |          |

**2**

- 1 F (they may also steal personal information or money)
- 2 T
- 3 F (they spend millions of dollars trying to stop spam)
- 4 F (dealing with the spam takes time)
- 5 T
- 6 F (they're networks of computers; not necessarily laptops)
- 7 T
- 8 F (never open strange email, even if it is from someone you know – their computer could have been infected!)

**3**

- |        |            |            |          |        |
|--------|------------|------------|----------|--------|
| 1 in   | 5 down     | 9 through  | 13 for   | 17 out |
| 2 down | 6 up with  | 10 up to   | 14 out   | 18 off |
| 3 up   | 7 out      | 11 with    | 15 out   | 19 up  |
| 4 up   | 8 together | 12 through | 16 up of | 20 out |

**4**

- |                    |             |
|--------------------|-------------|
| 1 make up          | 6 work out  |
| 2 see through      | 7 put off   |
| 3 set up           | 8 fall for  |
| 4 let someone down | 9 send out  |
| 5 keep up with     | 10 find out |

**5**

- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1 send out      | 6 see through  |
| 2 fall for      | 7 keep up with |
| 3 set up        | 8 work out     |
| 4 make up       | 9 let down     |
| 5 put (you) off | 10 find out    |

**Related websites**

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

- <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/7988579.stm>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-12126880>
- [http://www.symantec.com/content/en/us/enterprise/other\\_resources/b-state\\_of\\_spam\\_and\\_phishing\\_report\\_02-2011.en-us.pdf](http://www.symantec.com/content/en/us/enterprise/other_resources/b-state_of_spam_and_phishing_report_02-2011.en-us.pdf)