

VIDEO WORKSHEETS TEACHING NOTES

Each unit of *American Empower* is accompanied by a documentary-style video that links to the topic or theme of the unit. The videos and accompanying worksheets are standalone learning materials that can be used at any stage during the teaching of a unit. Students don't need to have completed the unit material before watching the video.

The content of the videos aims to amplify the topic of the unit while providing useful listening and speaking skills practice. The teaching guidelines below can be used with any of the videos in the course and don't relate to any one specific video. They outline the aims of the video lessons while giving an indication of task types and teaching methodology. Each video worksheet is divided into three sections: *Before you watch*, *While you watch*, and *After you watch*. The notes below focus on each section, respectively.

Teachers who wish to explore a wide range of ideas for teaching with video should consult *Language Learning with Digital Video* by Ben Goldstein and Paul Driver (Cambridge University Press, 2015).

BEFORE YOU WATCH

Aims

The main aim of this section of the worksheet is to prepare students to watch the video. This involves activating students' prior content and language knowledge in relation to the video.

More specific aims for *Before you watch* are to provide speaking fluency practice, to pre-teach unfamiliar vocabulary, to predict video content, and to highlight key background cultural information.

Task types

There is a strong emphasis on speaking tasks in this section. Often students do an activity alone in preparation for speaking and then share their ideas with other students.

Specific task types in this section are discussion activities, personalization of the topic, quizzes, prediction from video stills, matching pictures to new lexis, and matching contextualized new words to definitions.

Teaching tips

For speaking activities:

- Give students time to think about discussion questions before you get them to speak – suggest they write notes.
- Vary interaction patterns for speaking activities – pairs, small groups, larger groups.
- Get students to do activities twice – each time with different students.
- Conduct whole-class feedback on speaking activities by asking two or three pairs/groups to share their ideas.
- For prediction activities, write students' ideas on the board so they can be referred to after the first viewing.

For vocabulary activities:

- Students work alone and then check their answers in pairs.
- With classes that need more support, you can suggest they use a dictionary to help.
- Conduct whole-class feedback on vocabulary tasks – with more difficult words, it may be a good idea to ask concept questions that double-check students' understanding of the meaning.

Alternative teaching ideas

Here are some suggestions for *Before you watch* activities not included in the worksheets:

- Get students to research the topic online either before the lesson or during the lesson (if students can access the Internet in the classroom).
- Provide extra visuals associated with the topic to generate more speaking.
- Some discussion activities can be turned into "Find someone who ..." activities – you will probably need to add extra questions.
- Check the video script for any extra words you think your students might not know.
- Provide students with written (e.g., fill-in-the-blank) or spoken (e.g., personalization) practice of new vocabulary.

WHILE YOU WATCH

Aims

The main aim of this section is to allow students to understand the content of the video.

More specific aims for *While you watch* are to practice gist and detailed listening skills, to practice very detailed listening for language, and to provide students with language-noticing opportunities.

Task types

There is a wide array of comprehension task types in this section of the worksheet. Initial tasks require students to have only a gist understanding of the video. Each subsequent task requires them to understand increasing levels of detail.

Specific task types in this section are choosing the best summary, confirming predictions (from *Before you watch*), identifying images in the video, matching two ideas, answering comprehension questions, True/False questions, choosing the correct information, sentence completion, note-taking (both structured and freer), understanding a speaker's point of view.

Teaching tips

- Make sure you set viewing tasks before students watch the video.
- Give students time to read the task.
- After viewing, let students check their answers in pairs or small groups.
- Monitor when students are checking their answers to see whether they need to watch the video again.
- If students need more support, you can watch the video in stages, giving students time to check answers after each stage.
- With tasks that get students to listen for specific language items, you can pause the video after they hear the utterance.
- Do whole-class feedback for each task before moving on to the next one – this helps weaker students.
- When appropriate, write feedback on the board so the correct answer is clear for students.
- With whole-class feedback on note-taking tasks, you can show students a model of notes for them to check their notes against.

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Alternative teaching ideas

Here are some suggestions for *While you watch* activities not included in the worksheets:

- Before the first gist-viewing task, show the video (or part of it) with no sound and have students predict what they think they will hear.
- Before the first gist-viewing task, play the audio (or part of it) with no images and have students predict what they think they will see.
- If you think a detailed viewing task might be too challenging for your students (e.g., note-taking), you can create your own, more-structured task that you think might be more manageable.
- Divide up tasks; for example, have half the class listen for the answers to odd-numbered questions and the other half to even-numbered questions. Do whole-class feedback and then play the video a final time.
- Add your own personal response questions for students after the first or second viewing, in other words, questions that ask students to voice a personal opinion on the video content. For example: *Would you like to do that activity / visit that place / meet those people? Why / Why not? What did you think of the ideas in the video?*
- At lower levels, you could include a view-and-follow-the-script activity as a final, extra viewing task.
- At higher levels, you could include some critical-thinking questions in relation to the video content. For example: *What do you think will happen as a result of ... ? What are the implications of ... ?*

AFTER YOU WATCH

Aims

The main aim of this section is for students to activate the content of the video by means of a speaking activity.

More specific aims for *After you watch* are to provide speaking fluency practice, and to provide freer oral practice of new vocabulary focused on in the video.

Task types

There is a variety of speaking tasks that have a student-centered focus.

Specific task types in this section are discussions, role plays, personalization of the topic, information gap tasks, ranking and consensus activities, questionnaires, and joint planning of events/activities.

Teaching tips

- Give students time to think and plan what they are going to say – often there are prompts on the worksheet to help students with this.
- Think carefully about which students will work together – plan your interaction.
- With some activities, it might help to do a whole-class example together with a strong student.
- When students are speaking, monitor and be available to help students. You can also listen to what they are saying and note down any useful language to give feedback on – both good examples and examples that need improving.

- With discussion activities, students can move around from group to group.
- With role-play activities, students can do the role play more than once – get them to change partners and try it again.
- When conducting whole-class feedback, focus first on content, that is, the ideas that students talked about. If you have some language you want to give feedback on, do this second.

Alternative teaching ideas

Here are some suggestions for *After you watch* activities not included in the worksheets:

- Before students do the speaking activity, put them in pairs or small groups and get them to recap the content of the video – what do they remember?
- If the topic is interesting for students, get them to do more research for ideas as homework before doing the speaking activity. Students can give feedback to each other in groups.
- Give each student two or three key words from the video and let them know they have to use these words when they speak – their partner can try and guess the key words.
- Vary the speaking activity if you think the one on the worksheet won't be successful with your students; for example, you might turn a role play into a discussion, or vice versa.
- If your students are studying for an exam with a speaking component or perhaps plan to study academic English at some point in the future, you could get them to do mini-presentations based on the video content.
- Provide an extension activity that gets students to do some writing; for example, they can write a summary of the video (perhaps using the notes they took while they watched), or you could set a writing assignment associated with the video topic.