

Keep your English
up to date

Teacher's pack

Lesson plan and student worksheets
with answers

Lesson 3:
F. A. Q. s



BBC WORLD SERVICE
LEARNING ENGLISH



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Lesson Plan: Teacher's notes

Lesson 3: F. A. Q. s

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Level: Intermediate and above

Topic: Abbreviations

Language: FAQ
Creating new abbreviations

Aims: Listening skills – A short talk
Language skills - Abbreviations

Materials: Worksheet 1 – Introductory speaking and vocabulary exercises, listening section 1
Worksheet 2 – Listening section 2
Worksheet 3 – Extra work: Vocabulary and language
Tapescript – Available in teacher's notes
Recording of the talk – Available online at bbclearningenglish.com

This plan was downloaded from:

bbclearningenglish.com/radio/specials/1728_uptodate/page4.shtml

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LESSON STAGES

A

Explain to the students that they are going to listen to a talk by Professor David Crystal and that the talk is about the way the English language changes. This particular talk is about abbreviations.

B

Hand out **Student Worksheet 1**. Students do **Speaking Exercise 1** in small groups or pairs.

C

Students do the **Vocabulary Exercise 2**, without dictionaries at first. Practise the pronunciation of the vocabulary, as they will hear it in the talk.

D

Students read **Listening Exercise 3** and then listen to Section 1 of the talk. They answer the questions.

Students listen again and answer **Listening Exercise 4**

E

Hand out **Student Worksheet 2**

Students answer **Listening Exercise 5**

Students listen to section 2 of the talk and check their answer for **Listening Exercise 5**

F

Students answer **Listening Exercise 6** and **Listening Exercise 7**

They listen again to **Listening Section 2** to check/complete their answers.

Students do **Listening Exercise 8**

G

If you wish to do some extra work with the class, hand out **Student Worksheet 3**

For the listening exercise, Play the complete talk and then give the students copies of the tapescript to check their ideas.

For the pronunciation, use F-A-Q and SCUBA as your models.

For the language, note that the idea here is to get students to use the language creatively, it is not about thinking of actual abbreviations.

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TAPESCRIPTS

Listening Section 1

Now, nobody knows how many abbreviations there are in the English language, or in any language for that matter – half a million in one big set of dictionaries I've got: half a million abbreviations, can you imagine it! They're very important, abbreviations, because they save time and they add familiarity; it's a way of gaining rapport. I don't say "I'm in the British Broadcasting Corporation studio", I say "I'm in the BBC studio"...it adds a sort of familiarity, doesn't it. Now there are written abbreviations and spoken abbreviations, and the written ones are the ones that are interesting today – because you can have letters like U.N. for United Nations and you can have words like UNESCO for the other organisation.

Listening Section 2

Now, FAQs – you've seen them a thousand times I suppose on computer screens – are computer text files containing a list of questions and answers, especially basic stuff on news groups where you want to find a quick reply. It's not a universally spoken word. You don't say I've got some FAQs – because that could be very misleading, it could sound like facts, f-a-c-t-s. So most people use it as an initialism, they spell it out: F-A-Q. And it's beginning to be used now in a more general way, outside the internet setting. People talk about FAQs in all kinds of non-computer circumstances. I saw it on a church notice board once. I'll leave you to guess what the questions were.

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ANSWER KEY

SPEAKING

1.

- | | | |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| a. BBC | - British Broadcasting Company | Radio and television producer |
| CNN | - Cable News network | Television producer (USA) |
| UN | - United Nations | International organisation – peace |
| IBM | - International Business machines | Computer manufacturer |
| NATO | - North Atlantic Treaty Organisation | Military alliance, USA and Europe |
| b. CD | - Compact Disc | Stores digital information, often music |
| TV | - Television | Shows electronic pictures |
| DVD | - Digital versatile disc | Stores digital information, often movies |
| WWW | - World Wide Web | An address or space on the internet |
| USA | - The United States of America | A federally organised democratic nation |

VOCABULARY

2.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| a. to save time | to be more efficient or faster |
| b. familiarity | a feeling of closeness or knowing something well |
| c. rapport | good easy relationship |
| d. a web page | part of an internet site |
| e. universally | everywhere |
| f. A computer screen | the monitor you look at when on the internet |

LISTENING SECTION 1

3.

BBC, UN, UNESCO (The United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation)

4.

- Half a million (500, 000)
- They're very important because they save time and they add familiarity
- Written and spoken

LISTENING SECTION 2

5.

- FAQ
- The world of computing, the internet.

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6.

b. Frequently Asked Questions

7.

a. False – It is not universally spoken

b. True – So, people spell it out to avoid this confusion

c. False – He has seen it on a church notice board

8.

a. web page

b. internet site

c. FAQ

d. questions

e. answers

f. problem

EXTRA WORK

1.

a. familiarity

b. text

c. spell

d. church

2.

a. Spelt out: WHO (World Health organisation)
WTO (World Trade Organisation),
IMF (International Monetary Fund)

Said as one word: AIDS (Acquired Immune deficiency Syndrome)
NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation)

3.

b.	adverb	adjective	noun
	badly	driven	car

	modifier	adjective	noun
	really	lovely	day

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WORKSHEET 1

You are going to listen to a short talk given by Professor David Crystal about language change and new developments in English.

SPEAKING

1.

- a. Look at these organisations. What do you know about them?

What are they responsible for? What do they do?

BBC **CNN** **UN** **IBM** **NATO**

- b. What are these things?

CD **TV** **DVD** **WWW** **USA**

- c. Can you say what each letter in these abbreviations stands for?

Example: NATO stands for North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

VOCABULARY

2. Match these words and phrases to their definitions

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| a. to save time | part of an internet site |
| b. familiarity | everywhere |
| c. rapport | the monitor you look at when on the internet |
| d. a web page | a feeling of closeness or of knowing something well |
| e. universally | to be more efficient or faster |
| f. a computer screen | a good easy relationship |

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LISTENING SECTION 1

3. Now, listen to Professor Crystal talking about abbreviations in English.

Which examples of abbreviations does he give?

4. Listen again and answer these questions.

- a. How many abbreviations are there in Professor Crystal's dictionary set?
- b. Why are abbreviations important?
- c. What two types of abbreviation are there?

WORKSHEET 2

LISTENING SECTION 2

5. Professor Crystal next talks about one particular abbreviation. **Listen to Section 2 of the talk and answer these questions**

- a. What is the abbreviation?
- b. Where does it come from?

Answer these questions below and then listen to Section 2 again to check your ideas.

6. What do you think the three letters stand for?

- a. Fast Answer Questions
- b. Frequently Asked Questions
- c. Fairly Asked Quotes

7. Are the following sentences true or false?

- a. Currently, the word is spoken everywhere
- b. The pronunciation of FAQ could sound like the word ‘facts’
- c. The abbreviation is only used in an internet context.

8. Complete the paragraph with the correct words.

FAQ web page internet questions answers problem

FAQs are types of **(a)** _____ and are part of an **(b)** _____ site. People use the FAQ page when they are looking for information about a product or service. On the **(3)** _____ page you can read typical or common **(d)** _____ that people might ask, with the **(e)** _____. This may help you with your **(f)** _____ .

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WORKSHEET 3 - EXTRA WORK

LISTENING

1. Listen to the complete talk and complete the sentences with the correct words.
 - a. They're very important abbreviations, because they save time and they add _____
 - b. Computer _____ files containing a list of questions and answers
 - c. So most people use it as an initialism, they _____ it out
 - d. I saw it on a _____ notice board once

PRONUNCIATION

2. **FAQ is an abbreviation that is spelt out**
SCUBA is an abbreviation that is said as a single word
 - a. How are the following said? Are they spelt out or said as a single word?

AIDS WHO WTO IMF NATO

LANGUAGE

3. FAQ comes from the first letters of a phrase or set of words.
It is not the name of an organisation or company.

This is the way abbreviations often come in to the language. They are created.

- a. Look at the examples of possible abbreviations created in the same way as FAQ.

BDC	badly driven car	RLD	really lovely day
VUL	very useful lesson	RAQ	rarely asked question

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- b. Look at the language patterns. Put the other two in the correct pattern.

adverb	adjective	noun
rarely	asked	question
_____	_____	_____

modifier	adjective	noun
very	useful	lesson
_____	_____	_____

- c. Now, try to create your own **new** abbreviations.
Think about common things in your life