Teacher’s notes

joke /dʒək/ noun ★★
Level Upper Intermediate – Advanced

Suggestions for use in the classroom
This dictation is appropriate for classes at Upper Intermediate level or above. Although the dictation is only about one minute long, the ideas below will need about one hour of class time if you use them all!

1 Lead-in
You can prepare the students for the dictation by using one or both of the following activities:

Find out which students in the class know any jokes in their first language, but don’t ask them to tell their jokes – yet! Arrange the students into groups, making sure that at least one student in each group has a joke to tell.

In the groups, the students tell their jokes – initially, in their mother tongue. Then ask them to choose one or more of the jokes they have heard, and to prepare (in their groups) how to tell the joke(s) in English. This preparation is important, because it is extremely difficult to tell a joke well in a foreign language, even at a high level.

Rearrange the groups. Students can now tell their jokes. Ask them which joke they prefer, and why.

Tell the class that they are going to hear a joke about someone who pretends to have a telephone conversation. Put the students into groups. Ask them to brainstorm as many reasons as possible why someone might pretend to be on the phone.

If necessary, elicit a few ideas from the whole class before dividing them into groups, e.g. a young child who is playing / someone who uses this as an excuse not to do something (such as answer the door of the house).

2 The dictation
It is usually best for students to listen to the complete text at least once without stopping before they are asked to take notes. When they listen again, you will need to pause from time to time to allow students to write. The script has suggested pause marks. One of the values of dictations is to train the students’ short-term memory, so the sections between pauses should be short enough for the exercise to be do-able, but long enough to be challenging.

You can use one of the suggestions below to vary this procedure.

Allow a student / the students to decide when to pause the recording.

Instead of using the recording, read the dictation yourself. Tell the students that there will be one word missing from every line you read and they must identify and insert the missing words.

Read each line twice (or three times if you think it is necessary), with a decent pause between each reading, each time omitting the words that have been struck through in the script below.

N.B. Do not give any information about punctuation if you are planning to use the first activity in the ‘Follow-up’ section!
A resourceful young graduate decided to launch his own business as a financial consultant. The business did not progress very fast and in the first few days he had scarcely any enquiries, which left him feeling, not surprisingly, rather disappointed.

On the fifth day, however, he was relieved to hear a knock on his door. ‘Come in,’ he said.

Because he was worried that his visitor might realize he did not have a single client and had nothing to do, he picked up the phone and pretended to be busy.

He was speaking on the phone as his visitor walked into the room.

The young man signalled to the visitor to take a seat.

‘I won’t be long,’ he told him and resumed the phone conversation, if you can call it that, that he was having.

After a while, he hung up and turned to his visitor, who was looking surprised. ‘How can I help you?’ he asked.

His visitor answered: ‘I’ve come to connect your phone!’

Encourage the students to compare their answers in pairs before conducting feedback on the missing words with the whole class.

3 Follow-up
You can use one or all of the exercises below to explore some of the language in the dictation.

A Punctuation
Tell students to work in pairs and check the punctuation in their transcriptions of the dictation. After they have had time to compare notes, tell them to check again. This time, tell them that their texts should include:

- 10 full stops
- 11 commas
- 4 sets of inverted commas (speech marks)
- 1 question mark
- 1 exclamation mark

Tell them that, if they are not sure, they can consult the punctuation section (IW40-43) in the ‘Improve your Writing Skills’ pages in the middle of their dictionaries. They will find the following sections particularly helpful:

4.1 Subordinate clauses at the beginning or end of a sentence
4.2 Subordinate clauses inside another clause
5.1 Defining and non-defining relative clauses
5.2 Sentential relative clauses
6 Using commas with adverbs and adverbial phrases.
Finally, distribute copies of the script so that the students can check their answers and identify any problems.

B Expand your vocabulary
Tell the students to find and underline the following words in the script:
fast  disappointed  said  worried  speaking
walked  told  surprised  asked  answered
Now tell them to look at the ‘Expand your Vocabulary’ pages (EV1 – EV24) in the middle of their dictionaries. Ask them to find possible replacements for the words they have underlined.

Suggested answers:
briskly / quickly / rapidly / swiftly
disillusioned
called
anxious
chatting / mumbling
ambled / marched / strode
informed
amazed / astonished / taken aback
enquired / inquired
replied

After conducting feedback with the whole class, the students can turn over their scripts and practise telling the joke with a partner.

C Spelling
The dictation contains a number of words that are commonly misspelt (although they are not quite as tricky as the spelling of ‘misspelt’!). You may like to finish the lesson with a quick spelling test.
1 resourceful
2 consultant
3 enquiries
4 disappointed
5 relieved
6 signalled
7 resumed