Unit 2: Staying in touch

SUMMARY

You can use this summary to guide the learning objectives and target setting for your class.

Can-do statements

By the end of this unit, students will be able to say:
- I can navigate the pages of a social networking site.
- I can read a social networking site quickly to find information about particular friends.
- I can use the right expressions when making comments on social networking sites.
- I can read an email quickly to understand its main message.

Skill focus

Pre-reading:
Part A ❶
Skimming:
Part B ❶
Scanning:
Part A ❷
Reading for general understanding:
Part A ❸, **Part B ❷**
Reading for detail:
Part A ❹, **Part B ❸**

Vocabulary

Social networking: *status*, *profile*, *message*, *comment*, *share*, *like*, *subject box*, *email*

(Personal) news: *having a baby*, *taking a (driving) test*, *finish/run a marathon*

Responding to news: *congratulations*, *happy birthday*, *good luck*, *me too*, *that's terrible*, *get better soon*

Grammar

Ellipsis: *(I) Can't wait*, *(I'm) Having a great day*, *(I'm) Taking a test*, *(I) Broke my arm*

CLASSROOM EXTENSION IDEAS

You can use some or all of these ideas to check and enhance your students' understanding as they work their way through *Unit 2* of *Reading A2* in class.

Using *Getting started*

This mingle activity extends the questions in *Getting started*.

1. Get the students to discuss the *Getting started* questions among themselves in small groups or pairs depending on the size of your class.

2. Monitor their discussions and get them to start writing further questions about social networking, picking different categories for different groups. For example:
   - What methods do you use to stay in touch? *email*, *text*, *voice calls*, *Twitter*, *Facebook*
   - What devices do you use? *phone*, *desktop*, *laptop*, *tablet*
   - How much time spent a day? *hours*, *minutes*, *I lose track*
   - How much do you think networking costs you? *phone charges*, *upgrades*, *packages*

3. Get the students to mingle with each other and ask their questions of students in other groups.

4. Feed back with the whole group.

5. As with other extension exercises of this type, you can get the students to write up and display the answers to their survey as a poster in class or as homework.

Using *Part A*

Part A Exercise 1 is a pre-reading task aimed at familiarizing students with the vocabulary in the reading text. You may want to further expand the students' vocabulary with action words (e.g. *like*, *block*, *unfriend*, etc.) found on social networking sites.

1. Complete *Part A Exercise 1*.

2. Elicit verbs for actions on social networking sites (e.g. *like*, *block*, *unfriend*, *report*, *edit*, *upload*).

3. Ask students for definitions as in *Part A Exercise 1* for each one.

   like – to indicate you think something is really good

   block – to stop someone from sending you messages

   unfriend – to remove someone from your list of contacts

   report – to send a message about something to the website administrator

   edit – to change something you have written on a website

   upload – to add a photo or file to the website

4. After a brief introduction you can allow students to do stages 2–3 in pairs or small groups and set their questions as another exercise for other pairs.

You may want to highlight the use of ellipses on social networking sites:

1. Ask students to identify examples on Friendsmeet.

   (I) Can't wait to meet …

   (I'm) Having a great day!

   (I'm) Taking my driving test today.

   (I) Broke my arm

(I) Will post pix soon.

2. Discuss with students the way ellipsis becomes more and more frequent the briefer the message, from email, to message board, to text message, to chat.

3. Ask students to think of other places where they may read ellipsis, for example, newspaper headlines, short memos, to-do lists.

4. Discuss with students when they should use it and when not, and the importance of punctuation to maintain coherence, e.g. *I'm 23. And you?*

Part A Exercise 4 gives students the opportunity to add comments to the posts on Friendsmeet. You can extend this activity by creating a class social networking site.

1. Get students to think of a name for your social networking site.

2. Give each student a copy of the handout below and get them to complete the site name (top right) and add their name and a piece of news.

3. Students can then pass them round the class (in one direction) and fellow students can add comments.

4. Remind students that they should read all the comments and can comment on the comments.

5. Encourage students to use ellipses but monitor to make sure they maintain coherent sentences.

6. Students may want to do the activity with made up identities or with the identities of famous people – perhaps someone who has recently been in the news.

7. Feed back with the whole group.

Using *Part B*

Yiannis's email has fewer ellipses but does use an informal writing style which would be common when writing to friends.

1. Get students to identify the non-standard features.

   Hi

   …

   !!!

   VERY

   See you soon

   Students may also identify *And* at the start of a sentence.

2. After *Exercise 3* the class can share their replies in pairs or groups.

3. If they have used new non-standard writing styles in their own emails, pairs can feed back to the whole group about whether it was easy to understand.

You may want to bring in some other examples of non-standard writing from comment boards on news sites for students to decipher. Or, for business-focused students, bring in some business emails for students to create their own scanning questions to test a partner.

For practical purposes, you may want to raise the issue of safety on the internet and in chatrooms or rules for good behaviour in chatrooms. This can provide a good discussion topic, research homework or another opportunity for creating a wall poster, and will allow you to activate the language *should/should not* or *do/do not*.

Rules for internet safety might include not giving out contact details or passwords. Rules for good behaviour might include not using insulting language.

PHOTOCOPIABLES

CitySocialising.com profile

My profile

My friends

My messages

Share   Comment   Like