

Where do new words come from?

Aim of worksheet

To give students reading practice and to extend vocabulary. The theme of the text is how new words come into the English language.

Time and materials

Allow about 45 minutes.

The activities are best done with a dictionary so the students can find and/or check their answers. All the language in the worksheet is in the Second Edition of the *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners* (MED).

Procedure

- 1 Hand out a copy of the worksheet to each student. Ask the students to look at the title of the article and ask them what they know about where new words come from and how they enter the language.
- 2 Ask the students to read the text. Tell them not to worry at this stage about the exact meaning of every word.
- 3 Elicit a summary of the main ideas of the text. You could ask a few comprehension questions to check understanding and to help explain meaning. For example:

What is the most common way that new words are formed in English?

What other ways are new words formed?

Which words does the text use to illustrate compounding, borrowing, giving new meaning and shortening?

Which words that Shakespeare invented are in the text?

- 4 Ask the students, working alone or in pairs and using a dictionary, to answer the questions in Activities 1 to 5. Go through the answers and check understanding with the students.
- 5 Ask the students to form pairs or small groups and discuss questions 1 to 3 in the **For discussion** section. Ask them to report anything interesting from their discussions.

Answers

► Activity 1

a makes up **b** mundane **c** come about **d** euphemistically **e** homespun
f load **g** coinage **h** affix **i** without trace **j** oblivion

► Activity 2

a to invent

b *example answers*

to invent an explanation for something, especially in order to avoid being punished or embarrassed;

to put make-up on someone's face;

to prepare or arrange something;

to work at different times from usual because you have not worked enough at the normal times;

to become friendly with someone again after an argument;

to combine together to form something larger

Answers (continued)

c 1 to take the place of something that has been lost or damaged *or* to provide something good so that something bad seems less important

2 to do something good that helps someone feel better after you did something bad to them

▶ **Activity 3**

a to die

b to go to the toilet

c to have sex with someone (especially someone you are not married to)

▶ **Activity 4**

a carrying a lot of heavy things

b a question with a hidden or second meaning

c containing bullets

d very rich

▶ **Activity 5**

a all the time

b used when you realise you have been silly or made a mistake

c emails that are sent to large numbers of people on the Internet, especially when these are not wanted

d a difficult day when nothing seems to go well for you

e every possible thing

f the activity of shopping in order to make yourself feel happier

g used for describing a politician who expresses opinions that are different from the official opinions of the political party they belong to, or for describing the things they say

h someone who tries to avoid working