



Lesson plan 1

Aims:

- to see how common words can be used in an academic context
- to use the dictionary to find academic definitions of words
- to use the dictionary to find the right collocation when using academic words

Level: Upper intermediate – advanced

Time: 45 minutes

- 1 Write the word **CHALLENGE** on the board. Ask students what it means and elicit a sentence which you then write on the board.
- 2 Ask students to identify the part of speech of CHALLENGE in the sentence. Elicit other forms: challenge (*noun*), to challenge (*verb*), challenging (*adjective*), challenger (*person*). Briefly elicit a sentence with the other forms of the word.
- 3 Point out that, although *challenge* can be used in a non-academic context, it can also be used in an academic context. Ask students whether *challenge* in the sentence on the board is used in an academic or non-academic way.
- 4 Put the sentences provided on the separate sheet on the board, or handout or display them using a projector. Ask students to:
 - a Identify the part of speech of the underlined word
 - b Look in their dictionaries and find the correct definition of each use of the word
- 5 Ask students to compare answers then ask them to match each underlined word with one of the synonyms or paraphrases below.
 - difficult but interesting (v)
 - threat (iii)
 - presents a threat to (ii)
 - question (iv)
 - arguments against (vi)
 - difficult task (i)
- 6 Ask students to identify any patterns or collocations in the sentences above. Identify one together first: **face the challenge of**. Others: *challenge the authority of... a challenge to sth...challenge the validity of...*
- 7 Give student pairs two minutes to look in their dictionaries for more collocations, but don't let them write any down at this point.

- 8 Ask students to close their dictionaries. Give them one minute to write down (in pairs) as many collocations as they can remember.
- 9 Ask students (in pairs) to write 3-4 questions using some of the collocations. Put an example or two on the board: *Have you ever faced a major challenge? What is the most significant challenge facing students today? Do you think the government is doing enough to address the challenge of unemployment?* Encourage students to use different patterns: i.e. adjective + challenge; verb + challenge; challenge + verb; challenge + noun; adverb + challenge.
- 10 Put pairs together to form groups of 4. Instruct students to ask and answer the questions.
- 11 For homework, ask students to (1) read the thesaurus definition for *challenge* (found on the same page as the definition, p 111) and find the main difference between the four synonyms *challenge, question, dispute* and *doubt*; (2) write a 200-word paragraph answering one of the questions they wrote using the collocations, and (3) look through the dictionary to find another common word that can be used in an academic context.

- i** Graduates face the new challenge of finding a suitable career.
(*noun, definition 1*)
- ii** New legislation challenges the authority of the police to handle certain types of crime. (*verb, definition 2*)
- iii** The new phone company opening up on the high street is a serious challenge to the existing ones. (*noun, definition 3*)
- iv** Doctors are starting to challenge the validity of some earlier studies. (*verb, definition 1*)
- v** The students found the course challenging and rewarding.
(*adjective*)
- vi** The principal challenges to the theory will be examined.
(*noun, definition 1*)

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(*adjective*)
- vi** The principal challenges to the theory will be examined.
(*noun, definition 1*)