

Describing People

Talking about personality and appearance.

1. Discuss

Discuss the following with a partner.

- Who are the people in the picture? Where are they?
- Write down some adjectives to describe the people in the picture.



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2. Vocabulary

A. Read the personality adjectives below. Which are positive (+), negative (-), or both (+/-)?

- | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. selfish | 5. serious | 9. stingy | 13. confident |
| 2. forgetful | 6. honest | 10. easy-going | 14. reliable |
| 3. helpful | 7. hard-working | 11. generous | 15. stubborn |
| 4. talkative | 8. humble | 12. shy | 16. kind |

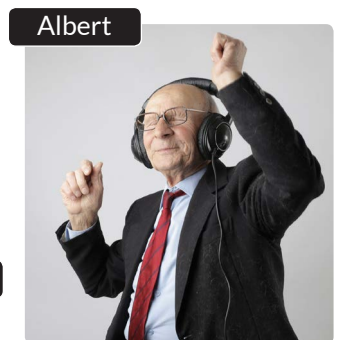
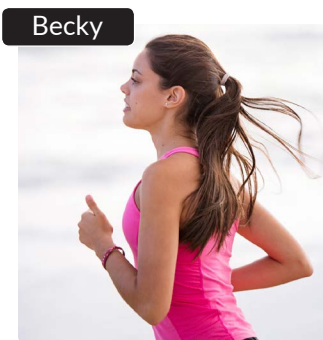
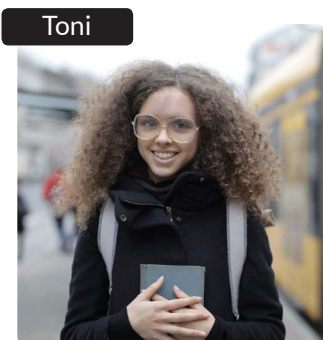
B. Choose three adjectives from Part 2A to describe the people below.

- A good teacher is,, and
- Doctors are,, and
- A CEO is,, and
- I am,, and

C. Answer the questions about the pictures.

Who ...

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. has a tattoo? | 5. is wearing formal clothes? | 9. has blue eyes? |
| 2. has curly hair? | 6. is wearing a tie? | 10. is a little chubby? |
| 3. is cute? | 7. is bald? | 11. has brown hair? |
| 4. has a pony tail? | 8. is in his late 70s? | 12. is wearing a bracelet? |



3. Describing People

A. Complete the table with the describing words and phrases from the box.

<input type="checkbox"/> slim	<input type="checkbox"/> in his teens	<input type="checkbox"/> a beard	<input type="checkbox"/> a tattoo
<input type="checkbox"/> wearing headphones	<input type="checkbox"/> a big smile	<input type="checkbox"/> in his late 30s	<input type="checkbox"/> medium length hair
<input type="checkbox"/> a ponytail	<input type="checkbox"/> good-looking	<input type="checkbox"/> beautiful, blue eyes	<input type="checkbox"/> bald

He/She is...

He/She has...

.....
.....
.....

B. Read the text below. Which person from Part 2C does it describe?

She is in her early twenties I think. She looks friendly and kind and has a big smile. She is not wearing makeup or jewelery at the moment but she is wearing glasses. She has long, curly hair and big, beautiful eyes. She's wearing a dark winter jacket and a backpack. She's holding a book but she isn't reading it. She is looking at the camera. I think she is waiting for a bus.

4. Writing

A. Write a description of another student in your class. Keep it a secret for now.

Think about the following things:

1. His/her personality.
2. Hair length and color.
3. Age.
4. Clothes.
5. What he/she is doing right now.

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B. Share your description with the class. Can other students guess who you described?

Describing People



Level: Elementary: A2
Pre-Intermediate: A2+

Updated: Jan 19, 2022

Language: Function: Describing people, places, or things.
Forms: Adjectives.

Teaching time: 60 minutes.

Overview: Students practice describing people using adjectives to describe for character, personality, and appearance. In American English it is usual to use the structure "He/She has (long hair)", however in British English the most common structure is "He/She has got (long hair)" which is usually contracted to "He/She's got (long hair)". This handout uses American English.

1. DISCUSS

A warm up activity helps set the mood for the topic/lesson and is a good opportunity to assess students' ability to generate language as well as elicit target vocabulary used in the lesson. If students struggle to engage with their partners, ask questions to encourage participation. Allow a few minutes for students to complete the activity and continue the conversation if interesting.

Elicit adjectives that students wrote for Question 2 to share with the class.

2. VOCABULARY

A. Read the adjectives in the box with students. Have them repeat after you to practice pronunciation and syllable stress. In pairs, students decide together which are positive, negative, or both. Write + or - or +/- in the space provided. Check answers with the class.

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. - selfish | 9. - stingy |
| 2. - forgetful | 10. + easy-going |
| 3. + helpful | 11. + generous |
| 4. +/- talkative | 12. - shy |
| 5. +/- serious | 13. + confident |
| 6. + honest | 14. + reliable |
| 7. + hard-working | 15. - stubborn |
| 8. + humble | 16. + kind |

B. Individually, students use the adjectives from Part 2A to fill in the blanks to describe people 1-4. Answers may vary. Have students share their descriptions with a partner or the class and discuss anything interesting.

C. In pairs, students look at the photographs then alternate asking questions 1-12.

- A Who has a tattoo?
B Deb has a tattoo.

Listen to students as they work through the activity and answer any questions that arise. Encourage students to answer in full sentences. Answers may vary but suggestions are listed below.

1. Deb has a tattoo.
2. Toni has curly hair.
3. Toni/Becky/Thomas/Albert is/are cute.
4. Becky has a pony tail.
5. Albert is wearing formal clothes.
6. Albert is wearing a tie.

7. Thomas/Albert is/are bald.
8. Albert is in his late 70s.
9. Thomas has blue eyes.
10. Albert/Thomas is/are a little chubby.
11. Toni/Becky has/have brown hair.
12. Becky is wearing a bracelet.

3. DESCRIBING PEOPLE

A. Explain that we use the verb 'to be' and 'to have' when describing people's personality and appearance. In pairs, students read through the describing words and phrases in the box. Answer any questions that arise. Students then write the phrases in the correct column in the table. Check answers with the class and discuss any differences.

He/She is...

slim
wearing headphones
in his teens
good-looking
in his late 30s
bald

He/She has...

a ponytail
a big smile
a beard
beautiful, blue eyes
a tattoo
medium length hair

B. Individually or in pairs, students read the description and decide which person from Part 2C it describes. The text describes Toni.

4. WRITING

- A. Students write a description of someone in the classroom. Ask that they keep the person a secret and not to include a name, instead use he or she. Students should consider 1-5 when writing their descriptions. Encourage higher level students to write notes instead of full sentences. The notes can be used when they present their descriptions to the class; students will need to create full sentences instead of simply reading their text. This would make a good homework activity if you have run out of time.
- B. If appropriate, have students present their descriptions to the class. Other students should listen carefully and then decide who was described.