

Describing people: Developing vocabulary skills

1 Work in pairs. Underline the adjective in italics that describes the person in the first sentence.

1 Ahmed plays a lot of sport. He's very *sporty*/ *lazy*.

2 David is the kind of person who gets on with people easily. He's very *friendly*/ *lazy*.

3 Mary is someone who helps other people. She's really very *kind*/ *practical*.

2 Work in pairs. Before you look at exercise 3, think of possible adjectives to describe the people below.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1 [_____ and _____] | Cheng is the kind of person who plays a lot of sport and works very hard at school. |
| 2 [_____ and _____] | Maria is someone who doesn't like hard work, but she gives lots of money to charity. |
| 3 [_____ and _____] | Charlie likes making things like computers. He is the kind of person who likes fixing gadgets for his friends and family. |
| 4 [_____ and _____] | David is someone who meets people easily and who likes exciting sports such as climbing and gliding. |
| 5 [_____ and _____] | Boris is the sort of person who always laughs a lot and tells stories, but he loses things and makes mistakes. |
| 6 [_____ and _____] | Fatima is the kind of person who never makes mistakes and she is never late for any appointments. |
| 7 [_____ and _____] | Carlos is someone who never does any exercise at all, but he speaks several languages and plays different instruments. |

3 Match two adjectives to the people in exercise 2. You may use any adjective more than once.

Clever/ lazy/ hardworking/ kind/ cheerful/ practical/ sporty/ sociable/ punctual/ helpful/ careless

4 Use the notes below to make sentences about people you know.

1 *hardworking/ because/ study/ very hard/ every day.*

Example: 1 John's hardworking, because he studies very hard every day.

2 *kind/ because/ help/ people a lot/ give money/ charity.*

3 *extremely lazy/ because/ not like/ working hard/ not do/ any sport.*

4 *very friendly and sociable/ because/ talk people easily/ make friends/ very easily.*

5 *really clever/ because/ understand/ speak/ several languages very well.*

6 *very practical/ because/ be /really good/ fixing things.*

7 *always cheerful/ because/ smile/ a lot/ be/ always happy.*

5 Now develop the description of the people in exercise 4 by matching the examples below. You may need to change the words in brackets.

- a For example, (she) bakes a lot and fixes things around the flat like broken furniture.
- b For example, (he) watches TV and plays computer games all day.
- c For example, people are always happy when they are around (her).
- d For example, (he) spends three hours in the library every day, including weekends.
- e For example, all the students know (her) well and say hello to (her).
- f For example, (he) can speak Russian and Chinese as well as English.
- g For example, (she) works as a volunteer in a project for young people.

6 Now describe at least three people in exercise 4 to a partner. Use examples from exercise 5 to help you or use your own examples.

7 Complete the notes about a partner or about someone you know well.

1 Circle at least three adjectives: Clever/ intelligent/
lazy/ friendly/ adventurous/ hardworking/ kind / cheerful/
practical/ sporty/ sociable/ punctual

2 Think of some activities he/ she does:

He/ She plays _____ / watches

_____ / spends _____ /

likes _____

3 Think of things he/ she doesn't do:

He/ She doesn't play _____ / doesn't

watch _____ / doesn't spend _____

8 Write at least three sentences about a partner or someone you know well.

Example

Ahmed is conscientious, because he works very hard. For example, he spends three hours in the library every day, including weekends. He's also the kind of person who is very friendly and sociable. For example, he talks to people easily and makes friends very easily. People think he's really adventurous, as he ...

Useful phrases

He/ She is the sort/ kind of person/ is someone who...

People/ My friends and family think that he/she...

...because/ since/ as he/ she ...

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Key

Exercise 1

- 1 sporty
- 2 friendly
- 3 kind

Exercises 2 and 3

- 1 sporty and hardworking
- 2 lazy and kind
- 3 practical and helpful
- 4 sociable and sporty
- 5 cheerful and careless
- 6 careful and punctual
- 8 lazy and clever

Exercise 4

Possible answers

- 1 John is hardworking, because he studies very hard every day.
- 2 Michelle is kind, because she helps people a lot and gives money to charity.
- 3 Patrick is extremely lazy, because he doesn't like working hard and doesn't do any sport.
- 4 Aika is very friendly and sociable, because she talks to people easily and makes friends very easily.
- 5 Aan is really clever, because he understands and speaks several languages very well.
- 6 Vladimir is very practical, because she's really good at making fixing things.
- 7 Antonia is always cheerful, because she smiles a lot and is always happy.

Exercise 5

1d 2g 3b 4e 5f 6a 7c

Exercise 6 -8

Students's own answers.

Teachers' Notes for Extract adapted from Writing Skills B1: Copyright Sam McCarter 2015

Aim: to help students at B1 to write a short description of someone by developing the meaning of adjectives

Notes

The exercises above are adapted from an unpublished Writing Book for students at B1 level by Sam McCarter. The material is copyright.

Exercise 1

This exercise can be done with the whole class showing how the adjectives summarise the information in the first sentence.

Exercises 2 and 3

Encourage students to supply adjectives from their own knowledge to complete the blank spaces in this exercise. Tell them that you do not expect them to be able to give adjectives for all of the sentences. When they have had a chance to use what they know, ask them to do exercise 3 in pairs. You might want to allow them to use a dictionary in exercise 2 and/or exercise 3, but try to encourage the use of their own knowledge first.

Exercises 4 and 5

Exercises 4 and 5 can be done individually or in pairs. After students have checked their answers, point out how the reasons in each sentence in exercise 4 (introduced by *because*) help explain the adjectives. Then point out how the examples in exercise 5 develop the explanation further.

Emphasise the following simple frame/ chain that students can use to write a description:

adjective + because + For example.

and frames/chains like:

sporty + play + games + football

Or sporty + because + games + for example + football

Point out that students can use the same frames/ chains when they speak.

Exercise 6

As an additional exercise, students can develop the sentences in exercise 4 using their own examples or by adding additional examples. This exercise can be followed by whole class checking. Give your own examples.

Exercise 7

This exercise is meant to be done by students on their own. You may want to demonstrate how to use the three bubbles by making notes about someone you know, or someone fictitious on the board. Alternatively/ Additionally, you can elicit notes from one or more students.

Exercise 8

Go through the example with students and elicit a few sentences using the useful language. Ask students to underline the adjectives in the example:

Ahmed is conscientious, because he works very hard. For example, he spends 3 hours in the library every day, including weekends. He's also the kind of person who is very friendly and sociable. For example, he talks to people easily and makes friends very easily. People think he's really adventurous, as he ...

When students have finished writing, they can compare their answer with a partner, or read it aloud to the class. They can also read it to a partner who asks questions about the person they have described. Allow students time to add more sentences to their answer if they wish, using the questions as guide.

Skills development

Encourage students to use synonyms of the adjectives in the exercise, e.g. *hardworking/conscientious, sporty/ active/ adventurous, kind/ generous. clever/ intelligent.*

As a global checking exercise at the end of the class, elicit frames/ chains like those in the explanation for exercises 4 and 5 above for different adjectives and ask students to expand them orally.

Alternatively/ Additionally, ask them to write chains for at least three adjectives describing someone they know for homework.

Remind students that part of the skill of **using** the adjectives here is **explaining** and **developing** what they mean. Using vocabulary such as adjectives is not just about **knowing** the spelling, pronunciation and dictionary definition of a word.