

3 THE NERD TEACHER'S NOTES

Objectives

SUMMARY

Following a discussion about Richie, a boy that Jeff and Leo unkindly call a nerd, Flora finds him working in the local computer store where she goes to get her laptop fixed. They talk about Saturday jobs and Richie tells her he uses the money he earns at the shop to pay for his hobby, climbing. Flora is very pleased to accept his invitation to meet at the climbing club so that he can introduce her to the sport and to his group of friends there. Later that week, Flora brings Jeff and Leo along to the club. She doesn't say who she knows there. Instead she is amused when they admire Richie's climbing. They don't realise it's Richie until he climbs down. Leo and Jeff feel embarrassed when they realise the truth.

LANGUAGE

personality adjectives: phrases for fluency: *Don't get me wrong, Don't mention it, Good point*

USEFUL INFORMATION

Encourage students to investigate *prejudice* so that they realise this is what Leo and Jeff were guilty of in their attitude towards Richie. Explain that the boys have a *fixed idea* about Richie – they have formed an opinion of him without getting to know him and it's unlikely that they will change their minds easily. There are many youth-oriented websites which cover prejudice.

Refer students back to episode 3 and ask them to recall the events. *Why don't Jeff and Leo like Richie?* (They think he is a nerd.) *Do they know him very well? Have they made assumptions about him?* (They don't know him well. They have assumed what he is like.) *Why do you think Flora decides not to tell Jeff and Leo who her friend at the climbing club was?* (She wanted Leo and Jeff to realise they had been childish and unfair towards Richie.) When discussing prejudice, you may want to also point out that Flora is a little prejudiced too when she says, *Boys! They're all the same!*

THINK ABOUT

- 1 Now refer students to questions 1 and 2. Ask students to work through the questions then feedback as a class.

Answers

- 1 Possible answers: A *nerd* is typically someone who is into computers and gadgets. They are hard-working and might appear a little antisocial. They aren't bothered by what other people think of them. They probably don't care about fashion.
 - 2 a) She isn't friends with him, but she doesn't dislike him. She knows he's got different interests to her, but this doesn't bother her.
b) She thinks they are mean and immature when they talk about Richie.
- 2 Ask students to read through the extracts from the video and then match them. They then watch to check their answers.

Answers

1 c 2 d 3 a 4 e 5 b

Mixed ability idea

Elicit where the extracts come from. What happens immediately before and after each extract?

Optional activity

After students have watched and checked their answers, allow them to practise the dialogues following the intonation demonstrated in the video.

THINK BACK

- 3 Read through the task with the students and explain that they need to choose the best response in each situation. These phrases practise some of the informal language from the video and photostory. When checking students' answers, draw attention to the wrong options in items 1 and 2 as these could be mistakenly seen as correct.

Answers

- 1 Never mind. It's OK. 2 That isn't nice. 3 Don't mention it.
- 4 No, but that's what you meant. 5 That would be so cool.

Mixed ability idea

Ask students to provide similar phrases in their own language to ensure that they have understood the meaning of these phrases, which can be misleading when seen out of context. Alternatively, ask students to paraphrase. For example, *Never mind* can be expressed as *It doesn't matter*.

Optional activity

Ask students to think of contexts where they might use the various phrases.

- 4 Students work in pairs and decide which statements explain why Leo and Jeff look surprised.

Answers

2, 4, 5, 7, 8

THINK THROUGH

ROLE PLAY A different ending

Explain that the students are going to work in pairs to write an alternative ending to the story. They can use the flow diagram to help them decide what happens.

Once students have decided the alternative ending, ask them to each take a role (one as Richie and the other as Jeff/Leo) and individually prepare what their character might say. Encourage students to draw upon the phrases in Exercise 3. You may wish to also refer students to the functions: apologies and accepting apologies vocabulary on page 45. Next, ask them to write their role play.

Monitor and support while the students are writing. Encourage as many students as possible to perform their role plays. Consider asking groups to perform to each other. The 'audience' group can monitor language use and make corrections if necessary. This can also be done as a whole-class exercise.

Optional activity

Students write a blog post by Jeff or Leo in support of *nerds*. The post doesn't have to include Richie's name, but it should encourage its readers not to make assumptions about people based on appearances. The blog post can refer to the conversation in the café at the start of the video and how Jeff/Leo felt at the climbing centre.