



STORIES AND LEGENDS – B1

I. About this Lesson

Activity title: Stories and legends

Level: B1

Recommended Age: 15-18

Subject: English as a foreign language

Timing: 50 minutes. If need be, allot double timing for this lesson.

Resources: computer with internet access, video projector, YouTube content

Learning objectives:

By the end of the lesson, the students will be able to:

- a. develop reading, writing and speaking skills in English;
- b. become familiarised with the plot of the literary work
- c. acquire the lesson vocabulary and use it in real-life examples;
- d. assimilate the degrees of comparison for the adjective.

Materials needed:

Digitally created comic strips, worksheets, infographic, printed page which can be displayed on the video projector from the graphic novel 'The Hound of the Baskervilles' whose authors are Martin Powell writer and Jamie Chase illustrator, published by Dark Horse Books in 2013. The comic book, according to the numerous positive reviews, truly follows Arthur Coyle's book 'The Hound of the Baskervilles'. To become acquainted with the plot, the students can read the versions adapted to their English level or the graphic novel where the page in the present lesson was derived from.



II. Lesson Scenario

1. Instructions for the teacher

Give your students enough time to go through the graphic novel as a project work or summer holiday reading activity. Encourage them to make notes for each page they read and write vocabulary entries for the unknown words they encounter while reading. Take advantage of the hints below about the author and the plot of the book.

HINT: Interesting facts about Arthur Conan Doyle

Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930) was born in Edinburgh, Scotland. His mother loved books and used to tell him stories when he was a little boy. He studied medicine and became a doctor, a profession he used to practise with dedication. He liked travelling, having an adventurous life and taking photos. He also practised sports: football, cricket, bowling, bodybuilding, boxing, rugby, golf. The writer is best known for his detective stories and famous character Sherlock Holmes who is always accompanied by Dr. Watson, his assistant and best friend.

HINT: Plot summary of 'The Hound of the Baskervilles'

According to an old legend, the noble Baskerville family and the entire English community from Dartmoor are threatened by a large, terrifying hound that would kill any family member who





wishes to live at the Baskerville estate. Sir Charles Baskerville, one of the family members, has already become the hound's victim. The famous detective Sherlock Holmes and his companion, Dr. Watson, are going to investigate the case and save Sir Henry, Charles Baskerville's nephew, from having the same fate. Holmes discovers that the hound is real and belongs to Jack Stapleton, who lives in the neighbourhood with his wife. Jack Stapleton is actually a descendant of the Baskervilles who claims their fortune. To catch Stapleton and prove his guilt, Sir Henry accepts the invitation to his house, when the hound is unleashed on him. Despite the foggy night, Holmes and Watson are able to kill the beast, while Jack Stapleton drowns in the moor which surrounds the estate.

Introduction (7 min)

Watch together with your students the 1939 film version directed by Sidney Landfield at the address [Sherlock Holmes | The Hound of the Baskervilles\(1939\)\[Color\]\[Full Movie\] - Bing video](#), also regarded as one of the best cinematic adaptations of the book. Start the video at 49:50 and pause it at 54:47. Tell them they have just watched the scene where Sherlock Holmes had been disguising and hiding in a nearby cave to watch the case undisturbed. Use adjectives to describe the atmosphere (examples: gloomy, intelligent, courageous, hidden, obscure); discuss about the way the two protagonists are dressed, behaviour and talking manner.





Presentation (23 min)

1. Pre-reading activity

- a. Use exercise 1 in the worksheet to reinforce students' understanding of the plot by asking them to write T (true) or F (false) at the end of each sentence.

Answers: 1. T, 2. T, 3. F, 4. F, 5. F, 6. F, 7. T, 8. F, 9. T, 10. F, 11. F, 12. T

- b. Pre-teach the unknown words and ask the students to include them in sentences of their own. Thus, the new words are used in context and the students activate their personal life experience and knowledge of the social background and get prepared for the reading activity. Pronounce the words several times; the class repeat them in chorus, then individually.

VOCABULARY	DEFINITIONS
forward (verb)	send a letter or email to a further destination
elude (verb)	not to succeed in achieving something
hound (noun)	large dog used for hunting
eerie (adjective)	strange in a frightening and mysterious way
howl (noun)	a long, loud, sad sound

2. While-reading activity

Invite students to read the comic page in the exercise 2 of the worksheet silently while they indulge in the following techniques:

- a. Skimming: Ask them first to extract the main idea of the page given and offer a title to the scene (example: **Holmes and Dr. Watson meet again to solve the strange case**).





- b.** Scanning: Then they are told to study the comic for details and answer the questions:
1. Who has got: a moustache; bushy eyebrows; wrinkled face; short hair; straight nose; rather plump?
Answer: Dr. Watson
 2. Who has got: a long nose; a slender body; a cap with a criss-cross pattern; an oval face; dark raincoat?
Answer: Sherlock Holmes
- c.** Sentence-level reading: Tell the students to read carefully the text and highlight the adjectives in the dialogue bubbles. Some are used at positive degrees (glad, brilliant, eerie); some have different degrees of comparison (very dark, as deadly as). Use the grammar pattern from exercise 2 or from the **annexed infographics** to help them acquire the degrees of comparison for regular and irregular adjectives. The students are actively involved in the grammar moment: they can read the rules in turns or provide examples, others than the already existing ones.

With intermediate students, especially older ones, comparative and theoretical presentations are more indicated, as the students have the necessary cognitive skills to absorb the information. Examples for each case will facilitate understanding and will help them respond to real-life needs.



3. After-reading activity

- a. Role-play: ask two students to pair in order to act out the scene in the comic page. They will use the adjectives which they have previously read and analysed in the dialogue bubbles at different comparison degrees: **glad, brilliant, eerie, dark, deadly**.
- b. Consequently, you will check for understanding and encourage your students to practise the vocabulary and grammar in context. You can give the first prompting sentence e.g. **Watson: So glad to see you, detective! Where have you been, all this time?**
- c. Ask your students to complete exercise 3 and 4 of the worksheet.

Additional exercises:

For more practice, the teacher can use exercises 3 and 4 in the worksheet.

In exercise 3, the students have to give a title to the comic and write the comparison degrees for each adjective in bold.

In exercise 4, The students follow the instructions for the writing activity. They need to write an article according to the task they find in the comic strip worksheet and should respect the number of words given.



Evaluation

At this level the students can work interdisciplinary with Science and Maths.

- **Science - phosphorus**

Fact: The hound was covered in phosphorus by Jack Stapleton, to make it glow in the dark and look like the hell-dog in the supernatural legend which scared the inhabitants of the village. The dog bred by Stapleton was supposed to kill Sir Henry, the true heir of the Baskervilles' legacy.

Project work: Students are asked to research on the chemical element: etymology, discovery, applications.

- **Geography - Dartmoor National Park**

Fact: Dartmoor, the setting of the novel, has a magnificent landscape with tors (granite hills), moors, river valleys and ancient places. It is located in Devon, south west England.

Project work: Allow students to watch the documentary on Dartmoor at [Welcome to Dartmoor - YouTube](#) (a 5-minute-video). They will have to work in pairs for a project work on the legendary moorland and attach the national park's map to their project.



2. Worksheet for the student

EXERCISE 1:

The Hound of the Baskervilles, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle – Plot understanding

Write T (true) or F (false) at the end of each sentence:

1. Dr. Watson is Holmes' best friend and assistant.
2. A terrifying hound threatens the Baskervilles.
3. The Baskerville curse is an old legend invented to scare the English community.
4. Sir Charles Baskerville died of a heart attack.
5. Sir Henry is Charles Baskerville's son.
6. Jack Stapleton is not a member of the Baskerville family.
7. Holmes and Watson must stop Stapleton before he kills Sir Henry, too.
8. That foggy evening they go to the Stapletons to attend a party.
9. The detectives shot the dog and managed to save Sir Henry.
10. Jack Stapleton tried to run away, but he was caught by the police.
11. Holmes and Dr. Watson must return to London to continue the case.
12. Sherlock Holmes is very wise and intelligent.

EXERCISE 2:

Comic page:

Read the page and follow your teacher instructions.





Grammar point:

THE COMPARISON OF REGULAR ADJECTIVES

Adjectives have three degrees of comparison: **positive**, **comparative** and **superlative**. According to the way in which the adjectives form the comparison degrees, they are **regular** and **irregular**.

Adjectives made of one syllable and of two syllables (ending in -er, -ly, -y, -w) add **-er** for comparative and **the ... -est** for superlative.

POSITIVE	COMPARATIVE	SUPERLATIVE
short	shorter (than)	the shortest (of/in)
big	bigger (than)	the biggest (of/in)
large	larger (than)	the largest (of/in)
heavy	heavier (than)	the heaviest (of/in)
clever	cleverer (than)	the cleverest (of/in)

Adjectives made of two or more syllables take **more** for comparative and **the most** for superlative.

POSITIVE	COMPARATIVE	SUPERLATIVE
beautiful	more beautiful (than)	the most beautiful (in/of)
difficult	more difficult (than)	the most difficult (in/of)



THE COMPARISON OF IRREGULAR ADJECTIVES

Some adjectives are irregular because they change form completely for comparative and superlative degrees.

POSITIVE	COMPARATIVE	SUPERLATIVE
good	better	the best
bad	worse	the worst
ill	worse	the worst
much	more	the most
many	more	the most
little	less	the least
far	farther, further	the farthest, the furthest
late	later, latter (the second of the two)	the latest (the most recent) the last (the final)

Farther is usually used for space.

- He lives **farther** than me.

Further is used for space and time; it also means additional.

- They need **further** information to solve the case.

Latter means the second of the two.

- I have two sisters: the former is a teacher, **the latter** is a doctor.

The latest means the most recent.

- Have you read **the latest** novel by Paulo Coelho?

The last means the final.

- Have you read **the last** play by Shakespeare?



OTHER COMPARAISON FORM

THE COMPARATIVE OF SUPERIORITY

Comparative adjective + than

- The princess is **more beautiful than** her sister.

THE COMPARATIVE OF EQUALITY

As + positive adjective + as

- The soldier was **as brave as** a lion.

THE COMPARATIVE OF INFERIORITY

Less + positive adjective + than

- A silver ring is **less expensive than** a gold ring.

THE RELATIVE SUPERLATIVE

- Of superiority

The biggest, the shyest, the most attractive, the best, the last

- He bought **the most expensive** painting.

- Of inferiority

The last + positive adjective

- That's **the least important** question of all.

THE ABSOLUTE SUPERLATIVE

Very + positive adjective

Instead of **very**, you can use: enormously, bitterly, extremely, terribly, awfully.

- The food in Romania is **very delicious**.
- That's an **enormously large** flat.




KEEP IN MIND!

- ✓ Some words **double the final consonant** (big-bigger-the biggest; hot-hotter-the hottest; red-redder-the reddest)
- ✓ **Consonant = y = i** (happy-happier-the happiest)
Some adjectives do not change: shy-shyer-the shyest; sly-slyer-the slyest.
- ✓ **Vowel + y = y** (gray-grayer-the grayest)
- ✓ Talk about gradual change **comparative** form: taller and taller, more and more delighted
- ✓ Talk about parallel increase of a characteristic with **two comparatives + the**: the more, the merrier
- ✓ Emphasise superlative adjectives with **by far**: She is by far the most intelligent girl in my school.
- ✓ A great number of **idioms are comparatives of equality**:
As cold as ice, as good as gold, as hungry as a wolf, as mad as a hatter, as soft as sick, as white as snow, as wise as an owl

EXERCISE 3: Read the task in the comic strip and work individually. Look again at the grammar rules for the comparison degrees of adjectives.

Title: _____

Give the comic strip a suggestive title then write the comparison degrees for each adjective in bold.



Panel 1: Listen to this, my **dear** Watson. **Good** news!

Panel 2: Yes, detective? Another **strange** case?
Not quite **true**!

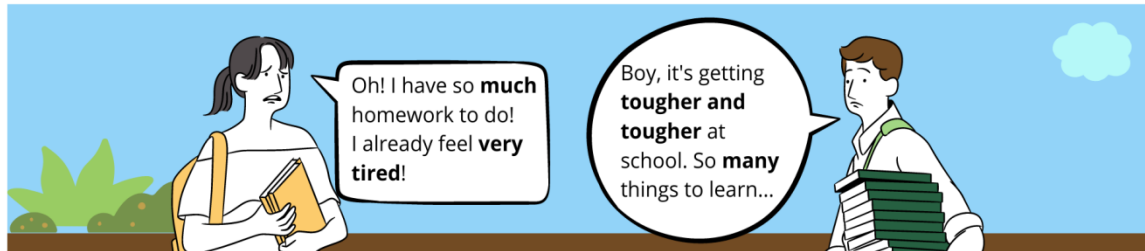
Panel 3: The villagers are **safe** now, Watson!
The Baskervilles found that **terrible** hound wandering **far** from the **dangerous** moors of the village.

Panel 4: You must return there. That **wet**, **foggy** night the dog tried to catch my wrist. I can't find my **old** watch ever since!

EXERCISE 4:

A NEW PERSPECTIVE

Write an article with the title 'THE HARDER YOU WORK, THE FARTHER YOU GO', based on the comic strip below. Use the adjectives in **bold**. Write 100-140 words.





III. Modification and Differentiation ideas

Just like all the lesson plans or activities the teacher wants to have together with his or her students, he or she must not forget to adapt the content and presentation according to the students' needs. Therefore, in this case, the digital comic strip page used as a lesson prompt had to be given a 'tint' and become lighter, as the original colours were too dark for SLD students. As regards the content of the exercises suggested, it can be adjusted by: level of complexity, amount of content, time allotted, form of expression (role-play, article writing, etc.)

IV. References

Dartmoor National Park (2018, June 4). Welcome to Dartmoor [Video]. Retrieved from [Welcome to Dartmoor - YouTube](#)

Powell, M. & Chase, J. (2013). The Hound of the Baskervilles. Milwaukee: Dark Horse Books, USA

Digital comics tools: www.canva.com