UK Culture: A Night out in Newcastle

Topic: Things to do in a city at night

Aims:
- To develop reading skills
- To develop the ability to work co-operatively in a group
- To develop the ability to deduce meaning from context

Level: Intermediate and above

Introduction
Reading can sometimes be a very solitary experience and many teachers prefer to get students to do it at home, but with the right kind of text and the right tasks, reading can be turned into a fun, collaborative and communicative experience. This lesson exploits an authentic text taken from a British Council website called 'UKinfocus': http://www2.britishcouncil.org/ukinfocus.htm and has a range of quite simple tasks that students work through in groups. There are also a range of suggestions for follow up tasks and the complete original text at the end.

Procedure

Pre reading task:
- Put the students into small groups and get them to brainstorm things they can do in the evening.

- Get students to talk about their favourite things to do in the evening and what are the best places for young people to go to have a good time.

Reading tasks:
- Divide the class into groups of five and give out the list of paragraph titles from **Worksheet A**.

- Then give each student a paragraph from the text in **Worksheet A**. Ask them to find the correct title to match to their text.

Tip: You can make this competitive by getting the students to work as a group. The first group to match the texts and titles correctly wins. This will encourage them to work as a team.

Answers:
a) A night-club with a difference **(para 3)**
b) Party atmosphere **(para 2)**
c) Safety on the streets **(para 5)**
d) What is there to do after dark? **(para 1)**
e) What to wear? **(para 4)**

- Next give out the list of statements from **Worksheet B** to each group and get them to work as a group to decide if they are true or false.

Tip: Again you can make this a competitive and see which team gets the most correct.

Answers:
1. Newcastle is a very old city. **(true)**
2. People don't wear much at night because Newcastle has very mild weather. **(false. It's very hot in the night clubs, but the weather can be very cool.)**
3. The 'Bigg Market' is in Glasgow. **(false. It's in Newcastle.)**
4. The people of Newcastle speak with accent called 'Geordie'. **(true)**
5. The presence of the police stops people from being loud, high spirited and aggressive. **(false. The police presence prevents aggression but not loudness and high spirits.)**
6. The Tuxedo Royale is very popular. **(true)**
7. Tuxedo Royale is the name of a ferry which goes to Northern Ireland. **(false. It used to be a ferry but it has now been converted into a night club.)**
8. Women go to 'hen parties' the night before they get married. **(true)**
9. You can only get into some clubs if you dress as a policeman. **(false. Some clubs have a dress code which means people have to dress smartly.)**
10. Young people go to Newcastle to go to the 'Theatre Royal'. **(false. They come for the bars and clubs.)**

1. Read out the answers for the students and see which group has got the most correct.

2. Give out the list of definitions from Worksheet C and tell the students that they should again work in groups to find one of the **bold** words in text which has that meaning.

Tip: You could again make this a competitive.

Answers:
1. a party for men before a wedding **(stag party)**
2. a party for women before a wedding **(hen party)**
3. clothes **(outfits)**
4. crowded **(packed)**
5. fashionable **(trendy)**
6. people who go out a lot at night **(clubbers)**
7. place **(setting)**
8. to attach a ship or boat to the land **(moored)**
9. to change something from one thing to another **(converted)**
10. to prevent **(deter)**

- Read out the answers and give each team their score.

Post reading discussion task:
- Put the students into pairs or small groups and ask them to discuss these questions from **Worksheet D**.

  - How does a night out in Newcastle differ from a night out in your town?
  - Which of the places mentioned in the text would you most like to visit? Why?

- Which of the things in the text would you not want to do?
- What do men in your country do the night before they marry?
- What do women in your country do the night before they marry?
- What places would you advise a foreign visitor to go to for an evening out in your country?

Possible follow up tasks:
- Get students in pairs or alone for homework to write a similar text about a night out in their city. If possible they could also include photos.

Tip: You could also get your students to look at http://www.britishcouncil.it/students/rome/f_places.htm This is a student site is run by Michael Ivy from British Council in Rome. Your students could send some of the best texts to him for his site or perhaps create their own site.

- Get students to prepare a similar text about their city during the day.

Tip: You can find one about Newcastle by day at http://www2.britishcouncil.org/ukinfocus-holiday-newcastle-day.htm The accompanying images are © Aidan O'Rourke

- Students could discuss whether their city is a 'daytime city' or a 'night-time city'. Do they prefer it at night or during the day?

TEXT

What is there to do after dark?
It's a myth that there's nothing to do in our cities at night. Our cities are **packed** with culture and attractions, and many people go to cities such as Newcastle or Glasgow for the nightlife alone. As night falls on Newcastle the shops and offices close, transforming the city. Newcastle's nightlife has something to offer everyone, from dinner at one of the many restaurants to an evening at the 'Theatre Royal'. Most young people are drawn to the centre of Newcastle for its **trendy** bars and clubs. An area of town named the 'Bigg Market' helped put Newcastle on the 'party' map and at weekends it is full of people moving from bar to bar. As the night draws on, they then move onto nearby night-clubs.

Party atmosphere
Crowds of friends mix with groups of visitors, from tourists to hen and **stag parties**. These are traditional parties that happen before weddings, the women have **hen parties** and the men stag parties to celebrate their last night out as single people. Conversation, laughter and loud music are everywhere; pouring out of hot night-clubs and trendy bars. Amongst the crowds you'll hear the local Geordie accent mixed with others from all over the UK and the world.

A night-club with a difference
One of the most popular destinations is the 'Tuxedo Royale' a ship permanently **moored** under the Tyne Bridge. It's open every night and is an old Northern Irish ferry which has been **converted** into a floating night-club. There are many bars and dance floors on it. At weekends the wait to get in can be quite long but once on board ship, the drinking and partying continues into the early hours.

What to wear?
Dress codes for entry into bars and clubs are common and strictly enforced at the weekends, which means people wear their best clothes and are out to make a good impression. People don't wear much, which may appear strange, as it can get very cold outside at night. There's a very good reason for it though - inside the night-clubs it's very hot, so there is no need for a coat. Some groups of people dress in theme **outfits** for special nights out like birthdays so don't be surprised if you see **clubbers** in school or police uniforms.

Safety on the streets
The police maintain a high profile to **deter** trouble and watch over the clubbers making sure that people enjoy a safe but fun night out. The police presence means people are loud and high spirited but not generally aggressive. It's the combination of the historic **setting**, the wide choice of bars and night-clubs, and Geordie attitude to having a good time that attracts people from all over the country to enjoy the amazing nightlife.