Pay It Forward

Language level: Intermediate (B1) - Upper Intermediate (B2)
Learner type: Teens and adults
Time: 90 minutes
Activity: Predicting a story, watching a short film, talking about giving and discussing quotes about kindness
Topic: Kindness, giving and Pay It Forward
Language: Vocabulary related to giving
Materials: Short film, video and quotation slides
Overview

This EFL lesson plan is designed around a short film for Thai communication provider TrueMove H and the themes of giving, kindness and the Pay It Forward movement. Students predict a story, watch a short film, talk about giving and discuss quotes about kindness.

Step 1

Show your students the image of the boy above and ask the following questions:

What does he look like?
What do you think he’s like as a person?
How is he feeling in this moment?
What’s happening?

Put students in pairs and ask them to discuss the questions for a few minutes. When students are ready get feedback from the whole class.

Step 2

Tell students that the photo comes from the beginning of a short film. Ask students to discuss with their partner what story they think they are going to see in the film. When students are ready get feedback from the whole class.

Step 3

Explain that the film is in Thai with English subtitles. Show the film.
Step 4
Ask students if their predictions were correct.

Step 5
Ask students how the film made them feel.

Step 6
Put students into small groups and ask them to discuss the following question:

What is the message of the film?

When students have finished their discussions, get feedback from the whole class on the film’s message.

Step 7
Write Pay It Forward on the board and ask students if they know what it means. If students don’t know, tell them that it means that if somebody does something kind to you, you should do something kind to another person without expecting anything in return. You may also like to explain that it has become a global movement. In 2000, Catherine Ryan Hyde's novel Pay It Forward was published and adapted into a film, Pay It Forward. In Ryan Hyde's book and movie it is described as an obligation to do three good deeds for others in response to a good deed that one receives. Such good deeds should accomplish things

Link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JPOVwKPMG8o
that the other person cannot accomplish on their own. In this way, the practice of helping one another can spread geometrically through society, at a ratio of three to one, creating a social movement with the impact of making the world a better place.

Step 8
Tell students that the message of the film might be that we should pay it forward. The restaurant owner is kind to the child and expects nothing in return. However, his kindness has a profound influence on the young boy who subsequently dedicates his life to helping others and becomes an eminent surgeon. The restaurant owner’s life is saved by the surgeon who waves his fee because of the restaurant owner’s previous kindness to him.

Step 9
Pair students and ask them to discuss what they think of the pay it forward concept and movement.

Step 10
Read out some examples of Pay It Forward.

- Collect cans of non perishable foods and give them to charities or organizations who would benefit
- Collect books and distribute to needy groups
- Buy the train or bus ticket for the person behind you
Pay It Forward

- Donate some of your professional services to someone in need on the day, for example - free hour consultation
- Buy a stranger a cup of coffee
- On a rainy day, buy a few umbrella's and give them to those who don't have one and are getting wet.

Show this video in which a person paying for other people's food at a drive through restaurant.

Link: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EsqtFyEol-Y](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EsqtFyEol-Y)

Ask students what they think of each deed and whether they would do them themselves.

**Step 11**

Now tell students that you would like them to think of 5 Pay It Forward actions which they would be happy to do. Give them 5 minutes to write down their actions.

**Step 12**

When students are ready, put them into small groups and ask them to explain their actions to each other.

**Step 13**

Hold a plenary discussion on the students’ Pay It Forward actions.
Step 14

Dictate the following quotation to students:

“Kindness, like a boomerang, always returns.”

Ask students what it means.

Step 15

Put students in pairs and show each of the 6 quotations on kindness and life. Give them 3 minutes to discuss each quotation and then change to the next one.
“Be the change you want to see in the world.”

Gandhi

“In giving you are throwing a bridge across the chasm of your solitude.”

Antoine de Saint-Exupery

“Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth.”

Muhammad Ali
Step 16

Ask students which quotes they like most and why.

I hope you enjoy the lesson.

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