Teacher's Guide

The Cup of Coffee

A complete guide to teaching the ManWrites short-story lesson

LEVEL	FORMAT	AUDIENCE
B1-B2	Flexible lesson sequence	Teenage and adult learners

1. Lesson at a Glance

Teaching principle The full pack is a flexible resource bank. Choose the tasks that fit your class and reserve the remaining exercises for follow-up. The lesson explores loneliness, embarrassment and considerate help. Keep money-related discussion centred on the story.

Story type	Realist short story about an awkward encounter in a café
Main characters	Joe, the café worker and the man in the dark suit
Core language level	B1–B2
Core lesson time	Approximately 60 or 90 minutes
Extended sequence	Two or three lessons with speaking and writing
Main skills	Reading, listening, vocabulary, speaking and writing

Learning objectives

- Trace Joe's visit to the café and explain why staying there matters to him.
- Infer café and everyday vocabulary from context and apply it in new sentences.
- Support comprehension answers with details from the relevant story section.
- Discuss how people offer help, show impatience and preserve someone's dignity.
- Practise calm problem-solving in a café role play and give reasons in a debate.
- Write a first-person account from the café worker's point of view.

Before the lesson

- Read Full Lesson Plan Version 3 and choose the questions, vocabulary and activities for your route.
- Prepare the story pages or rehearse reading aloud. Use a projected copy or printed extracts.
- Put £3.20, £3.50, 30p, £1 and 70p on a private prompt card for the payment scene.
- Share only the learner pages needed for the route. Keep the answer keys for feedback.

2. Choose a Teaching Route

Route A: Focused 60-minute lesson

1. Introductory questions — 5 minutes
2. First reading or teacher read-aloud — 10 minutes
3. Selected section-based comprehension questions — 15 minutes
4. One vocabulary activity — 10 minutes
5. Selected discussion questions — 15 minutes
6. Exit reflection on Joe's decision to stay — 5 minutes

Route B: Complete 90-minute lesson

1. Introductory questions — 10 minutes
2. First reading or teacher read-aloud — 10 minutes
3. Reread, answer selected RCQs and check evidence — 20 minutes
4. Context vocabulary and one or two exercises — 20 minutes
5. Discussion and a short role play — 20 minutes
6. Review and brief the writing or debate follow-up — 10 minutes

Route C: Extended sequence over 2–3 lessons

Lesson	Focus	Suggested content
1	Story and understanding	Introductory Questions, story, RCQs and True or False
2	Language and interpretation	Essential Vocabulary, selected exercises, discussion and role play
3	Critical and written response	Debate, writing, peer response and review

Homework option Set one unused vocabulary exercise or ask learners to plan the café worker's account between lessons. For two lessons, assign the writing for homework and select either role play or debate for class.

3. Teaching the Core Lesson

A. Introduce the theme

Choose from the eight introductory questions. Use questions 1, 3 and 5 to move from the cover to café atmosphere and checking prices. Keep answers general and let learners discover Joe's situation during the reading.

B. Read or listen to the story

- First encounter: use the complete story. Ask learners to notice what Joe hopes to get from his visit and to keep reading through unfamiliar words.
- Second encounter: use the eight-section version. After each selected section, ask pairs to find the detail that supports their answer before they report back.
- Prediction: pause at the end of Section 4, after Joe searches his pockets. Ask learners what he might say and then read on to see how the café noise and the other customer affect him.

C. Check comprehension

The 28 RCQs appear as a standalone list and in the sectioned reading with the same numbering. Section ranges are 1–4, 5–8, 9–12, 13–15, 16–19, 20–22, 23–25 and 26–28. For the focused route, sample across the arc, for example 1, 3, 6, 11, 14, 16, 22, 23, 25 and 28.

Efficient correction Ask learners to point to the relevant line before checking the key. For 14, calculate £3.50 minus £3.20. For 22 and 24, distinguish the £1 the man puts down from the 70p change the worker puts in front of him. For 28, check the physical warmth described in the text and discuss its emotional significance separately.

D. Teach vocabulary

The 45 Essential Vocabulary entries are drawn from the story. Pre-teach a few items that could block understanding, such as counter, saucer, odd jobs and change. Use the approved worked examples for shuffle and gust to model a definition and original sentence.

- Vocabulary notebook: record the contextual meaning and an original example. Add a word class when useful.
- True or False (10): ask pairs to correct every false statement using evidence. For item 7, check the coin against the story.
- Synonyms and Antonyms (10 each): read the whole phrase before choosing from the box. Check appeal to with seem attractive to and still with moving in the context of Joe's hands.
- Words and Meanings (10): ask pairs to justify matches using context. Contrast hiss with whirr using the two sounds of the coffee machine.
- Gap Fill (10) and Vocabulary Practice (15): work individually, compare in pairs and check with the matching key. In Gap Fill, wardrobe and blackboard are the unused options.

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4. Speaking, Debate and Writing

Discussion questions

Choose from the 20 discussion questions. Start with 3–4 on sounds and the meaning of a proper coffee, move to 10–12 on the man's motives and the worker's response, then use 18 or 20 for reflection.

- Give learners a minute to note a detail before speaking.
- Let pairs compare interpretations before inviting whole-class responses.
- Ask which action supports each interpretation. Leave room for different readings of the man's motives.

Role play

Work in groups of three using the approved roles: customer, café worker and waiting customer. Give each group a minute to plan, then ask them to settle the bill. Swap roles and try a different solution. Debrief by comparing how the customer felt in the two versions.

Debate

Motion: "A café should let a customer pay later if they are only a little short of money." Divide the class into two sides. Each side prepares two reasons and a reply, opens for one minute, takes turns responding and votes with a reason.

- Ask the supporting side to explain how a café could offer help respectfully.
- Ask the opposing side to consider consistency, staff discretion and practical alternatives.
- Listen for clear reasons and a response to the other side's argument.

Writing

Set the approved 150–200-word account from the café worker's point of view after her shift. Have learners outline what she saw at the counter, what she was trying to do and what she noticed after Joe sat down. Check first person, past tense, story consistency, one observable detail and one thought of her own.

Safeguarding note The story touches on financial hardship, loneliness and embarrassment. Keep discussion centred on the characters or fictional situations and allow learners to pass on personal questions.

5. Classroom Resource Directory

Use The Cup of Coffee — Full Lesson Plan Version 3. The editable DOCX and matching PDF are available. Page references below are for the 52-page PDF. Use its contents page to jump to sections.

PDF page	Lesson-plan section	Best use
4	Introductory Questions	Choose a warm-up before reading.
5–13	Complete story	Read or listen for general meaning.
14–16	Reading Comprehension Questions	Assign selected questions for review.
17–28	Story and Reading Comprehension Questions	Reread in eight sections and locate evidence.
29–30	Essential Vocabulary	Model contextual definitions and examples.
31	Vocabulary Practice Exercise	Match 15 items in pairs.
32	True or False	Correct false statements using the story.
33–36	Synonyms, Antonyms, Words and Meanings, Gap Fill	Select one or two exercises for the class.
37–39	Discussion Questions	Choose prompts for pairs or groups.
40	Role Play	Set up a three-person café conversation.
41–42	Debate and Writing	Use the approved motion and writing instructions.
43–45	Reading Comprehension Questions — Answers	Check all 28 answers against the story.
46–51	Exercise answer keys	Check vocabulary and True or False.

For a listening variation, read the approved story aloud while learners follow the text. For review, use the answer sections at the end of the same PDF.

6. Differentiation and Classroom Management

Support for B1 learners

- Pre-teach a few essential items and display the coin amounts when checking the café scene.
- Work through shorter sections. Let learners underline the evidence before answering.
- Offer starters such as “Joe decides to stay because…” or “The worker helps by…”.
- Rehearse debate reasons in pairs before asking learners to speak for their side.

Challenge for B2 learners

- Distinguish what the narrator reports from what readers infer about motives.
- Compare the café sounds with the sounds in Joe’s room and justify the effect with a detail.
- Ask learners to respond to a practical objection during the debate.
- In writing, keep the worker’s knowledge limited to what she could observe or reasonably infer.

Mixed-level classes

- In large classes, assign different sections to pairs and collect one supported answer per pair.
- Online, share the PDF and use breakout trios for role play. In 1:1, take one role and have the learner briefly voice the third character.
- Give quieter learners planning time and offer a note-taking or evidence-finding role before reporting.

Assessment suggestions

- Reading: accuracy, clear sequence and relevant evidence from the assigned section.
- Speaking: clear reasons, interaction and a respectful response to another view.
- Writing: first person, past tense, consistent events and a plausible thought from the café worker.

Answer keys

Use the full-sentence RCQ key on PDF pages 43–45 and the exercise keys on pages 46–51. Accept equivalent wording where the story supports it. Use the approved wording when displaying an official model answer.

Final reminder Choose a route and mark the required pages before class. Leave time for learners to explain what makes the visit important to Joe.

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