



STUDYING RELATIONSHIP VOCABULARY WITH 'FANGS' – B1

I. About this lesson

Activity title: Studying relationship vocabulary with 'Fangs' by Sarah Andersen

Level: B1

Recommended Age: 15+ (mild references to sexual themes)

Subject: English as a foreign language

Timing: 50 minutes

Resources: Computer with internet access, worksheet.

Learning objectives:

- a. Presenting one's favourite comic strip
- b. Understanding and explaining humour
- c. Vocabulary and idioms related to relationships

Material needed: Computer with internet access

(<https://tapas.io/episode/1559785>) or print version of "Fangs"

(<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/54911057-fangs>)



II. Lesson scenario

1. Instruction for the teacher

Preparation to do before the lesson

One month before the lesson: provide access to the print or web version of Sarah Andersen's 'Fangs' to your students, and ask them to read it. Do tell them that they should make sure to read everything even if they do not understand all comics at first: they are likely to understand more as they progress through the pages.

One week before the lesson:

- Ask your students to pick their favourite strip in the book, and to prepare an explanation as to why they prefer this one in particular. Ask them to write down any questions they might have to be able to discuss them together in class. If you feel that your students might get lost in the process, ask them to write down 3 things they did not understand in the comics.
- Ask your students to do some quick research on vampires and werewolves: they should come with a list of 5 things that vampires and werewolves can and cannot do.

Introduction (5 minutes)

Start the lesson with a short "Check IN" by telling students:

- a. Today, we will study 'Fangs' by Sarah Andersen.
- b. For the preparation, I asked you to read the book, choose your favourite strip, and note 3 things you did not understand. We will use all of this during this lesson.
- c. Here is the plan for today's lesson:



- First, I will show you how to state your opinion.
- Then, we will create small groups of 4-5 people, and we will each present our favourite strip to the others members of the group (10 minutes).
- After, we will come back all together and share what we did not understand (20 minutes).
- Finally, we will do some exercises together to explore some idioms related to relationships.

Step 1: Create groups for students to discuss favourite comics strips (15 min)

- a. Introduce to your students expressions and vocabulary to argue (student worksheet step 1) – 5 minutes.
- b. Put students into groups of 4-5. You can create the groups by having them pick a card in a classic card deck: the first 4-5 to pick a hearts card go together until you have all students in a group.
- c. Tell your students to each present their favourite strip of the book to the others in their group.
- d. After 10 minutes, make all students come back to their seats for the next step.

Step 2: Understanding and explaining humour (15 minutes)

- a. Introduce the next activity: “Before this class, I asked you to write 3 things you did not understand in a comic. Let us see what they are to understand them together. Before we take time to explain humour, let us look at the comic on your worksheet (or you can project it on a screen)”.



- b. Ask your students who would like to start first. When they are done explaining, ask the rest of the class if one of them could explain. As humour is used throughout the book and as there is mature content, remind the class to respect others' comments and questions. You will act as a moderator.
- c. Explain points that cannot be explained during class discussion.
- d. After 15-20 minutes, move on to the next step.

Step 3: Exploring vocabulary and idioms related to relationships (20 minutes)

- a. Go through the list of vocabulary with your students to make sure they understand the words and idioms.
- b. If you have time, ask them to do the exercises in class. If you don't, you can ask them to do the exercises at home. In any case, correct them in class to explain the answers and make sure that the most important words are understood by all students.

Answers to exercise 1:

- 1) a (broke up)
- 2) c (have)
- 3) a (fell)
- 4) b (get)
- 5) c (gotten engaged)

Answers to exercise 2:

- 1) up; 2) on; 3) in; 4) to; 5) on



2. Worksheet for the student

INTRODUCTION: PRESENTATION OF FANGS BY SARAH ANDERSEN

Title: Fangs

Type of comic: graphic novel (first published as a webcomic)

Author: Sarah Andersen

About the author: Sarah Andersen is an American cartoonist and illustrator. She graduated from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2014. She is known for her semi-autobiographical comics strips 'Sarah's Scribbles' (available at: <https://sarahcandersen.com/>)

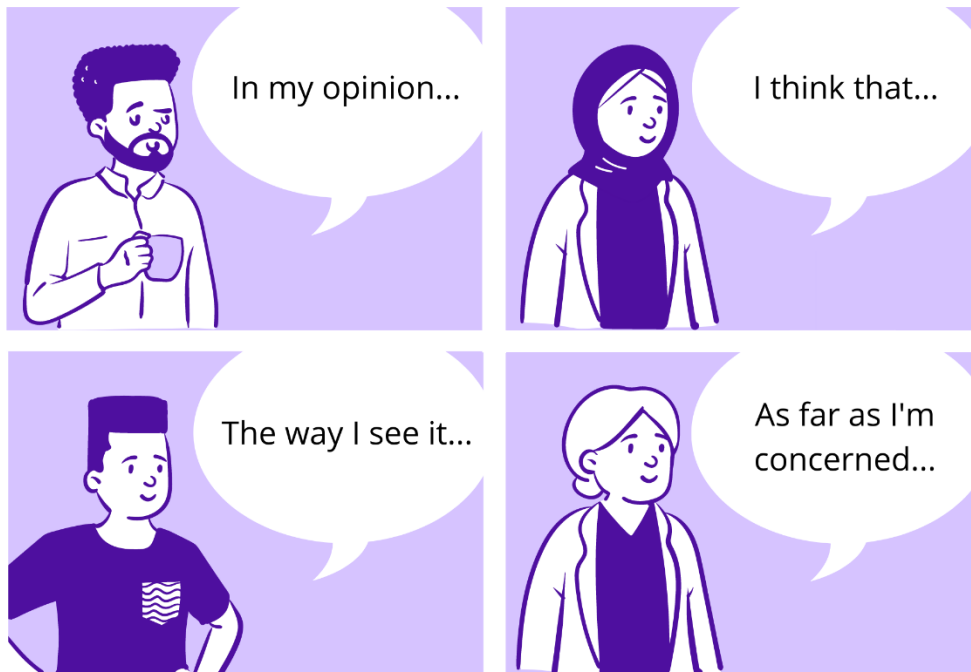
Summary: Fangs is a humoristic romance comic about a 300-year-old vampire finally meeting her match in a werewolf. It tells about the building of a relationship between two radically different beings.

Link to the webcomic: <https://tapas.io/series/fangscomic>

ACTIVITY 1: SHARING FAVOURITE COMICS

Here are some expressions and vocabulary that could help you present your favourite strip, and why it is the one you prefer in this book. Try to use 3 of them to express your argument.

4 ways to introduce your opinion



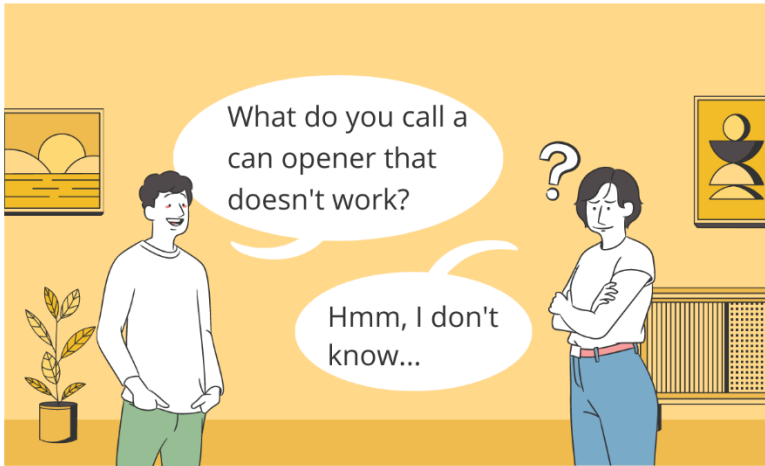
Sequence your argument

- Firstly..., secondly..., thirdly..., etc.
- Here is the main point I would like to make...
- I would like to deal with three points here. First..., secondly..., thirdly...
- Expressions to start: "I would like to start with...", "My first point is that..."
- Words to add arguments: next, what's more, moreover, in addition
- Last but not least (to express your final point)

ACTIVITY 2: UNDERSTANDING AND EXPLAINING HUMOUR

We all understand, receive and appreciate humour in different ways. It is perfectly ok if you did not understand or enjoy all the jokes in 'Fangs'! It is interesting to explore what you did not understand with your classmates and teacher. The comic below illustrates how we all react to humour in different ways.





Remember that some jokes are related to vampires and werewolves, and what they can and cannot do according to different myths. For instance, the strip 'Silver' is based on the fact that silver is toxic to werewolves. This comes from the idea that the Moon controls werewolves, and silver is a metal commonly associated with the Moon.

See 'Silver': page 17 in the book or <https://tapas.io/episode/1565829>



STEP 3: EXPLORING VOCABULARY AND IDIOMS RELATED TO RELATIONSHIPS

Nouns

Word	Definition	Example
anniversary	The day on which an important event happened in a previous year	It's my parents' 30th wedding anniversary this summer!
bride	A woman who is about to get married or has just got married	My mother was shocked the bride wasn't wearing white.
date	A person one has a romantic meeting with; or a romantic social meeting	I was surprised when my daughter told me she had a date.
engagement	An agreement to marry someone	My cousin had an engagement party last weekend.
friendship	A situation in which two people are friends	I formed my closest friendships when I was in college.
groom	A man who is about to get married or has just got married	The groom was waiting eagerly for the bride.



honeymoon	A holiday taken by a couple after their marriage	We're going to the Bahamas for our honeymoon!
marriage	A legally accepted relationship between two people who live together, or the official ceremony that results in this	My grandparents had a long and happy marriage.
nephew	A son of your sister or brother, or a son of the sister or brother of your husband or wife	My grandfather doesn't like that my nephew plays with his sister's toys.
niece	A daughter of your brother or sister, or a daughter of your husband's or wife's brother or sister	My niece is a big fan of Spiderman but her dad is annoyed by all the Spiderman items she has.
partner	The person one is married to or living with as if married to them, or the person one has a romantic relationship with	I met Lea's partner for the first time yesterday,



relationship	The way in which two or more people feel and behave towards each other	My father has a good relationship with his brothers.
single parent	A parent who raises their child on their own	We often visit my uncle to help because he is very busy as a single parent.
wedding	A marriage ceremony and any celebrations such as a meal or a party that follow it	I had so much fun at my brother's wedding last weekend, the party was great!

Definitions are adapted from the Cambridge Dictionary (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>).



Verbs and phrasal verbs

Verb/phrasal verb	Definition	Example
To be in a relationship	To be in a romantic relationship with someone	It's the first time my brother is in a relationship.
To break up with someone	To end a romantic relationship	My brother broke up with his girlfriend a month ago and he isn't feeling well.
To fall in love with someone, to fall for someone	To start to love someone	People fall in love way faster in movies than in real life!
To lose contact with	To stop having news from someone	I lost contact with my friend after she moved out of the country.
To get divorced	To end one's marriage by an official or legal process	My parents got divorced when I was 12.
To get engaged	To decide to get married	My parents are not married: they have just gotten engaged last week!
To get on well/badly with someone	To have a good or bad relationship with someone	I get on well with my aunt, but badly with my uncle.



To go on a date	To go to a romantic social meeting with someone	My mom has finally gone on her first date since she divorced my dad.
To go out with someone	To be in a romantic relationship with someone	My brother is going out with a professional dancer: she has very strict life hygiene.
To have things in common	To share interests, experiences, or other characteristics with someone or something	The one thing my sister and I have in common is our passion for drawing.
To hug/to give a hug	To hold someone close to your body with your arms, usually to show that you like, love, or value them	I always give a big hug to my dog before leaving for work.
To kiss/to give a kiss	to touch with one's lips, especially as a greeting, or to press one's mouth onto another person's mouth in a romantic way	Have you noticed how Olympic athletes always kiss their cup when they receive it?



To live together	To share a home (in the case of a relationship, to be an unmarried couple)	My sister and her boyfriend have just started living together, she was a bit nervous but now she loves it.
To pop the question	Colloquial: to propose	My girlfriend looks like she's been preparing something: I'm sure she's about to pop the question.
To propose to someone	To ask someone to marry oneself	There's no reason why men should be the ones to propose anymore.
To split up	If two people split up, they end their relationship	Splitting up is tough, but sometimes it's the best thing to do for both members of a couple.



EXERCISES

Exercise 1: Fill each sentence by choosing the correct word from the list.

1. Last time Vamp _____ with a partner, it did not go well.
 - a. Broke up
 - b. Split
 - c. Fell

2. Vamp and Jimmy might look different, but they _____ a lot in common.
 - a. Share
 - b. Hold
 - c. Have

3. Vamp and Jimmy _____ so fast for each other that they kissed on the night they met.
 - a. Fell
 - b. Grow
 - c. Felt

4. Jimmy does not _____ on well with cats and small dogs.
 - a. Go
 - b. Get
 - c. Feel



5. It's hard for a vampire and a werewolf to enter a church: otherwise I'm sure Vamp and Jimmy would have _____.
- Proposed
 - Popped the question
 - Gotten engaged

Exercise 2: Fill each hole by writing the right preposition to complete the phrasal verb.

- To break _____ with someone
- To get _____ well/badly with someone
- To fall _____ love
- To propose _____ someone
- To go _____ a date



III. Modification and differentiation ideas

- a. This lesson can be used as an application of lessons about ways to argue or about vocabulary related to relationships. You could also use it in complement to a lesson or reading about daily life (to give a more stimulating example), legends or fantasy.
- b. In preparation for the lesson, you could ask your students to research common characteristics of vampires and werewolves to discuss them in class. We propose to ask students to list 5 things that vampires and werewolves can and cannot do, but you could ask them to do research about the figure of Dracula or to read specific texts.
- c. As this graphic novel is not too long, you could take one or more classes to go through the entire book with your class. This could help your students feel more confident next time they read on their own and do not fully understand what they read: they will feel empowered to keep on reading to overcome their difficulties.