The ideas on this worksheet will help you to exploit our topical news series ‘Words in the News’ in the classroom. There is a new episode every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, so you can always find an up-to-date story to use. Most of the ideas on this worksheet need little or no preparation.

Go to bbclearningenglish.com/newsenglish/witn/index.shtml to find the latest stories and our archive of previous stories. You can also find a bank of Words in the News lesson plans by going to bbclearningenglish.com/teachingenglish/plans/witn_archive.shtml.

Here are some ideas for ways to use Words in the News in class:

**Before Reading / Listening**

1. **Prediction** – Give your students the title of the news story, and ask them to predict 10 words or phrases they think will be in the story. Students then read and/or listen to the news story to check their ideas.

2. **Prediction 2** – Give your students the title of the news story, and ask them to predict the content of the story. Students then read and/or listen to the news story to check their ideas.

3. **Gapfill prediction** – Give your students the text of the News story, with the vocabulary items blanked out. Students try to work out what the missing words/phrases should be, then listen and/or read to check their answers.

4. **Prediction 4** – Give students the title of the News story and the list of 10 words and phrases, and get them to write a short news story containing the vocabulary items. Students then read and/or listen to the news story to see if there are any similarities between the 2 stories and their use of the vocabulary items.

5. **Questions game** – Give students the title of the News story, and get them to write a list of 5 questions that they think will be answered by the story. Students then read and/or listen to the news story to see if their questions are answered.

6. **Extra words** – Give your students the text of the News story, but add some extra words: for example, prepositions, articles and auxiliaries. Students try to work out which words should be deleted, then listen and/or read to check their answers.

7. **Jumbled text** – Give your students the text of the News story, with the sentences jumbled up. Students try to unscramble the text, before listening and/or reading to check their answers.
While Reading / Listening

8. **Find the mistakes** – Create a text version of the story with some mistakes in it. The mistakes can be factual or linguistic, or even a mixture of both. Students read the story while listening to the audio, and mark the mistakes on their written version.

9. **Story reconstruction** – Play the audio only – don’t let them see the written version. Tell students to take notes, and when the story has finished, give them a few minutes to review their notes with a partner. Play the story twice more, pausing after each play for students to review and check their notes. The group who are able to re-tell the story the most accurately after 3 plays are the winners.

After Reading / Listening

10. **Sentence Auction** – Make a list of sentences using the vocabulary items from the News story. Pick some correct sentences, and some with errors. Give each student (or pair of students) some ‘money’. The students ‘bid’ on each sentence, and the highest bidder ‘buys’ the sentence. The winner of the game is the student who buys the highest number of correct sentences. At the end of the game, have the students look back at the News story, and see which sentences are correct.

11. **Scrambled Sentences** – Take example sentences from the News story, and mix the words up. The students have to re-order the words to make correct sentences. After the exercise, students can look back at the News story and find the correct versions of the sentences.

12. **Multiple Scrambled Sentences** – Take two (or even three) example sentences from the News story, and mix all the words together. The students have to reconstruct the original sentences. After the exercise, students can look back at the News story and find the answers.

13. **Roving reporters** – Students work in pairs or small groups. One or two students play the role of reporter, the other(s) are characters who feature in the news story. Together they plan and roleplay an interview to follow up on issues mentioned in the story.

14. **Noughts and Crosses** – Make a noughts-and-crosses grid, with one vocabulary item from the news story written in each square. Divide the students into two teams. When a team chooses a square, they have to use the vocabulary item in a sentence. They have to make an original sentence: they are not allowed to memorise and repeat the sentence from the News story. If their answer is correct, they get a nought or a cross – if not, they skip their turn.

15. **Expanded Noughts and Crosses** – This game works on the same principle as Noughts and Crosses above, but is suitable for larger classes as it involves three or more teams. Instead of a standard 3 X 3 noughts-and-crosses grid, make a 4 X 4 grid or even a 5 X 5 grid. Divide students into three or more teams, and instead of using the nought and cross symbols, have each team choose its own symbol (stars, hearts and smiley faces are popular choices). Then follow the instructions for Noughts and Crosses above.
16. **Writing** – Students compose a letter or write an article giving their opinion of the issues raised in the news story.

17. **Discussion** – Help your students prepare for a classroom discussion on the News story by writing a list of discussion issues/topics. Give them a few minutes to prepare ideas and language in pairs or small groups, before opening out the discussion to the class. You can follow up the discussion by having student write a summary of the main issues under discussion and giving their own opinion.

18. **In their shoes** – This is an exercise which helps students think about things from another person's viewpoint. Have them write a commentary about the News story from the point of view of one of the people mentioned in the story. For example, if someone has committed a crime, the student would write (in the first person) about why the person did what they did, how they feel about it now, what they felt while they were doing it, whether they regret it now, what they think will happen next etc. Another student could write about the same story from the point of view of the victim, another from the point of view of a police officer etc. They should try to incorporate some of the key language from the story if possible.