

Keep your English  
up to date

## Teacher's pack

Lesson plan and student worksheets  
with answers

Lesson 13

Prenup



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# BBC Learning English – Keep your English up to date

## Lesson Plan: Teacher's notes

### Lesson 13: Prenup

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**Level:** Intermediate and above

**Topic:** marriages and weddings

**Language:** Abbreviations: shortened forms (clippings) – pre-nup

**Aims:** Listening skills – A short talk

**Materials:** Worksheet 1 – Introductory speaking and vocabulary exercises, listening section 1  
Worksheet 2 – Listening section 2  
Worksheet 3 – Extra work: Vocabulary and writing  
Tapescript – Available in teacher's notes  
Recording of the talk – Available online at [bbclearningenglish.com](http://bbclearningenglish.com)

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## Lesson Plan: Teacher's notes

### Lesson 13: Prenup

#### LESSON STAGES

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##### A

Explain to the students that they are going to listen to a talk by Professor Crystal about the way the English language changes. This particular talk is about a type of abbreviation known as clipping. Clippings are shortened versions of words.

##### 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 answers for **Listening exercise 5**.

##### F

Students read **Listening Exercise 6 and Listening Exercise 7**. They listen again to **Listening Section 2** to answer the questions.

##### G

If you wish to do some extra work with the class, hand out **Student Worksheet 3**. For the vocabulary exercise, give the students copies of the tapescript and play the complete talk as they read.

The language work focuses on other clippings.

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### **Lesson 13: Prenup**

#### **TAPESCRIPTS**

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#### **Listening Section 1**

We often abbreviate words by dropping the endings. There's a technical term for it in linguistics - they're called clippings. I suppose the word 'ad' is the most familiar, from advertisements. 'Pram' is another, from perambulator, and nobody uses that these days, really. And now, we've got 'prenup' which came in in the 1980s I suppose.

It's short for pre-nuptial agreement. In other words, it's two people who're coming together, and they're going to get married, they're going to have their nuptials, they're going to get married - and because they think the marriage is not going to last for very long and there's going to be a messy divorce, where they're going to have to split all their worldly goods, they decide to have a prenup, which is an agreement, a pre-nuptial agreement, where they decide who's going to have what, and it's going to save a lot of mess in due course.

#### **Listening section 2**

Funny idea really....but very popular amongst American film stars apparently. Well, it isn't modern, actually. The earliest time I ever found any reference to it is 1916. So, it was very common in the United States during the 20th century and is increasing elsewhere. But the clipping, the abbreviated form, is very recent - I've only heard that since the 1980s. How do you write it? Well some people write it pre hyphen nup, but increasingly these days they've been dropping the hyphen, and the two elements are written solid, without any space or any hyphen in-between. The words have come together....not so of course the people they refer to!

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#### ANSWER KEY

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#### VOCABULARY

- 2.
- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| a. <b>a clip</b>       | A shortened version of something         |
| b. <b>nuptial</b>      | Connected to a wedding                   |
| c. <b>an agreement</b> | A legal arrangement or contract          |
| d. <b>a reference</b>  | When you mention another person or thing |
| e. <b>recent</b>       | New, not very old                        |
| f. <b>a hyphen</b>     | A punctuation mark written as a dash -   |

#### LISTENING SECTION 1

- 3.
- a. prenup
  - b. a pre-nuptial agreement
- 4.
- a. Clippings
  - b. ad
  - c. pram
  - d. the 1980s
  - e. It is used when there is a divorce. It is used to decide who gets what from the shared possessions

#### LISTENING SECTION 2

5.  
The USA
- 6.
- a. True
  - b. False – The early references are in 1916
  - c. False - It (the use) is increasing elsewhere
  - d. False – The clipping is very recent (since the 1980s)
7.  
pre-nup and prenup

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## Lesson Plan: Teacher's notes

### Lesson 13: Prenup

#### EXTRA WORK

**1.**

1. the ending
2. messy
3. all their worldly goods

#### LANGUAGE

**2.**

- a. head
- b. doc
- c. admin
- d. spec
- e. mic
- f. gym
- g. telly
- h. hi-tec

**3.**

1. spec
2. gym
3. hi-tec
4. telly
5. head
6. mic
7. doc
8. admin

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## WORKSHEET 1

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

### SPEAKING

**1. Discuss these questions with other students**

- a. Are you or would you like to be married?
- b. What happens at a typical wedding in your country?
- c. Have traditions changed over the years?
- d. Is money important at weddings in your country?
- e. Is divorce common in your country? Why do people get divorced?
- f. What problems can divorce cause?

### VOCABULARY

**2. Match these words and phrases to their definitions**

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| a. <b>a clip</b>       | A punctuation mark written as a dash -   |
| b. <b>nuptial</b>      | New, not very old                        |
| c. <b>an agreement</b> | A shortened version of something         |
| d. <b>a reference</b>  | A legal arrangement or contract          |
| e. <b>recent</b>       | When you mention another person or thing |
| f. <b>a hyphen</b>     | Connected to a wedding                   |

## LISTENING SECTION 1

**3. Now, listen to Professor Crystal talking about an abbreviation which is connected to weddings and marriages. Answer these questions.**

- a. What is the abbreviation?
- b. What is it short for?

**4. Listen again and answer these questions.**

- a. What are these kinds of abbreviations called by linguists?
- b. What is the abbreviation for an advertisement?
- c. What is the abbreviation for a perambulator (a baby carrier on wheels)?
- d. When did the word 'pre-nup' appear?
- e. A pre-nup is agreed before a marriage, when is it used and why?

## WORKSHEET 2

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### LISTENING SECTION 2

**5. Read these questions and listen to section 2 to check your ideas.**

a. In which country do you think the idea of a pre-nuptial agreement first appeared?

China      The USA      The UK      India

Listen again to section 2 and answer these questions.

**6. Are the following sentences true or false?**

a. American movie actors often use pre-nuptial agreements

b. The idea of pre-nuptial agreements is very modern

c. They are only used in America

d. The abbreviation appeared at the same time as the complete phrase

**7. What are the two ways that the abbreviation can be written?**

Listen again to check your answers.

## WORKSHEET 3 - EXTRA WORK

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### VOCABULARY

**1: Look at the tape script and find words or phrases that mean the following.**

- a. The final part of a word
- b. Not tidy or clean
- c. All the possessions someone owns

### LANGUAGE

**2. What do you think are the clippings of these words?**

- a. headmaster -
- b. doctor -
- c. administration -
- d. specifications -
- e. microphone -
- f. gymnasium -
- g. television -
- h. high technology -

**3. Put the abbreviated forms in the correct sentences.**

1. Could you tell me the computer's \_\_\_\_\_. How big is the hard drive?
2. I'm just going to the \_\_\_\_\_ for a work-out.
3. Bill gate's home is really \_\_\_\_\_
4. Did you see the film on the \_\_\_\_\_ last night?
5. If you are rude to the teacher, you have to see the \_\_\_\_\_
6. I can't hear anything. Have you turned the \_\_\_\_\_ on?
7. I should be better soon, so the \_\_\_\_\_ says.
8. He works in the \_\_\_\_\_ department, so he's good at organising things.