

UNIT 13 BEN AND MIKE

UNIT OVERVIEW

In this unit, students will:

- 🎧 Read and listen to the conversation between Ben and Mike.
- Answer open-ended questions to show understanding of the conversation.
- 🎧 Consider four alternative opinions about friendship and rumors, and express **agreement or disagreement** with the opinions.
- Study the Opinion Network to learn expressions for “strength of opinions.”
- Extend the Topic by talking about what activities are OK between best friends.
- Read a Culture Corner extract about rumors.
- Share ideas about something that is unfair to men or women.
- Watch a follow-up video extract from Steve giving his views about misunderstandings in friendship
- Take the Unit Test.

Authors' Introduction

Go to impactseries.com/issues to listen to Junko's unit introduction.

The Issue

In this unit, a rumor goes around about two best friends, Ben and Mike—a rumor that they are homosexuals. They are just close friends since high school who do a lot of things together. They don't understand why people start rumors and believe them easily. Should they just ignore the rumors, or should they pay attention to them? Also, they realize that there may be a double standard about what is acceptable behavior between close friends; that is, two women can do a lot of things together without causing such rumors.

Questions Raised

- If there is a stupid rumor going around about you, what would you do? Should you ignore it, or should you pay attention to it?
- If two men are close friends and do a lot of things together, would people regard them as homosexuals? How about two women?
- What behaviors by two best friends are OK and what behaviors are not OK?

To Keep in Mind

- What two best friends can do together without being misunderstood may vary according to the culture. If you have students from different cultures, it might be interesting to compare.
- Another issue that exists here is prejudice against homosexuals. People who are gay should not be discriminated against.

TEACHING GUIDE

Getting Ready

→ Have students work in pairs. Don't spend too much time here—do this part lightly. Make sure students understand the meaning of the word *rumor*.

🎧 **Teaching tip:** After the students have worked in pairs, you could ask volunteers for their answers.

Situation

→ Have students listen to the dialogue without looking at the text. Ask them if they understood the rumor that has been spread about Ben and Mike. Then have them listen again, this time looking at the text.

Teaching tip: Have students work in pairs to read the dialogue. One student reads the part of Ben and the other the part of Mike. Tell them they have to read as if they are in a drama, showing Ben and Mike's feelings.

Check Your Understanding

Answer Key (sample answers)

1. Yes, he does.
2. He doesn't want to work with a homosexual.
3. Mike.
4. They eat, study, and go to the movies together.
5. They are always together.

What Do You Think?

→ After you check students' understanding of the story using the comprehension questions, students discuss the opinions of Mark, Anna, Shingo, and Iris. Have students do Activity A individually. Then have them move to Activity B and share their opinions in pairs.

Teaching tip: Students should check the opinion that they think makes the strongest point, even if they disagree with it.

Culture point: What is OK for best friends to do is often determined by culture. However, even in a single culture there seem to be different standards for men and women. For example, in Japan and in many other countries, it is not regarded as strange for two women to walk hand in hand, but it is considered strange for two men to hold hands.

Extending the Topic: Best friends: what's OK?

→ Have students individually write "OK" or "No" for each column, and then have them work in pairs (or threes) for the follow-up discussion.

Culture Corner

Have students work in pairs or groups of three. Students read through the song lyrics for "Rumors." Give them an opportunity to ask about unknown words. If possible, bring a recording of the song to play in class. Ask the students if they can tell the main idea of the song.

Sharing My Ideas: It's not fair!

→ Choose

Begin by having the students choose a topic. They may choose from the examples at the bottom of the box or think up their own topic. Allow plenty of time for this step, as the rest of the activity will be easier if students are comfortable with the topic they have chosen.

→ Prepare and Rehearse

To help students get started, go over the questions at the bottom of the Prepare box. Point out the Language Hints as well as the Presentation Tip, because it relates to note-taking. You also may want to elicit common ways to introduce and conclude presentations.

When students are ready to rehearse, put them in pairs. The focus of the Listener task is on the reasons why the topic they chose is unfair. Give partners plenty of time to work on improving their notes before moving on to Step 4.

Sample Presentation

I think women these days get special treatment, and it's not fair. For example, women get more discounts. There are "Ladies' Days" at almost any place—shops, sports gyms, karaoke, movie theaters, just everywhere. And they get discounts. Men don't. It's not fair. Also, women do work and earn money but men pay for dates. That's not fair either. In addition, women have more choices in fashion. They have so many styles to choose from at shops. Men don't. Women often say things are not fair for women, but I disagree. Many things are not fair for men!

→Present

Have students change partners, or put them in small groups. Encourage listeners to take notes, and be sure they have read and understood the Listener task.

If you are using the assessment guide below, go over each point with the whole class before students begin their presentations. (This could also be done during the Rehearse step so that students have time to prepare for or practice each assessment point.) Be sure to remind your students that communicating their ideas is more important than using perfect English!

Assessing the Activity

Create a handout with a rating grid such as the one below, or simply write it on the board. (Note: For more information on student assessment and ways to modify the assessment system, see *Assessing the Activity*, Unit 1.)

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1 – There was a clear introduction and conclusion. | ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ |
| 2 – The presenter gave three clear reasons. | ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ |
| 3 – The presenter used the Language Hints. | ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ |
| 4 – The presenter showed enthusiasm for the topic. | ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ |
| 5 – The presenter made good eye contact with the audience. | ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ |

When students are working in pairs, have each student evaluate the other. If a student presents in front of a small group or in front of the class, have each student evaluate him or her. A rater can give up to 5 stars for each category, so the maximum score for any presentation is 25 stars.

Of course, you can also give your own assessment, along with positive suggestions for how the presenter can improve next time.

PERSONAL OPINION

→ If you have downloaded the video clip or have access to the Internet in class, play the video clip. The first time, have the students watch with books closed. Ask questions to see if the students have understood the gist of Steve's opinion. Then have them look at the summary. See if they can fill in the missing words. Play the extract once or twice more. Then check the answers.

Answer Key

Steve

Unfortunately, this is a very typical situation. People are people. No matter where you are, whatever country you're in, someone will gossip about somebody. I don't know why it happens, but it does.

Related to this particular situation, I had a similar thing happen to me. I had left my email program open by mistake. I guess I had forgotten to close it and I didn't realize it at the time. Apparently, what happened was, someone sent a friend of mine, a male friend, an email from my computer saying that I wanted to go out with him.

So this friend came up to me a few days later and said, "Steve, forget about it. I'm not like that!" And I said, "What do you mean?" I had no idea what he was talking about. And he didn't tell me, and I was really confused! And then a couple of days later, he said that I had sent him an email, asking him for a date. And I said, "No way. That wasn't me!" And he still didn't believe me.

Video Script

Well I think that, um, unfortunately, people are people. No matter where you are, whatever country you're in, someone will gossip about somebody. I don't know why it happens, but it, it does.

About this situation, I had a similar situation happen to me, unfortunately. Um, in the early days of computers, um, the Internet was just coming in, and I'd left my Internet open without closing it, and I, I'd forgotten to do that. I didn't realize at the time. And, um, someone sent a friend of mine an email saying that I wanted to go out with him.

And, uh, he came to me a few days later and said, "Steve, I'm not like that!" And I said, "What do you mean?" I had no idea what he was talking about. And, uh, he didn't tell me, and I thought—I was confused! And then a day later or two days later, he came up to me and he confessed what he, what was, that I'd sent him an email. And I said, no, I hadn't! And, basically, to be honest, he still didn't believe me.

UNIT TEST

→ Make copies of the Unit Test for each student. Distribute the copies and allow about 15 minutes for the class to complete the test. Correct the test in class.

A. Understanding the Situation: The focus is on understanding the story in the Situation. Students answer five multiple-choice questions.

B. Vocabulary: The focus is on understanding vocabulary from the Situation or the Extending the Topic sections. Students match three words with their definitions.

C. Expressions: The focus is on checking students' understanding of expressions or phrases from the What Do You Think? and Opinion Network sections. Students answer two multiple-choice questions.

Answer Key

A. 1. b 2. d 3. c 4. c 5. a

B. 1. d 2. b 3. a

C. 1. a 2. b

LINKS

If you would like the class to do additional research on best friends, here are some useful links:

Do best friends always have to do and share everything together?

<http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=1005110400007>

Do Best Friends Make Best Roommates?

<http://www.campusblues.com/best-friends-roommates.asp>

Boyfriend...best friend?

<http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20070728161149AAYIGNQ>