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Teacher's pack

Lesson plan and student worksheets
with answers

Lesson 12

Spam



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Lesson Plan: Teacher's notes

Lesson 12: Spam

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Level: Intermediate and above

Topic: Technology – the internet

Language: Spam and expressions using food

Aims: Listening skills – A short talk
Language – idiomatic uses of words connected with food

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

This plan was downloaded from:

bbclearningenglish.com/radio/specials/1728_uptodate/page13.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 about a word which has come from modern technology.

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 try to answer **Listening Exercises 6 and 7**. They listen again to **Listening Section 2** to check/complete their answers.

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 looks at idioms that use food words.

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TAPESCRIPTS

Listening Section 1

Spam. Technology always has an influence on language; when printing came in, it brought new words into the language; when broadcasting first started, new words came into the language – and now the internet has come along, so it's not surprising that quite a large number of new words have come into the English vocabulary since, oh, especially the last 10 years really, since the world wide web came into being. And of course if you've got email (and most people have these days) then you will have encountered the word spam. Spam: flooding your e-mail box with ads or other unwanted messages. But why the word 'spam' for this sort of thing?

Listening Section 2

But why the word 'spam' for this sort of thing? Spam was originally a tinned meat, back in the 1930s, a brand name for a particular kind of cold meat, but it became very fashionable when Monty Python, the satirical television comedy series, back in the 70's and 80's...they had a sketch where, just for fun they had spam, with every item on the restaurant menu: bacon and spam, egg and spam, ham and spam, spam and spam, spam spam spam spam – and they actually sang a song about it, and it caught on. And the word became a real part of the language, meaning any unwanted material of any kind. And then, when the internet came along, it wasn't surprising really that spam became part of that kind of experience. And the evidence that it's become part of the language is not just because of the noun 'spam', which you might expect to see in the internet context, but because it's generated other kinds of linguistic expressions as well. You've now got verbs based upon it and adjectives based upon it. You can now have 'I've been spammed' or 'somebody is spamming me' – and the actual people who do the work themselves, who send out these horrible e-mails to everybody so that they're flooded with these things, what are they called? Well, there's a new noun: they're called – spammers!

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ANSWER KEY

VOCABULARY

2.

- a. **broadcasting** sending out sounds and pictures using radio waves
- b. **to flood something / somewhere** to fill an area or space with a large amount of something e.g. water
- c. **tinned food** food which is in a metal container or can
- d. **to catch on** to become popular
- e. **evidence** something that makes you believe that something exists or is true
- f. **linguistic** connected to language or the study of language

LISTENING SECTION 1

3.

- a. The internet / the world wide web / e-mail
- b. Spam

4.

- a. Printing and broadcasting
- b. No, he doesn't – “so it's not surprising that quite a large number of new words have come into the English vocabulary since, oh, especially the last 10 years really, since the world wide web came into being”
- c. Spam is the word for the **unwanted** messages and **advertisements** that come into your **e-mail** in-box. These messages come in **large** amounts and you do not ask to **receive** them.

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LISTENING SECTION 2

5.

- a. Spam is a type of poor quality meat that used to be very common

6.

- a. False. It was a tinned meat
b. False. It was a comedy series on TV
c. True – it caught on.
d. True
e. False – I've been spammed, He is spamming me

7.

A spammer

EXTRA WORK

1.

- a. encountered (to encounter something)
b. fashionable
c. a sketch

LANGUAGE

2.

- a. cup of tea
b. beef
c. jelly
d. pickle
e. hot cakes
f. hot potato
g. ham

3.

- i. – b. to beef about something
ii. – c. to turn to jelly
iii. – g. to be a ham / to be hammy
iv. – e. to sell like hot cakes
v. – a. to not be your cup of tea
vi. – d. to be in a pickle
vii. – f. to be a hot potato

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. Discuss these questions with other students

- a. Can you think of examples of modern technology that you use in the following fields?
 - Transport
 - Home life
 - Study or work
 - Entertainment
 - Communication
- b. What have been the benefits of modern technology?
- c. What have been the drawbacks of modern technology?
- d. What have been the benefits and drawbacks of the internet?
Does the internet have any problems?

VOCABULARY

2. Match these words and phrases to their definitions

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. broadcasting | something that makes you believe that something exists or is true |
| b. to flood something / somewhere | sending out sounds and pictures using radio waves |
| c. tinned food | to become popular |
| d. to catch on | food which is in a metal container or can |
| e. evidence | connected to language or the study of language |
| f. linguistic | to fill an area or space with a large amount of something e.g. water |

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LISTENING SECTION 1

3. Now, listen to Professor Crystal talking about how technology affects the development of the English language. Answer these questions.

- a. Which item of modern technology does Professor Crystal concentrate on?
- b. What is the new word that has come from this technology?

4. Listen again and answer these questions.

- a. What other types of technology does Professor Crystal mention?
- b. Does he think it is strange that new words have come from internet technology?
- c. Complete the definition of spam with the words in the box..

large unwanted receive advertisements email

Spam is the word for the _____ messages and _____ that come into your _____ in-box.
These messages come in _____ amounts and you do not ask to _____ them.

WORKSHEET 2

LISTENING SECTION 2

5. At the end of part one of his talk, Professor Crystal asks, “But why the word spam for this sort of thing?” Which of the following explanations of the original meaning of spam do you think is correct?

- a. Spam is a type of poor quality meat that used to be very common
- b. Spam is the rubbish left on the beach after the sea has gone down
- c. Spam is the stuff which collects in the bottom of your bag e.g. small coins, pieces of paper, pen lids etc.
- d. Spam is the advertisements for pizza restaurants etc. which are posted through your door

Listen to Section 2 of the talk and check your ideas. Were you correct?

6. Are the following sentences true or false?

- a. Spam was a fresh meat
- b. Monty Python was a comedy series on the radio
- c. The Monty Python song about spam became very popular
- d. In the song, spam came with everything and it was not really wanted
- e. You can't use spam as a verb

7. What is the name for someone who sends out spam emails?

Listen again to check your answers.

WORKSHEET 3 - EXTRA WORK

VOCABULARY

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

- a. to meet something
- b. very popular or trendy
- c. a short comedy performance or scene

LANGUAGE

2. Although the modern meaning of spam is connected to the internet, originally it was a type of food. Look at these expressions which all use food words. Underline the food words. Have you eaten those types of food?

- a. It's not my cup of tea . I prefer rock music.
- b. Stop beefing about doing the shopping . It's your turn, so just do it.
- c. I was so scared my legs turned to jelly.
- d. He is in a pickle now, how will he escape?
- e. The new computer game is selling like hot cakes.
- f. Immigration is a political hot potato at the moment.
- g. He is such a hammy actor, I think he ruins the film

3. Match the food expressions above with the definitions below.

- i. To complain about something
- ii. To become weak and wobbly
- iii. To perform in a very artificial way
- iv. To sell very quickly
- v. To not be a personal preference
- vi. To be in a difficult situation
- vii. To be a controversial issue, to be something no-one wants to deal with