

Looking Back... and to the Future (conversation lesson)

level: intermediate (B1) +

class: one-to-one

time: 60 min

skills: speaking, listening

Warm up

1. Ask your student how their Christmas was and if they kept any *Christmas traditions*. Have a little chat to warm them up after the break.
2. Then ask: 'And how was the whole year? Was it a good year for you? Do you think it was a good year for the world?'

2014 Zeitgeist

3. Ask your student if they can remember *5 important events* that happened last year.
4. Can they relate words from the worksheet below to any events from 2014?
5. Find *Google Zeitgeist 2014* on youtube.com and watch it with your student. If necessary, explain what 'zeitgeist' means. Ask: 'What are the other events you can see and you didn't mention?' Help with any difficult vocabulary at this stage.
6. If necessary, watch the video several times to make sure your student's list of events is as long as possible.
7. Ask your student to choose the *5 most important events* of 2014. Why do they consider them to be more important than the rest?
8. Then, choose one feeling that best characterises the *mood* of 2014. As your student explains their choice, challenge them a little. :-)

New Year's Resolutions

9. Remind students of the traditions they talked about in the warm-up and ask them if they know any traditions related to the New Year. Elicit the topic of the second part of the lesson: *New Year's resolutions*.
10. Ask a few questions about New Year's resolutions: 'Do you ever make them? Why/why not? And do you keep them?'
11. Make a list of *top 5 most popular resolutions*. Think of some reasons why they are so popular and why people often fail to stick to them.
12. Try to think back and make a list of all *people you have talked about* in today's lesson, esp. in the part 2014 Zeitgeist. Then, take turns with your student to make New Year's resolutions for each of them. Let each other guess who you are speaking on behalf of.
13. Then, pick one of them and speak for them as if on 31st January 2015. Did they keep their resolution? How hard was that? What are they going to do next?

Cooler

14. Show the *pictures from Google Zeitgeist* again and ask your students to sum up with one sentence what happened.



A word cloud featuring various events and topics from 2014. The words are arranged in a roughly circular pattern around the year '2014', which is the largest and most central word. Other prominent words include 'election', 'riots', 'Korea', 'Ukraine', 'Malaysian', 'terrorism', 'ISIS', 'Pope', 'referendum', 'the Wall', 'World Cup', 'Sochi', 'virus', 'facebook', and 'World Cup'.

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