



Review

- Elicit the topic from the previous lesson's video/lesson. Write Ss' comments on the board as a visual reminder of the content.
- Explain that this lesson will build on the general strategies learned up until now in the iEnglish program.

Introduction

- Tell Ss that one of the most rewarding and exciting parts of learning a new language is being able to read great literature, listen to classic songs, and watch interesting movies in the language in which they were written. Remind Ss that novels, music, and film are also fun and effective ways to study pronunciation, culture, vocabulary, and grammar.
- Try to relate to Ss' frustration with trying to break into the language arts of another language, using your own experiences
- Example: "I have tried to read a classic Japanese novel, **Snow Country**, only to give up on the first page because using a dictionary for every third word was time-consuming and annoying. Now, I read for main idea, and not to understand every word."
- Remind Ss that children begin speaking their native language knowing only a handful of words. Through hearing songs, listening to native speakers, watching dramatic works, and eventually reading, they gain an understanding of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and culture. Explain to Ss that although adults tend to want to know the meaning of everything in a work, it's important to be able to look past small details to gain a general understanding of a work.
- Explain to Ss that "identifying main ideas" is most useful when they are trying to learn cultural facts. For example, watching a video about a wedding in North America will help them identify several cultural facts: who is involved, how formally they speak, what witnesses are expected to do and say, where such an event might take place, etc.
- Tell Ss that identifying main ideas can also help them understand the meaning of new vocabulary. For example, the word "U-ie" might be very foreign to Ss. However, if Ss understand that the conversation is taking place in a car, and the driver has just driven straight where he should have turned left, and the passenger says, "Just pull a U-ie", the meaning becomes clearer (perform a U-turn).
- Suggest to Ss that they listen to English, even if they don't understand every word, as a way to familiarize themselves with the characteristic rhythm of English (thought groups, word and sentence stress, intonation), which will help them achieve better pronunciation.
- Tell Ss that identifying the main idea is really just identifying two things: WHO or WHAT, and THE AUTHOR'S INTENDED MESSAGE. WHO/WHAT is the subject of the article/book/movie/conversation, etc. THE AUTHOR'S INTENDED MESSAGE is what the writer, speaker, artist is trying to say. Explain to Ss that main ideas can usually be reduced to one sentence.



Introduction (continued)

- Ask Ss to identify the main idea of your body language. Open your eyes wide, open your mouth, and hold your hands up, palms out towards Ss. They should identify that you're trying to say, "Stop!". Explain that the WHO would be the Ss, and MESSAGE would be "stop".
- Ask Ss if they know the story of "The Boy who Cried Wolf" (A boy is in charge of protecting a flock of sheep. For fun, the boy runs back to the village and cries that a wolf is attacking the sheep. The villagers run to help, and realize that there was no wolf. The boy laughs and laughs. The villagers are angry and return to the village. Later, the boy repeats the trick, and the villagers once again come and see that they've been fooled. They leave the boy, angry as ever. A while later, a wolf emerges from the forest and begins attacking the sheep. The boy runs to the village, and tries to get help, but no one believes him. He goes back to the sheep, and tries in vain to fend off the wolf. In some versions, the boy loses all of the sheep and is miserable. In others, the wolf eats him!). Ask Ss to identify the main idea of the story:

WHO/WHAT

Liars

MESSAGE

suffer.

- Explain to Ss that this is a simple example of finding the main idea. Ask Ss if they would like to see a more complicated example.
- Hook up an LCD projector and access the following video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A6kWJFtuyy0>

Play the video and ask Ss to find the main idea.

WHO/WHAT

Schmoozing

MESSAGE

is important.

- Explain to Ss that they will now practice with an even longer work. Distribute the "How to Learn a Language" handout. Ask Ss to read it, and identify the main idea.

WHO/WHAT

Learning a language

MESSAGE

is possible for anyone.

- Explain to Ss that sometimes, even native speakers will disagree about what constitutes the main idea of something. For example, some people would say that the main idea of the movie Titanic is "Nothing and no one is invincible", since the "unsinkable" ship sinks and one of the main characters, who usually survive hardships in films, is killed. Others may say the main idea is "True love triumphs above adversity" because the arranged marriage does not survive the voyage, but the new love between the main characters transcends death and time (Rose's "heart will go on").



Introduction (continued)

Still others would say that the main idea is that “The divide between rich and poor is insurmountable”, since the poor classes are locked below deck, even when the ship is sinking, and Rose and Jack (a rich woman and a poor man) are kept apart by Rose’s family and, of course, Jack’s death.

All of these interpretations of “main idea” are correct. Explain that simpler words, like textbooks, newspaper articles, sitcoms, and conversations in the break room, usually have one unambiguous main idea.

- Remind Ss of the ways that learning how to identify main ideas can help them in their language studies.

Presentation

- Play the video for Ss once.
- Elicit some main points from the video. Write a brief outline of these points on the board in the order that they appear in the video.
- Play the video for Ss again. Augment the outline already located on the board.

Content Knowledge-Building

- Ask Ss to complete the “See It Activities”.
- Review the exercises together as a group.
- Ask Ss to complete the “Try It Activities”.
- Ask Ss to discuss their work with a partner or a small group. Circulate and offer assistance or commentary, as needed.

Skill-Building

- Ask Ss to complete the “Use It Activities”.
- If time permits, discuss the reflection-based questions as a class, or in several small groups.

Wrap-Up

- Explain to Ss that even native English speakers may have trouble identifying the main idea in texts – different people focus on different things!
- Encourage learners to practice their new skills by delving into the rich world of English literature, drama, and music.