

The Happiest Country in the World, A2

Lesson plan and notes:

This is a full lesson including the speaking, reading and vocabulary activities for students of A2, B2 and C1. The order of activities is meant to smoothly introduce students to new vocabulary and practice both speaking and reading. However, when you go through the pages, T may decide to use individual elements that suit their needs.

Intro - brainstorming the topic and a brief discussion

Slide 3 - T starts by initiating a discussion based on the intro questions that are meant to encourage ss to talk about their personal opinions and experiences.

Vocabulary introduction and practice

Slide 5 - T introduces vocabulary through quizlet set and multiple choice exercise. SS decide what the words mean. Next ss do the synonym match in learningapps and reinforce the meanings of the words they just learnt. The last vocabulary exercise gives ss the opportunity to practice the words in context. They get a list of sentences and new words and need to put them in context.

Reading practice

Slide 6 - True and false statements about the text. Ask ss to go through the statements before they read the article and decide what they believe could be true or false. Ask them to read the text and confirm the answers. Discuss.

Reading practice continued

Slide 7 - it's a continuation of the reading practice but this time ss get comprehension questions and need to find the answers to them. The ss have a notes field to write the answers down. Check the answers.

More vocabulary practice

Slide 8 - contains a short text where the new words are used in context. Ss need to put them back inside and check.

Slide 9 and 10 - contain more vocabulary exercises - word formation. It's a good exercise for ss to work with dictionaries and learn new forms of the words they studied.

Discussion

Slide 11 - contains discussion questions for further speaking practice. They encourage ss to express their opinions and expand on the topic of happiness.

The navigation through the set is self-explanatory. It's quite easy to follow the icons and different instructions. The buttons may look different but their function is the same.



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The Happiest Country in the World, A2 - WS

1. **Introduction.** Let's talk. What's your opinion?

- Imagine you could move anywhere in the world. Which country would you choose and why? Would it make you happier?
- Do people in your country work too much? Do they have enough free time?
- Do you like spending time outdoors? How does nature make you feel?
- Free education and healthcare – are these important for happiness? Would it make life easier? How is it in your country?
- Do you think people in your country are happy? What makes life good or difficult where you live?

More ideas:

- What does it mean to be “happy”? What are some things that make you feel happy?
- Do you think some countries are happier than others? Why or why not?
- Have you heard of Finland? What do you know about it? (e.g., location, weather, culture)
- What things do you think make a country a happy place to live?
- Do you think people in your country are happy?

2. Vocabulary intro:

quizlet set

Match the words with their meanings or synonyms:

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| ___ 1. in a row | A. a group of people who live in the same place or share something |
| ___ 2. trust | B. people who study something to learn more |
| ___ 3. government | C. to give something to help people |
| ___ 4. safe | D. to become more or bigger |
| ___ 5. calm | E. being nice and helpful to others |
| ___ 6. stressed | F. a group of people born around the same time |
| ___ 7. generation | G. feeling worried or nervous |
| ___ 8. kindness | H. peaceful and not angry or worried |
| ___ 9. to increase | I. not in danger |
| ___ 10. to donate | J. the people who lead and make rules for a country |
| ___ 11. researchers | K. when you believe someone is good and honest |
| ___ 12. community | L. many times one after another, with no break |

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Gap-Fill Sentences. Use one word in each blank.

in a row, trust, government, safe, calm, stressed, generation,
kindness, increase, donate, researchers, community

1. After three years _____, Denmark lost its place as the happiest country.
2. I feel very lucky to live in a _____ where people help each other.
3. The police and fire services help keep our city _____.
4. Many people don't _____ the news because they think it's not honest.
5. The teacher told us to take deep breaths and stay _____ before the test.
6. Students feel _____ when they have too much homework.
7. My aunt always tries to show _____ by smiling and helping her neighbors.
8. The number of people who _____ food to charities went up last year.
9. The _____ wants to improve public transport in the city.
10. Scientists and _____ studied what makes people happy.
11. There has been an _____ in outdoor exercise since the pandemic.
12. Young people from this _____ often talk about mental health and stress.

3. Reading practice

Pre-reading - True or False - read the statements before you read the article and mark if they are True or False in your opinion - discuss your choices. Then read the article and correct your answers.

1. T / F – Finnish people often feel stressed because healthcare and school are very expensive.
2. T / F – The article says many young people today are happier than older people.
3. T / F – According to the report, Finland has been number one only once before.
4. T / F – People in Finland trust others in their community and feel safe.
5. T / F – Spending time outdoors in nature is one reason for Finland's happiness.
6. T / F – The report says acts of kindness are becoming less common since COVID-19.
7. T / F – People in Finland have a balance between their jobs and personal life.
8. T / F – North American young people are feeling more positive than before.
9. T / F – The article says happiness depends mainly on being rich.
10. T / F – Helping others can make people feel happier, according to researcher

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March 25, 2025 | World News

Finland Wins First Place Again!

Every year, researchers make a list of the happiest countries in the world. The results for 2024 are out, and Finland is the happiest country again! This is the seventh time in a row that Finland has won first place. But what makes Finnish people so happy?

What Makes Finland So Special?

According to the World Happiness Report 2024, Finland is happy because of these reasons:

- Free healthcare and education – People do not have to pay to see a doctor or go to school. This makes life less stressful.
- Trust and safety – Finnish people trust their government, their neighbors, and the police. They feel safe in their country.
- Good work-life balance – People in Finland work hard, but they also have a lot of free time. They enjoy hobbies, family, and relaxation.
- Nature – Finland has many forests, lakes, and mountains. People love spending time outside, which makes them feel calm and happy.

Are Young People Still Happy?

The report says older people (over 60) are usually happier than younger people. In some countries, young people (ages 15-24) are feeling more stressed than before. In North America, for example, young people report feeling less happy than older generations.

Kindness Is Growing

One positive trend is that acts of kindness are increasing. Since COVID-19, more people donate money, help their neighbors, and do kind things for others. Researchers say kindness makes people feel happier!

What Can We Learn from Finland?

Finland teaches the world important lessons about happiness:

- ✓ Spend more time in nature.
- ✓ Find a balance between work and free time.
- ✓ Build strong communities and trust others.
- ✓ Be kind and help the people around you.

Finland shows us that happiness is not just about money. It comes from feeling safe, enjoying life, and being part of a strong community.

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Comprehension Questions - Answer the questions in complete sentences.

1. Which country is number one on the World Happiness Report 2024?
2. How many times in a row has Finland been the happiest country?
3. What are two reasons why people in Finland are happy?
4. Do Finnish people trust their government?
5. What kind of work-life balance do Finnish people have?
6. What do people in Finland like to do in nature?
7. Are young people (ages 15–24) happier than older people?
8. What has changed since COVID-19 about kindness?
9. What are two lessons the world can learn from Finland?
10. According to the article, what is more important than money for happiness?

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More text practice

The Happiest Country in the World - Use these words to fill the gaps:

in a row | trust | government | safe | calm | stressed | generation |
kindness | to increase | to donate | researchers | community

Finland is the happiest country again! It has won first place many times (1) _____, and people want to know why.

According to (2) _____, there are many reasons why Finnish people are so happy. The Finnish (3) _____ gives people free healthcare and education. This helps people feel less (4) _____.

Also, Finnish people feel (5) _____ in their country. They have (6) _____ in their police and leaders. They also enjoy nature, which helps them feel more (7) _____.

The report also says older people are usually happier than the younger (8) _____. In some countries, young people are feeling more worried and less happy.

But there is good news! Acts of (9) _____ are growing. People like (10) _____ money and helping others. These actions help happiness (11) _____.

Finland shows that happiness is not just about money. It comes from feeling part of a strong (12) _____, being safe, and enjoying life.

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4. More vocabulary practice

Word Formation – Complete the gaps with the correct form of the word in brackets.

1. I don't think you should _____ people you don't know well. (trust)
2. She felt a strong sense of _____ in her local neighbourhood. (community)
3. The news made me feel very _____, so I turned off the TV. (stress)
4. It's important to find a balance between work and _____. (relax)
5. My parents always taught me that _____ matters more than money. (kind)
6. He _____ some old clothes to the charity shop. (donate)
7. The number of people helping their neighbours has _____ since the pandemic. (increase)
8. The police do a good job of keeping the city _____. (safe)
9. A new _____ of young voters is becoming more active in politics. (generate)
10. The woman gave me a _____ smile and held the door open. (kind)
11. The children were taught _____ is a way to show respect and care. (kind)
12. The doctor said my heart rate was fine and I looked very _____. (calm)
13. She spoke very softly and tried to _____ the crying baby. (calm)
14. A group of _____ are studying why people in Finland are so happy. (research)
15. I don't feel very _____ walking alone at night. (safe)
16. The situation at work was too _____, so he decided to quit. (stress)
17. It's nice to live in a place where people _____ each other. (trust)
18. My phone bill seems to _____ every month! (increase)
19. Our _____ helps plan events like festivals and clean-up days. (community)
20. She lost _____ in the system after the mistake. (trust)
21. The group offered free food as an act of _____. (kind)

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5. Post-Reading Discussion Questions

1. What do you think makes a country happy?
2. Why do you think Finland has been the happiest country in a row for seven years?
3. How important is trust in your country? Who do people trust most?
4. Do you feel safe in your neighborhood? Why or why not?
5. What activities help you feel calm and relaxed?
6. Have you ever felt stressed at work or school? How do you deal with stress?
7. Do you think people in your community donate money or help others? Why or why not?
8. Have you seen kindness increase in your country during difficult times?
9. What lessons about happiness can other countries learn from Finland?

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Answer Key

Synonym match

1-L, 2-K, 3-J, 4-I, 5-H, 6-G, 7-F, 8-E, 9-D, 10-C, 11-B, 12-A

Words in context

1. in a row
2. community
3. safe
4. trust
5. calm
6. stressed
7. kindness
8. donate
9. government
10. researchers
11. increase
12. generation

Reading - True / False

1. ☒ False – Healthcare and school are free in Finland, which reduces stress.
2. ☒ False – The article says older people are usually happier than young people.
3. ☒ False – Finland has been number one seven times in a row, not just once.
4. ☒ True – People in Finland trust their government, neighbors, and police.
5. ☒ True – Nature (like forests and lakes) helps people feel calm and happy.
6. ☒ False – Acts of kindness are increasing, not decreasing.
7. ☒ True – Finland is known for a good work-life balance.
8. ☒ False – Young people in North America report feeling less happy than before.
9. ☒ False – The article says happiness is not just about money.
10. ☒ True – Researchers say kindness can make people feel happier.

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Comprehension Questions – Sample Answers

1. Finland is number one on the World Happiness Report 2024.
2. Finland has been the happiest country seven times in a row.
3. Two reasons are: free healthcare and education, and trust and safety.
4. Yes, they trust their government, neighbors, and the police.
5. They work hard but also have a lot of free time to relax.
6. They like spending time outside in forests, lakes, and nature.
7. No, young people are often less happy than older people.
8. Since COVID-19, more people do kind things, like helping others.
9. We can learn to spend time in nature and be kind to others.
10. Feeling safe, enjoying life, and strong community are more important than money.

More text practice - Gapped text **The Happiest Country in the World:**

1. in a row
2. researchers
3. government
4. stressed
5. safe
6. trust
7. calm
8. generation
9. kindness
10. to donate
11. to increase
12. community

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More vocabulary practice - Word formation Key

1. trust
2. community
3. stressed
4. relaxation
5. kindness
6. donated
7. increased
8. safe
9. generation
10. kind
11. kindness
12. calm
13. calm
14. researchers
15. safe
16. stressful
17. trust
18. increase
19. community
20. trust
21. kindness



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