Section 16  comparison

page 227

possible further activities

Colourful comparisons See note for page 231.

pages 228–9

language notes

Students may make occasional mistakes with one-word adjectives, often under the influence of the mother tongue.

*Today is more cold than yesterday.

Two-syllable adjectives vary, not very systematically. Some have comparatives and superlatives with -er, -est, some have more and most, some have both. At this level, if students use more and most except for the ones ending in -y they will usually be right.

Doubling consonants may cause spelling problems. (It does for many native speakers.)

*Tomorrow will be hoter.

*The days are getting shortter.

Some students may use comparatives instead of superlatives, especially if their language uses the same form for both meanings:

*I'm the younger in my family.

Some languages have one word corresponding to than and that, or than and as, or than and of:

*Maths is more interesting than/as/of English.

Pronunciation: both as and than are normally pronounced with a reduced vowel (/ə/).

The ‘Pronunciation for grammar’ exercises will help students who have trouble perceiving the forms in fast speech.

possible further activities

Which form? Say one-syllable and three-syllable words, mixed up, along with some two-syllable words ending in -y. Students say the comparative and superlative.

Spelling practice Say words from page 228, mixed up. Students tell you how to make the comparative, like this:

‘old’ – ‘e r’
‘hot’ – ‘t e r’
‘late’ – ‘r’
‘high’ – ‘e r’
‘happy’ – ‘i e r’
‘beautiful’ – ‘more’

Personalisation: comparatives  If physical comparison is not a sensitive area, put students in groups of three. Each student has to find one way in which he/she is different from one of the others, using comparatives. (‘I’m taller than Nadia.’ ‘I’m older than Abbas.’)

Personalisation: superlatives  As before, but now each student has to find one way in which he/she is ‘superlative’ in the group. (‘I’m the tallest person in the group.’ ‘I’ve got the longest hair.’ ‘My handbag is the biggest.’)

An asterisk (*) indicates an incorrect form or use.
Mime: comparatives  Students work in pairs, and do exaggerated mimes to show that one is much more … than the other. The class say what is being demonstrated:

Jean is much colder than Andrea. [Jean is shivering as hard as he can.]

Comparing places  Give students the names of three places. They write sentences about them with comparatives and superlatives:

Texas is bigger than France. Scotland is colder than Texas. Scotland/Texas/France is the most interesting. Texas is the hottest.

Students’ favourite places  Ask students to write a few sentences about their favourite places, comparing them with others. They should try to use both comparatives and superlatives.

Wishes  Ask students to complete one or more of these sentences:

I’d like to be …-er. I’d like to be more …

I wouldn’t like to be …-er I wouldn’t like to be more …

Wishes  Students write sentences saying ‘I wish I could … more …’ or ‘I wish I could … -er’, using comparative adverbs. For example:

I wish I could write more easily. I wish I could think faster.

language notes

Students sometimes make mistakes with comparative adverbs ending in -y:

*She speaks even slowlier than me.

Possible further activities

Wishes  Students write sentences saying ‘I wish I could … more …’ or ‘I wish I could … -er’, using comparative adverbs. For example:

I wish I could write more easily. I wish I could think faster.

language notes

The as … as structure is difficult for some students:

*You aren’t so old like me.

*Her hand was cold like ice.

Older grammars often say that so … as is normally used after not. In fact, in modern English not as … as is also common and correct.

The first as is often dropped in speech, especially in American English.

Possible further activities

Colourful comparisons Many languages have colourful traditional comparisons. Look through the ones in Exercise 2, and those on page 227, with the students; help with vocabulary if necessary. Warn them, though, that some of these are unusual, and some traditional comparisons (especially the ones found in language-teaching books) may be old-fashioned. Get students to translate a few of their native-language comparisons into English; this can be particularly entertaining in an international group. (A couple from French: ‘as friendly as rain’; ‘as stupid as a broom’.)
possible further activities

**Personalisation** Get students to complete some of the following sentences, using the double comparative structure practised on this page.

I'm getting …
My (name of relation) is getting …
(Name of person) is getting …
This town is getting …
This country is getting …
The world is getting …
… is getting …

**Mime** Give out cards with double comparative expressions to small groups of students. Each group has to mime what’s on the card; the others guess what is being mimed.

Suggestions:
- faster and faster  slower and slower  colder and colder
- warmer and warmer  later and later  happier and happier
- more and more tired  angrier and angrier  more and more excited
- more and more beautiful  hungrier and hungrier  older and older

**Internet** Ask students to find interesting sentences on the internet containing “slower and slower”; “faster and faster”; “more and more expensive” or other double comparatives of their choice.

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possible further activities

**Personalisation** Ask students to complete one or more of the following sentences:

The more I try to …,
The older I get, …
The more books I read, …

**Internet** Ask students to find interesting sentences on the internet beginning “The more we”.

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language notes

Students may confuse the use of in and of after superlatives.

*This is the most beautiful place of the world.*

**possible further activities**

**Quiz** Students work in groups preparing quizzes for the class, using questions with superlatives beginning ‘Who/What/Which is …?’ (They can get the information from the internet if necessary.) Examples of possible questions:

What/Which is the longest river in Africa?
What/Which is the highest mountain in Japan?
Who is the fastest sprinter in the world?
What/Which is the biggest animal in Europe?
What is the coldest place in the world?

(For more about what and which, see notes on page 182. Both are common in quiz questions of this kind.)

➔ Section 16 continues
**Personalisation**  Ask students to complete one of more of the following sentences:
- I’m happiest when I’m ...
- I’m happiest when I can ...
- I’m happiest when I don’t have to ...

**Internet**  Ask students if they can find a few interesting sentences on the internet beginning “He’s most dangerous when”.

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**language notes**

Students’ mother tongues may have only one word corresponding to *like* and *as*. Look out for mistakes like:

*He looks as a teacher.*
*I wouldn’t want to work like a tour guide.*

There may be similar problems with *such* and *so*:

*She’s got so beautiful eyes!*  
*He speaks Spanish really well.*  
*I wish I had a so good accent.*

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**possible further activities**

**Personalisation: family resemblances**  Ask students to write some sentences about family resemblances (in their own or other families); or about resemblances between friends. Some possible beginnings:
- I’m very like …
- I look like …
- I’m rather like …
- I’m a bit like …
- I’m not at all like …
- I don’t look like …
- My friend X is like …

**Personalisation: jobs**  Ask students to write three completions for each of the following sentences. Help with vocabulary as necessary.
- I’d like to work as a …
- I’d hate to work as a …

‘Such’ or ‘so’? Say a series of adjectives and noun phrases (the ones on page 235 and others). Students have to add such or so. Like this:
- ‘tired’ – ‘so tired’
- ‘a tired baby’ – ‘such a tired baby’
- ‘ideas’ – ‘such ideas’

Keep it going fast, but not so fast that the students get confused.