

Jane Godwin Coury

FOUR SHORT STORIES

TO USE IN THE
ELT CLASSROOM



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These four short stories were written by Jane Godwin Coury, a British ELT writer, who has lived in Brazil since 1994. The stories were inspired by everyday life she has experienced observing different places and cultures, and some imagination!

The level is recommended for each story according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The background and instructions for each story are provided for the teacher. There are tasks for learners to do, which are called 'Over to you!'.

Two of the stories "An Unusual Day" and "The Mystery Object" were published in a resource book for English teachers called *Exercícios para Falar Melhor em Inglês* (Speaking Activities) by Jane published by Disal in São Paulo, Brazil.

The writer hopes that students of English from around the world will enjoy reading these short stories and consequently build up their repertoire of vocabulary and understanding of the language. She also hopes that they will inspire English teachers to encourage their students to read more and discuss or write about what they have understood.



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LEVEL: B1

BACKGROUND: This story has five chapters and is about a British man called Josh. He tells his story of growing up in London, his school life, and what he does in his early twenties. At the end of each chapter, there are phrases students can use to talk about their own lives. Learners can either read the chapters in class or for homework.

INSTRUCTIONS: Ask the students to read each chapter of the story below individually. After they have read a chapter, either ask them to tell their partner about themselves using the phrases or encourage the students to write sentences about themselves.

The end of Chapter 5 leaves the students in suspense as Josh meets a beautiful girl, but we don't know what happens after this. When they have finished reading and have talked about themselves using the phrases, ask the students to write an ending to the story. After you have corrected their endings, they can compare their versions with each other.

CHAPTER 1

Hi, my name´s Josh. I´ll be 30 years old next Tuesday. I´m from London, the capital of England. Did you know that my country is part of the United Kingdom (UK)? The other countries in the UK are Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The UK lies between the North Atlantic Ocean and the North Sea and is 22 miles from France. Here´s an interesting fact for you! No one in the UK lives more than 75 miles from the sea! So, now you can see how small it is! I can also say I´m from Great Britain, which is the island of England, Wales, and Scotland. The capital of Wales is Cardiff, the capital of Scotland is Edinburgh, and the capital of Northern Ireland is Belfast. The capital of the Republic of Ireland is Dublin. This sovereign state shares its border with Northern Ireland.

As I write this in 2021, London has a population of 8.9 million people. The River Thames flows through the city and it´s England´s longest river (215 miles long). The river has played an important role bringing and taking products to different places over the years. Nowadays, London is a very cosmopolitan city, and you can hear people speaking many different languages on the streets. Some of them are residents, others are tourists. There are many interesting tourist attractions to visit like: Buckingham Palace, where some members of the Royal family live; the London Eye, a big wheel where you can see the city from a capsule; the



Big Ben, London, the United Kingdom
Picture taken by Lucas Davies on Unsplash

Tower of London, which was established in 1066; Big Ben, which is the nickname for the Great Bell of the clock at the north end of the Palace of Westminster; and many fascinating museums and art galleries.

I went to primary school in London until I was 11 years old. In England, you start primary school when you´re 5 years old. I remember my school very well. It was in

an old Victorian building and there was a small playground. We began school at 9am and finished at 3.30pm. We had lunch at school every day and we ate a snack during break times. Lunch was typically chicken, beef or pork with vegetables and chips. Our snack was usually crisps, chocolate or fruit. I liked all my teachers and my favourite subject was English. I loved writing stories and drawing pictures. I walked to school every day. It was about 15 minutes from our house.

Well, I've told you a bit about me. Now it's over to you! Complete the phrases below to talk about yourself, your country, and your primary school.

OVER TO YOU!

Hi, my name's ...and I'm from ...

My country lies between ... and ...

My city has a population of ...

There are some interesting tourist attractions in my city like ...

I went to primary school in ...

We began school at ... and finished at ...

Lunch was typically ...

My favourite subject was ...

I walked/went by bus/went by car/went by train to school every day.

CHAPTER 2

I've got short, curly, dark brown hair, brown eyes and I'm black. My grandparents are from Jamaica, and they came to England in the 1950s after the Second World War. In 1952, my granddad started working for London Transport rebuilding the train stations that had been damaged during the war. In 1958, he became a tube train driver and worked there until his retirement in 1995.

I've never been to Jamaica, but I really like the food from there. My grandma still cooks dishes like fish stew, which is really spicy. She also fries plantains. That's a type of banana Jamaicans eat as a staple food. About four times a year, I go to my grandparents' house for lunch and meet up with the whole family. My cousin is a reggae singer and after lunch, he usually sings some reggae tunes, and we join in.

My Grandparents and parents live in Tottenham, which is in North London. My Mum is a secondary school teacher. She teaches History to 11–13-year-olds. She really enjoys what she does. My Dad is a cab driver and knows London really well. He's been driving a London cab for 30 years.



A London cab

Picture taken by Jordan Brierly on Unsplash

I've got one brother and one sister who are both younger than me. My brother's name is Samuel, he's 28 years old and is a Maths teacher. He doesn't live in London anymore. He moved to Bristol in 2010 after getting married. Kate, my sister, is the youngest. She's 25 years old and she's studying for her Master's degree in Languages and Literature.

Well, that's a bit about my family. Now, it's your go! Complete the phrases below to talk about yourself and your family.

OVER TO YOU!

I've got short/long/curly/straight/dark/fair/red hair.

I've got brown/green/blue eyes.

My grandparents are from ...

My parents live in ...

My Mum is a ...

My Dad is a ...

I've got ... brother(s) and ... sister(s). They are younger/older than me.

My brother is a ... and my sister is a ...

My brother(s) and sister(s) live/don't live in ...

CHAPTER 3

As I told you, I went to primary school in London until I was 11 years old. After leaving primary school, I went to Northlands secondary school in Tottenham. We had to wear a uniform, which was a white shirt, black trousers (a black skirt for the girls), a blue jumper, and a black blazer with the school badge on it. My school was very culturally diverse so many teenagers wore different kinds of headwear. There were Muslim girls who wore headscarves, Sikh boys who wore *patkas* on their heads and teenagers who had dreadlocks, like me. I used to have long hair down to my shoulders. Now my hair is short.

I learnt a lot about other cultures at my school and there was a sense of community spirit. The school encouraged us to respect each other's religions, way of dressing, and cultural

habits. For example, my Muslim friends went to a classroom to pray at lunchtime, I had a Hindu friend who didn't eat beef in the school canteen and my Christian friends gave all their



Diversity

Picture taken by Clay Banks on Unsplash

mates a chocolate egg at Easter. Our teachers always got us working in groups on projects in the classroom and I think that helped us a lot to understand each other.

The subjects I liked the most at secondary school were English, Art and French because I thought they were interesting. I didn't like Chemistry and Physics very much as I found them very difficult to understand. After school, we had extra-curricular activities such as drama, painting, dance and choir. I took part in the drama group and every year we performed a play in December. All the parents came to watch and after the play, we all got together in the school hall and ate food that our parents had made specially. As you can imagine, there were a lot of different kinds of dishes!

Well, I've told you about my school experiences. Now it's your turn! Complete the phrases below.

OVER TO YOU!

I went to ... secondary school in (city) ...

We had to wear a uniform, which was .../ We didn't have to wear a uniform.

My friends ...

I learnt a lot about ...

Our teachers always ...

The subjects I liked the most were ... because ...

The subjects I didn't like were ... as ...

After school, we had extracurricular activities such as ...

I took part in ...

CHAPTER 4

When you're 15 or 16 years old in the UK, you take your GCSEs (General Certificate of Secondary Education). Let me explain what they are! They're academic qualifications that are taken in a variety of subjects. The average number of subjects is around 10, but some people do less, and others do more. Before that, when you're 13 or 14 years old, you can choose which subjects you want to study for your GCSEs. English, Maths and a Science are compulsory, so you have to continue studying them. However, you can drop subjects like History, French or Business Studies.

After you've done your GCSEs, there are a number of paths you can take. You can leave school and get a job, you can study at a college of Further Education, you could do voluntary work, or you could do A- (Advanced) levels. Let me tell you what they are! A-levels are also academic qualifications, but you typically take the examinations when you are 17 or 18 years old. You choose 3 or 4 subjects and study them for 2 years. Once you have these

qualifications, you can apply for university. You can do your A-levels at secondary school or at a college of Further Education. You don't have to be a teenager to do them either! You can take them at any age.

As I've always enjoyed English and languages, I opted to do my A-levels in English Language, English Literature and French. I decided I wanted to study Modern Languages and so I looked for universities that offered a degree in this subject. In the UK, this degree is called a BA (Bachelor of Arts). If I'd chosen Science or Mathematics, it'd be called a BSc (Bachelor of Science). I chose 5 universities to apply to. You get a place at university depending on your A level grades. I got grades A, A and B and got into my first choice of university, UCL (University College London).

In 2002, I started my degree in Modern Languages (French and Spanish) and in the third year I did work experience in France as a teaching assistant at a secondary school. You see when you study languages, you normally go abroad for a year to work or study, and of course learn the language!

I've said a bit about my qualifications and university. Now it's your turn! Complete the phrases below to talk about how the education system works in your country and your background.

OVER TO YOU!

When you are 15 or 16 years old in (my country)..., you ...

Let me explain what they are!

After you've done ..., there are a number of paths you can take. You can ...

Once you have ..., you can apply for university.

As I've always enjoyed ..., I opted to ...

I decided I wanted to...

You get a place at university depending on ...

In (year)..., I started my degree in ...

In the (third) year, I did work experience/studied/ at ...

CHAPTER 5

While I was at university in London, I met lots of interesting people. One particular person became a very good friend. His name's Pedro and he was studying the same degree as me. He has straight blond hair, green eyes and a fair complexion. He's very studious and hard working. Pedro is Brazilian and moved to the UK when he was 12 years old. His parents work at Imperial College in London as researchers.

On our course, we had lectures and seminars about language, culture, history and literature. We were assessed by written and oral examinations, as well as coursework. We had loads of opportunities to practice French and Spanish as it is an international environment and there are people from all over the world there. There were many parties and cultural events every week.



A pub

Picture taken by Drew Beamer on Unsplash

In the UK, it is quite common for students to work part time in the evenings or at weekends to earn some money. The tuition fees are high and there are also living expenses like rent, utility bills (electricity, water, heating) and food. Pedro and I found jobs in the same place, which was quite near our university. We worked in a pub from 7-11.30pm from Thursday to Sunday. I worked as a bartender, and he worked in the kitchen preparing food. The pay wasn't bad and it helped pay the bills!

One night while I was serving people at the bar, the most beautiful woman I had ever seen walked through the door. She was smiling and coming towards me.

"Hello", she said. "You must be Josh. I'm Carla, Pedro's cousin"

“Hi, Carla, nice to meet you”, I replied.

“Pedro has told me so much about you!”, she exclaimed.

“Really! I hope nothing bad”, I said laughing.

“No, no, all good!”, she assured me.

I´ve told you something about my experiences. Now it´s over to you! Complete the phrases below.

OVER TO YOU!

While I was younger, I met ...

My friend´s name is ...

He´s/She´s very ...

On our course, we had lectures and seminars about ...

In (my country), it is (not) common for students to work part time.

Tuition fees are high/low/free in my country.

I had to/didn´t have to pay utility bills, such as ...

I worked as a ...

One day/night, I met the most (beautiful/handsome) ... woman/man I had ever seen

OVER TO YOU!

Your last task is to answer the following question!

How do you think the story ends?

LEVEL: B1

BACKGROUND: This story is narrated by a manicurist who tells us about one of her clients, who has an interesting job. The story is in two parts.

INSTRUCTIONS: Write the following words on the board/show them on a screen: *manicurist; elderly lady; red cap; petrol station*. Ask the class what they think the connection could be between these words in a story.

Ask the students to read Part 1 individually. When they have read this part, ask them to discuss the two questions in pairs. Now ask the students to read Part 2 individually and answer the questions at the end in pairs. Go through the answers with the class and check if they have any questions.



THE MYSTERY OF THE RED CAP

Part 1

She came to my salon every Friday morning to get her nails done. The first time she appeared I noticed that her hands were worn, and her fingernails were dirty. After about 3 weeks, we started getting to know each other better. Her name was Maria and she told me that she walked from one end of the avenue to the other every day. To my knowledge, that was about 3 kilometers. The woman was around 75 years old.

“So, I was going past the petrol station on Wednesday morning”, Maria said interrupting my far away imagination of this fascinating woman.

“It was raining so I couldn't see very well”, she continued.

“But I did notice that something was wrong”. Now I was brought back into the conversation and was focusing on what she was saying. What could be wrong? I wondered.

“Normally, there's a young man there pumping fuel. He's been there for ages. He always catches my eye because he smiles at me when I pass by. He always wears a red cap with the word 'Orlando' written on it. Such a nice man”, she recalled as though remembering his kind act.

“So, on Wednesday, instead of the young lad, there was a woman in her early twenties serving the customers. Well, I couldn't help myself. I walked onto the forecourt and asked her where the young man was. The new girl told me that he hadn't turned up for work that day. She didn't know what had happened to him and she was filling in for him”, Maria said sighing.

“What color nail varnish would you like today?” I asked Maria.

“Oh, I think I'll have a nice blue color today”, she answered picking out a turquoise nail varnish.

“So, what do you think had happened to the man?” I asked inquisitively.

“Well, I wondered the same thing. I continued on my daily walk stopping now and again to pick them up when I suddenly saw a red cap with 'Orlando' written on it”, she responded.

I was so curious to know about the mystery of the boy with the red cap that I didn't even think to ask her what she was referring to when she said, 'pick them up'.

OVER TO YOU!

Answer the following questions in pairs.

- 1. What do you think Maria picked up now and again on her daily walk?**
- 2. What do you think had happened to the young man?**



A skip

Picture taken by Tyler Nix on Unsplash

Part 2

Now continue reading the story.

“So, I got the red cap, as a kind of souvenir from a happy 2 minutes of my daily routine that had repeated itself over months – the friendly young man smiling at me and giving me some attention”, Maria said.

“And then what did you do?” I enquired.

“Well, I went down a side road because I knew there was a skip there and usually there are loads of them inside. You know, I make a living from selling them”, she told

me looking at me in the eye.

“Oh, I see”, I exclaimed, trying to disguise the fact that I hadn’t guessed what her job was yet.

“As I was getting nearer the skip, I heard a voice calling for help. It was coming from inside the container. I looked inside and to my horror, there was the man all covered in stones and rubble. All you could see was his head”, Maria told me.

“Oh, my goodness! How did he end up there?” I asked.

“Well, when I finally got him out with the help of some men who were in the next street, he told me the story. Before going to work on Wednesday, he was fixing a hole in his roof at home. Suddenly he fell and landed in a lorry that was passing by. It was full of stones and rubble. The driver didn’t see him. The next thing he knew he was being tipped into a skip along with all the stones and nobody heard his cries for help. He had been half buried there since 9am!”, Maria said.

I was totally shocked by the story.

“The funny thing is...”, she laughed “is that he joked with me when he finally staggered out of all that mess on top of him. He told me that he was thinking of me because there were quite a lot of aluminum cans in the skip and he thought if I ever get out of here, I’ll give them to that nice woman that passes by every day!”

So, that was Maria’s job. She picked up aluminum cans every day and sold them to a recycling depot. And every Friday she came to my salon to get her nails done.

OVER TO YOU!**Answer the questions in pairs.**

1. How did the narrator (the manicurist) know Maria?
2. Why did Maria like the man who worked at the petrol station?
3. What did the girl at the petrol station say had happened to the man?
4. What object did she find that belonged to the man?
5. How did the man end up in the skip?
6. What did the man say he would give to Maria?
7. What was Maria's job?

Answers

1. *The manicurist knew the old lady because she came to her salon every Friday to get her nails done.*
2. *Because the man smiled at her every day she passed by the petrol station.*
3. *She said that he hadn't turned up for work that day. She didn't know what had happened to him and she was filling in for him.*
4. *His red cap with 'Orlando' written on it.*
5. *He was fixing a hole in his roof. Suddenly he fell and landed in a lorry that was passing by. He was tipped into a skip with stones and rubble. The driver didn't see him.*
6. *The aluminum cans that were in the skip.*
7. *Maria collected aluminum cans to sell to a recycling depot.*

Published in *Exercícios para Falar Melhor em Inglês (Speaking Activities)* by Jane Godwin Coury, Editora Disal, São Paulo, Brazil – p39-43.

LEVEL: B1

BACKGROUND: This story is set in the huge metropolis of São Paulo city in Brazil. It tells the story of a woman who has an unusual day at work.

INSTRUCTIONS: Show the students a picture of a helicopter and a black box as below:



Ask the students what the possible connection could be between the helicopter and the black box in a story set in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Now, ask the students to read Part 1 of the story individually.

In pairs, the students should tell the story so far to their partner. Then, they should discuss what they think will happen next and how the story could possibly finish. Afterwards, ask them to read Part 2 and then talk to their partner again to check if their predictions were correct.



AN UNUSUAL DAY

Part 1

São Paulo is a huge city in the Southeast of Brazil, which spreads out over miles in every direction. If you look out the window on the top floor of one of its many tall skyscrapers, you will see many different buildings of various shapes and sizes and people bustling here, there, and everywhere. It is a modern and dynamic city where business deals take place seven days a week in posh offices and expensive restaurants all over the city.

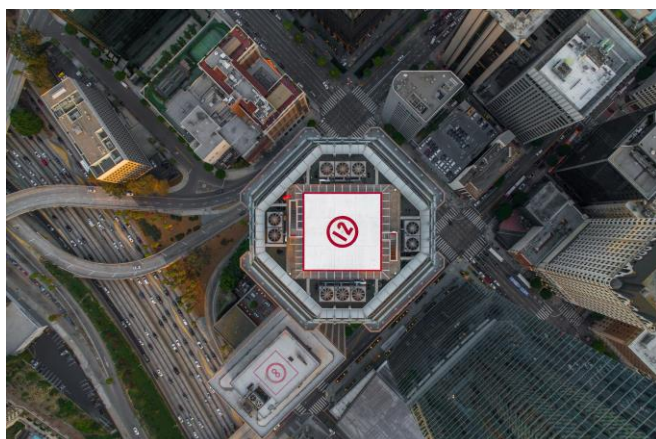
Maiara is one of Sao Paulo's 18 million inhabitants. Although she lives in this busy metropolis, she was not born here. She is from a nearby city called Campinas and her parents still live there. Maiara is tall, slim and has dark wavy hair which is shoulder length. She has been married to José for six years.

Every morning, Maiara wakes up at 5am when her alarm clock goes off. After having a long warm shower, she makes some strong coffee and lays the table for breakfast. José normally joins her for the first meal of the day, and they usually eat papaya with honey and a bread roll with cheese. At around 6am, José kisses his wife goodbye and goes to work by car. It takes him an hour to arrive at his company as there are often intense traffic jams at this time of day.

Maiara also sets off for work. She is a helicopter pilot and works for a company that provides helicopter shuttle services from a suburb called Tamboré to many places in the centre of São Paulo. Her clients are successful businesspeople who are smartly dressed and often carry briefcases.

It was a sunny Tuesday morning and Maiara drove to work as normal and left her Fiat Uno in the parking lot next to the heliport in Tamboré. After greeting her colleagues, she met her client and took him to the helicopter she was to use that day. She noticed that her client was carrying a strange black box. When they got to the helicopter, they sat down next to each other and Maiara went through the pre-flight checking procedure before taking off. Everything seemed to be fine.

At 8am, the helicopter rose up over the buildings and Maiara headed in the direction of Avenida Paulista where her client, a rather chubby man with a dark moustache, had an important meeting at a multinational company. His name was Fernando Silva and he was from Angola. He had told Maiara that he was just visiting Brazil on business. They had few problems communicating as they both speak Portuguese. As they were chatting, Maiara thought that she could hear a hissing noise. However, it soon stopped, and she forgot about it.



A helipad on top of a building
Picture taken by David deLeon on Unsplash

On top of some of Sao Paulo's tall office towers are numbers which indicate where helicopter pilots must land. Maiara had been told by radio that she had to go to Helipad 12, which was the headquarters of a company called Rainer. Maiara circled around the tower and gently lowered the helicopter until it stopped on top of the roof of the building. Fernando jumped out of the helicopter and said goodbye to her in a thick Angolan accent. Maiara waved at him as she lifted the helicopter off the

ground.

As she was flying back, she suddenly realised that her passenger had left the strange black box on the seat beside her.

OVER TO YOU!

Tell your partner the story so far.

Discuss what might happen next and predict how the story might end.

Part 2

Maiara wondered what to do. If she turned back now, it would be dangerous to suddenly change course. She may cause an accident doing that. She decided to go on her way and ring her passenger when she arrived back at the heliport.

She dialled the number, but there was only an answering machine, so she left a message.

“Senhor Silva. This is Maiara, your helicopter pilot. I am calling to say you left your belongings in the helicopter. Please ring me.”

Maiara put the box inside a safe in the company’s office. Having woken up early and eaten her breakfast some hours ago, she thought it was time for a coffee and a cheese bun, so she went to the heliport café to buy one. Just as she sat down to enjoy her mid-morning snack, her mobile phone rang. She picked it up and said:

“Hello!”

“Maiara. This is Fernando Silva. Thanks for your message. I don’t know what to do. I need the box I left in the helicopter, as there’s something very important inside. Can you fly back to Avenida Paulista and bring me it? I will pay you for your services, of course.”

“OK, Senhor Silva. I’ll check with my boss. I don’t think there will be any problem.”

Maiara got the go-ahead from her boss and was soon flying back the same way she had previously flown some hours ago. Fernando’s box was on the seat next to her. By this time, she was really quite curious to know what was inside it.

Maiara landed on the tower and saw Fernando waiting anxiously for her. He ran over to her and thanked her for coming all this way. After paying her for the extra trip, he turned around to go back to the door leading to the stairs of the building.

“Senhor Silva,” Maiara called out. “Just one thing! Could you please tell me what’s inside your box? I am a bit of a busybody or should I say curious!”

“Well, ok. Please do not tell anyone though.” Fernando slowly opened the strange black box, and Maiara saw a 20 cm bright green snake. It had been eating a small lizard that was lying dead next to the snake.

“This is a rare snake from Angola”, Fernando explained. “I am taking it to this company to show them. In fact, they are interested in buying it. I had to transport the snake in an inconspicuous way, as it would have looked too suspicious.”

Now, Maiara understood what the hissing sound was!

OVER TO YOU!

Talk to your partner about whether your predictions were correct.

What happened in Part 2?

Tell your partner if the story reminded you of anything you have seen on the Internet, read in a book, or seen on television.

Published in *Exercícios para Falar Melhor em Inglês (Speaking Activities)* by Jane Godwin Coury, Editora Disal, São Paulo, Brazil – p48-51.

LEVEL: B1

BACKGROUND: This story is set in the UK and tells the story of two people who meet each other again after some time in unusual circumstances.

INSTRUCTIONS: Ask the students to read Part 1 individually. When they have finished, ask them to tell the story so far to a partner. They should then discuss what will happen next and how the story could possibly finish. Ask them to read Part 2 individually and at the end discuss in groups of three if they had predicted this ending.

THE MYSTERY OBJECT

Part 1

Abigail liked getting up late. She taught Spanish evening classes to adults and normally went to bed late. On this particular day she was awakened by her young neighbours who were playing music very loudly. This was normal on a Friday in the street where she lived in Southampton. There were many student houses nearby, and Friday at 11am was party time for them.



A bowl of cornflakes

Picture taken by Deepak N on Unsplash

Abigail, who was in her thirties, got out of bed and stretched her arms. She brushed her long dark hair and went downstairs to make herself some breakfast. She put a bowl of cornflakes and a carton of milk on the table. Then, she sat down on her favourite chair, still feeling half asleep. There was a local newspaper on the table. She hadn't had time to read it the previous day, so she started flicking through the pages. Suddenly, she saw something that caught her eye on page six. There was a person in a picture that

she recognised. Underneath the picture, there was an article. It went like this:

Edward Banks, a landscape designer from Lymington, decided to remodel his garden. This 42-year-old man wanted to plant some apple trees, and so he dug some holes in his back garden. While he was digging, he came across something hard.

He said "Luckily I didn't break the object. I knew it must have been something precious as I could see a shining gold colour gleaming from the ground."

Edward tried to make a bigger hole and felt the object with his hands. At that very moment, his phone rang, and he hurried quickly into the house to answer it. When he picked up the phone, there was no one there.

“I thought it was strange!” exclaimed Edward.

He put the phone down and went back outside. When he got to the hole, he looked inside and noticed that there was no golden coloured object there anymore.

Abigail was very interested in the story and wanted to know the end. She became very frustrated, though, when she realized that the end of the story was missing. Her dog, Rover, had picked up the newspaper and had chewed up a piece of it. She was very curious to know what had happened to Edward.

OVER TO YOU!

Tell your partner the story so far. You can use these words to remind you of the story:

- ***Spanish***
- ***Music***
- ***Breakfast***
- ***Newspaper***
- ***Landscape designer***
- ***Apple trees***
- ***Gold***
- ***A hole***
- ***Phone***
- ***Frustrated***
- ***Rover, the dog***

Discuss what might happen next and predict how the story might end.

Part 2

Abigail thought for a moment about where she had met Edward.

“Now I remember,” she said out loud. “He was in my cooking class I took last year at college.”

She tried to visualize what he looked like. A picture came to mind of a tall man with blond hair. During the course at college, the students had exchanged phone numbers. Abigail got her notebook that she had used at that time and found Edward’s number. She decided to call her former classmate to see what had happened.

They arranged to meet up at a nice café on King’s Road the following Saturday. Both Abigail and Edward arrived on time and were pleased to see each other again. Edward told Abigail the story that she had already read in the newspaper. He added that he had ended up in hospital that day because he had got very anxious about the whole story and had experienced a nervous breakdown. He had told his family and friends about what had happened in the garden, but no one had believed him.

Abigail asked Edward if he would like to look for the object again. She would help him if he agreed. Edward was very happy because someone finally believed him. They went back to his house and Edward found two spades, one for him and one for Abigail. They started digging.

“Look!” yelled Abigail suddenly. “I’ve found something.”



A yellowish box

Picture taken by Christopher Bill on Unsplash

Edward quickly rushed over to see what she had discovered. It was a yellowish box with a hole in it. They both pulled it out of the ground. Inside the hole, there was a piece of paper with a plastic bag wrapped around it. By this time, Edward and Abigail were very excited.

“You open it!” suggested Edward.

“OK!” Abigail said, tearing the plastic bag. The piece of paper was a little brown, but they could still read it. It said:

Pupils from St. John’s School in Southampton buried this box on 23rd March 1965. Whoever finds it will see 3 things that reflect our life at the time of writing.

1) *a cassette with Beatles songs*

2) *a mini skirt*

3) *a Beatles wig*

Edward looked at Abigail and they both burst out laughing. What a pity they didn’t have a cassette player!

OVER TO YOU!

Talk to your partner about whether your predictions were correct.

What happened in Part 2?

Can you think of any other objects that might have been hidden in the box from a different era? For example, from the 1990s.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jane Godwin Coury is from the UK and has been living and working as an English teacher, teacher educator, copyeditor, and translator in Brazil since 1994. She is an ELT writer and has written many publications focusing on helping English teachers, including a book entitled *Exercícios para falar melhor em inglês - Speaking Activities* (Disal), which has 32 speaking activities for English language teachers to use with their students. Since 1987, she has worked in different teaching institutions in Brazil, the UK, the USA, France and Germany. Jane holds a BA in Modern Languages and European Studies, an MA in Applied Linguistics and TESOL, and a post-graduate certificate in Education.

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