



## Pre-Reading Activities

### A: Discussion

Part 1: Read the short text below and then answer the questions in pairs:

*"When she heard my accent, she told a joke about a man who did something foolish. Of course the man in the joke came from my country. After telling it, she looked at me with a little smile. It wasn't a friendly smile. Two of the other staff laughed when she told the joke. The others looked uncomfortable. It was my first day in this company. On another occasion she came into the lunchroom and started talking loudly. I knew I was meant to hear her. She said people from my country had come to this country to get government welfare and we had no right to be here. On that day I just picked up my lunch and walked out."* **Anna 25**

Questions:

1. What happened to Anna? Tell your partner using your own words.
2. Why do you think the other woman did this?
3. Imagine you work in Anna's company and are present when the joke is told. You are from the same country as the woman who told the joke. Would you laugh? Why or why not?

Part 2: Read and answer the questions:

Note - Discrimination is the practice of treating a person or group less well or less fairly than other people

1. Here are some different kinds of discrimination:
  - gender discrimination
  - discrimination against someone with a disability
  - age related discrimination
  - political discrimination

Try to think of examples of what might happen when these types of discrimination occur.

2. Here is an excerpt from today's article.

*"As in the English-speaking world, there are an unending number of jokes about "louras burras" or dumb blondes in Brazil."*

Jokes are sometimes told about people with blonde hair. They are known as dumb blonde jokes. The jokes suggest that blondes are unintelligent. How do you feel about this type of joke?

## Reading Activities

### A: Vocabulary

Look at the words and their meanings from today's article. Once you understand the meanings, use the words to fill in the gaps in the sentences below. (Be careful! You may need to change the forms of some of the words.)

- moral - to do with the principles of right and wrong behavior
- unduly - more than is right or reasonable
- to be fired - someone is dismissed from their job
- to pave the way - to make it possible for something to happen in the future
- compensation - a thing, usually money, given to someone because of injury, damage to property etc.
- unprecedented - something that has never happened before
- violated - a law, rule, or agreement was broken / not obeyed
- dignity - being worthy of respect or honor



1. When she became a judge she always made sure that her public behavior was \_\_\_\_\_ and correct.
2. She received a large sum of money in \_\_\_\_\_ after the court decided that the other driver was responsible for her injuries.
3. The court decision was absolutely \_\_\_\_\_. Everybody was shocked.
4. He has to pay a fine, as his actions were a \_\_\_\_\_ of the law.
5. He was \_\_\_\_\_ after using a company credit card to pay for his trip to see his parents.
6. I do not believe the decision was \_\_\_\_\_ harsh as he had already been given many chances.
7. We have a \_\_\_\_\_ duty to oppose discrimination in the workplace.
8. We hope these new laws will \_\_\_\_\_ for better conditions for workers.



## B: Listening and Grammar

### Woman Sues Boss Over 'Dumb Blonde' Jokes

This is the headline from today's article. (To sue someone means you can take them to court.)

The article is about a woman called Andrea Eloisa da Silva. Your teacher will read you part of today's article.

- Write down what you hear. (It is not necessary to produce an exact copy of what your teacher says.)
- The first two times you listen, write down the important content words, that is, the meaning words. For example, you do not need to write down a, or the, or in but you do need to write down blonde.
- Then, rewrite the text to get the meaning and the grammar correct. (Remember, it does not need to be exactly the same as what you heard.)
- Finally, compare your text with a partner. Work together to try and rebuild the story using correct grammar.
- Turn this paper over before you begin so that you can't see the article.

## C: Comprehension

Work with your partner from the previous activity. Your teacher will now divide the class into two groups, Group A and Group B, and give you worksheets. Follow the instructions on your worksheet.

## D: Test your Memory

Part 1: Below is the complete article. Read it through and then cover it.

### Woman Sues Boss Over 'Dumb Blonde' Jokes

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil September 26 (Reuters) - Brazilian metal-worker Andrea Eloisa da Silva is no "dumb blonde."

After listening to her boss repeatedly call her just that in front of colleagues, the 32-year-old Silva sued him and won \$1,300 in moral damages plus recognition that she was unduly fired -- which paves the way for more compensation.

"It is an unprecedented decision on moral damages for blondes," Alexandre Santoro, a spokesman for the regional labor court that ruled in Silva's favor, said on Tuesday.

"The judge determined that the term 'dumb blonde' violated the dignity of the employee," he said.

The owner of Usinagem RPM metal factory in Belo Horizonte, 280 miles (450 km) northwest of Rio de Janeiro, can appeal the ruling.

As in the English-speaking world, there are an unending number of jokes about "louras burras" or dumb blondes in Brazil.

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Part 2: Here is a summary of today's article. It has some mistakes. Find the mistakes and correct them. Do NOT look at the article again until you have finished. How many facts can you remember?

Summary: Andrea Eloisa da Silva from Brazil has won \$130,000 in damages after a judge ruled her boss had violated her dignity when on one occasion he called her a 'dumb blonde' in front of her union representative. The owner of the factory, Alexandre Santoro, can appeal the ruling. The decision was made by a regional labor court 280 miles (450 km) northwest of Rio de Janeiro. It was the second time in Brazilian history that a blonde has sued and received payment based on intellectual grounds. Dumb blonde jokes are not very common in Brazil.

## Post-Reading Activities

You may do one or more of these.

### A: Group Discussion

Imagine that you work with Anna, the employee (from Pre-Reading Activity A) who is very unhappy because another worker has made racist jokes and remarks. Anna comes to you and asks you what she should do. You are from the same country as the worker who made these jokes. What would you tell Anna to do? How could you help her? Should the boss of your company do anything?

### B: Applying for a Job

Jim Hamilton is applying for a job he saw advertised at an employment agency. Look at his resume below:

He has prepared a functional resume which focuses on his skills and qualities. Some words from the resume have been removed. Complete it with the words in the box.

development, diving, experienced, independently, motivational, referees, skills, team, understanding

Jim Hamilton  
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#### Profile

Enthusiastic, 1. \_\_\_\_\_, responsible teacher and teacher coordinator with a Postgraduate Diploma, MA in Applied Linguistics and good organizational and 2. \_\_\_\_\_ skills. Flexible, as able to work 3. \_\_\_\_\_ using initiative or as part of a 4. \_\_\_\_\_. Good computing skills.

#### Training

Completed the Postgraduate Teaching Diploma at the University of Chicago and MA (applied) at the University of London. Certificate in Advanced Computer Skills from Sydney Polytechnic.

5. \_\_\_\_\_ gained:

Curriculum design

Testing and evaluation design

CALL course design and implementation

Classroom management

Materials design

6. \_\_\_\_\_ of current linguistic theory

Web design and use of graphics software

Use of spreadsheet software and word-processing

#### Experience

Three years work experience with Australian Languages Inc. Brisbane as a course curriculum designer.

Teacher training and 7. \_\_\_\_\_ at Australian Languages Inc.

Teacher coordination, class scheduling and general administration in Turkey.

Language teacher at 'A to Z Language Institute', Tokyo, Japan.

#### Education

MA in Applied Linguistics, University of London

Post Graduate Diploma in Second Language Teaching, University of Chicago

Degree BA (Hons) with major in English, Art and Design

#### Interests

Music: playing the guitar.

Skiing.

8. \_\_\_\_\_

Photography

9. \_\_\_\_\_

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## B: Writing a C.V.

**Part One:** When writing a resume, you need to focus on your personal qualities and skills. This is the area that some people find difficult, as they have been taught not to boast about what they are good at. However, if you don't tell a potential employer about your good qualities, who will?

Look at the list of words below. They are frequently used when writing resumes. Decide into which of the four categories the words fit. You may need to use your dictionary. (Sometimes more than one category is possible for a word.)

friendly, methodical, independent worker, thoughtful, hands-on knowledge, experienced, good sense of humor, punctual, works well with others, gets on well with other people, careful, positive, thorough, organized, self-motivated, courteous, hardworking, skilled

People Skills	Training	Work Skills	Personal Qualities

**Part Two:** Use five words from the list above which you think apply to you or other people in your class. For each one you choose, give a reason why you chose that word to describe yourself or another person in the class.

For example: I think Jim is courteous and polite, because he always says " Please", and "Thank you."



# TEACHERS' NOTES AND ANSWER KEY

**Please note:** This lesson can be used in conjunction with the Upper Intermediate Instant Lesson "Sue Them!" which looks at employment issues and the writing of cover letters. You could also try the Elementary Instant Lesson called "Blondes Earn Less" as a warmer. **Please also note:** This lesson also has additional exercises for your students to do online at [www.instantworkbook.com](http://www.instantworkbook.com). You can get a username and password for your students by clicking on the blue icon next to this lesson description at [www.english-to-go.com](http://www.english-to-go.com).

(There is some cutting and pasting to do with this lesson. Worksheets for Reading Activity C are contained in the Teachers' Notes and need to be copied.)

## Pre-Reading Activities

### A: Discussion - Notes

Part 1: Be sensitive when doing this activity. It is not intended to unleash a series of racist or sexist jokes.

Students retell the story using their own words and then give their responses to what happened. They are probably more likely to be honest if they are working with other students they feel comfortable with.

### Part 2:

1. Students describe scenarios where discrimination might take place. e.g. with age-related discrimination, an older worker loses their job because they do not fit with the 'youthful' image of the company.
2. Students give a personal response to this question. Once again, do not encourage this to become an opportunity for discriminatory joke telling. Jokes like these allow one group to feel superior towards people in another group. (Some students may argue that jokes are just funny and don't hurt anyone. However, the jokes do hurt the people in the targeted group and can be used to attack or isolate them.)

(Please note: the noun 'blonde' can also be spelt 'blond'. 'Blonde' is used to refer to 'women', 'blond' to men.)

## Reading Activities

### A: Vocabulary - Answers

1. dignified
2. compensation
3. unprecedented
4. violation
5. fired
6. unduly
7. moral
8. pave the way

### B: Listening and Grammar - Notes

Read out the passage at the same speed that you would normally read aloud. The students have to take notes as it is being read - they need to write down the stressed, 'content/information' words rather than the 'grammar' words. After one or two readings, each student tries to rebuild the text and write the passage using their notes, so that it makes sense.

Then read the text again and students try to rebuild it in pairs. Students should work together to make grammatical decisions about the text: especially about word choice, sentence formation, verb forms, etc. The idea is not to produce an exact copy of the original, but to produce a logical, grammatically correct text. You should go round, helping out and correcting or offering alternatives.

You could compare the students' versions with the original, but this would change the aim and could also be demotivating if the students feel their versions aren't very good. The follow-up exercises will show if students have understood the content.

In a one-to-one situation, you may prefer to turn this into a gap-fill activity. Give the student the text below with gaps (remove four or five words for each gap). Read the text to the student while they try to fill the gaps. After reading it through two times, let the student take the lead in identifying possible errors or omissions. Do not just tell them the correct answers but help them to work through the process of deducing what the correct text should be.

### B: Listening and Grammar - Text to be read aloud to students

Brazilian metalworker, Andrea Eloisa da Silva, is no "dumb blonde." After listening to her boss repeatedly call her just that in front of colleagues, the 32-year-old Silva sued him and won \$1,300 in moral damages plus recognition that she was unduly fired -- which paves the way for more compensation. It is an unprecedented decision on moral damages for blondes. The judge determined that the term 'dumb blonde' violated the dignity of the employee.

## C: Comprehension - Notes

Walk around and look at the questions students are writing. Correct them, or make notes of the main errors and focus on them after the Reading Activities have been completed.

In a one-to-one situation the student could ask you the questions for the Group A Worksheet, and answer your questions from the Group B worksheet. (They can write the questions out beforehand.)

## C: Comprehension - Worksheets to be copied and given to Students

### Worksheet for Group A

#### Group A: Instructions

Here are some answers to questions taken from today's article. With your partner, write questions for the answers.

When you have done this, work with a pair of Group B students. Ask them your questions and answer their questions (using the text you wrote down in Reading Activity B).

Answers: (You write the questions.)

1. Example: 32 Question: How old is da Silva?
2. her colleagues
3. more compensation
4. she is a metal worker
5. moral damages

### Worksheet for Group B

#### Group B: Instructions

Here are some answers to questions taken from today's article. With your partner, write questions for the answers.

When you have done this, work with a pair of Group A students. Ask them your questions and answer their questions (using the text you wrote down in Reading Activity B).

Answers: (You write the questions.)

1. Example: Brazil: Question: Where is da Silva from?
2. \$1,300
3. the dignity of the employee
4. being unduly fired
5. no, it was unprecedented

C: Comprehension - Suggested Answers for Questions

Group A

1. How old is Andrea Eloisa da Silva?
2. Who was also present when her boss told the jokes?
3. What might she also get for being unduly fired?
4. What is her job?
5. On what grounds did she win the case? / What was she given the money for?

Group B

1. In which country did this happen? / Where is Andrea Eloisa da Silva from?
2. How much money did she receive?
3. What did the term "dumb blonde" violate?
4. What else did she get recognition for?
5. Has a decision like this happened before? / Has there been a case like this before?

D: Test Your Memory - Notes

You may like to give students a time limit for Part 1. Set a time limit appropriate for the level of your students which will allow them to absorb most of the facts but still put them under a little pressure. Tell them they are not allowed to write anything down during this time. Students then follow the instructions for Part 2. They should not look at the article while they are doing Part 2. (Again, you could set a time limit.) They can then check their answers by referring back to the complete article.

D: Test Your Memory - Answers

Part Two - Summary

Andrea Eloisa da Silva from Brazil has won ~~\$130,000~~ (\$1,300) in damages after a judge ruled her boss had violated her dignity ~~when on one occasion he called her~~ (by repeatedly) calling her a 'dumb blonde' in front of her ~~union representative~~ (colleagues). ~~The owner of the factory,~~ Alexandre Santoro, can appeal the ruling. The decision was made by a regional labor court ~~280 miles (450 km)~~ ~~northwest of Rio de Janeiro.~~ (The factory is 280 miles (450 km) northwest of Rio de Janeiro.)

It was the ~~second~~ (first) time in Brazilian history that a blonde has sued and received payment based on ~~intellectual~~ (moral) damages. Dumb blonde jokes are ~~not~~ very common in Brazil.

Post-Reading Activities

A: Group Discussion - Notes

Students take on the role of Anna's fellow workers in discussing what should be done to solve this problem. If you wish, you could add a few more details to add more interest to the situation. (You could add information about the size of the company, what positions Anna and her co-workers have, what avenues this company has for complaints etc).

You and the class may prefer not to make this a discussion focussing on racist jokes. You could change it to another form of offensive behavior (jokes about age, for example).

In a one-to-one situation, you could instead role-play the situation with you taking the part of Anna, and the student acting as her co-worker who gives her advice.

If your students are interested in researching the problem of discrimination in the workplace, here are two sites that may be of interest:

<http://www.jobsite.co.uk/career/advice/discrimination.html>

[http://www.nolo.com/encyclopedia/emp\\_ency.html#Subtopic213](http://www.nolo.com/encyclopedia/emp_ency.html#Subtopic213)

B: Applying for a Job - Answers

1. experienced
2. motivational
3. independently
4. team
5. Skills
6. Understanding
7. development
8. Diving
9. Referees

C: Writing a Resume - Notes

Many of the answers here could vary. However, the focus is to get students to think about adjectives and phrases to describe personal qualities and skills.

C: Writing a Resume - Sample Answers

People skills	Training	Work skills	Personal qualities
friendly, gets on well with other people, thoughtful, works well with others, courteous.	experienced, skilled, hands-on knowledge,	careful, methodical, thorough, organized, independent worker, hardworking.	self-motivated, punctual, positive, good sense of humor.