The Business World

Unit 1: An Introduction

This module is divided into three units. Each unit is designed to take three hours of class time for a class size of 30.

Aims

- To introduce and activate business world vocabulary.

- To focus on error correction.

- To understand a written description of a graph. *(relating non-linear text to text)*

- To understand spoken descriptions of a graph.

Materials needed

- Word Spider *(on board)*

- BW 1.1. Student's File   Jumbled Story

- Grammar Auction *(see point 9 for sentences)*

- BW 1.2. Student's File   Graph and Text Matching

- Word List for Money Movements *(board work)*

- BW 1.3. CD Sales Graph

- BW 1.4. Teacher's Resource Kit   CD Sales Sentences *(to be COPIED and CUT)*

- BW 1.5. Student's File   Time/Money Sentences Worksheet

- BW 1.6. Student's File   Countries and Currencies

- BW 1.7. Student's File   Listening: The Financial News

- BW 1.8. Student's File   Time to Think

Procedure

1. The first activity is a word/vocabulary brainstorm where the teacher finds out how much business vocabulary the class may know. On the board draw a circle and write Business in the middle. Draw legs from the circle so that you have a "word spider".
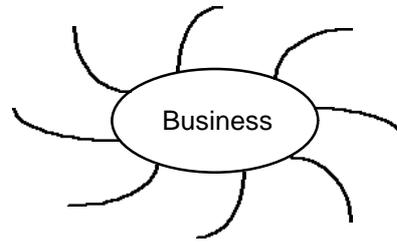
2. Tell each student to draw one of these word spiders. Ask them to add words that they connect with business to the legs. Let them work individually and then when they have come to a stop, ask them to share their words with a partner or small group.
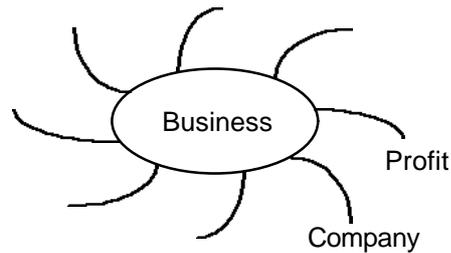
3. Now ask each group for their words and add them to the word spider.

4. The next step is to sort the words into categories. It is probable that you will find many words connected with *money/finance*. That could be one heading; others might be *organisations, people*. Ask the class to make 3-4 headings *(depending on the words collected)* and list the words under the headings. They can keep these for future reference.

5. Refer students to BW 1.1. which is designed for students to reorder the story and link the sentences with *so, because* etc.

6. The next activity focuses on the vocabulary of how we pay for things. Ask the class to write down as many as possible ways in which we can pay for things we buy and then write the answers on the board. Expected answers would be: Credit Card, Cheque, EPS, Cash, Standing Instruction.

    (You may need to explain Standing Instruction.)

    (Possible additions are: barter, payment in kind)

    Now ask the class if they know what an auction is. Encourage them to tell you/the class if they do. Check that everybody knows what an auction is - You bid (*offer money*) for something in an open room and the person who bids (*or offers*) the most is able to have/buy that something.

    Ask where in Hong Kong there are auctions. *(the government's land auctions, antique auctions and auctions for charity)*

7. Explain that you are going to set up a "*Grammar Auction*". There will be 20 sentences on auction and the class will be divided into seven groups who will bid for the sentences. They will want to buy correct sentences and not all of them will be correct. So the group must decide whether or not it wants to buy and bid for sentences it wants. The highest bid wins. When the auction is over the teacher will tell the class whether they have paid for correct sentences or incorrect sentences. The group who has bought the most correct sentences is the winner.

8. Each group has a budget of $10,000. They will need a *treasurer* to keep check on how much they have spent. The decision to buy must be made by the group collectively but only the *chairman* makes the bid.

9. The teacher reads out the sentences and repeats them twice if necessary. The teacher MUST NOT give any hint whether the sentence is correct or not.

    Here are the sentences. The teacher can use any order for the auction.

    9.1.   He hasn't been to China, did he?   ✘
    (He hasn't been to China, has he?)

    9.2.   I lived in London a long time ago.   ✔

    9.3.   She didn't likes it.   ✘
    (She didn't like it.)

    9.4.   I want to go to shopping on Saturday.   ✘
    (I want to go shopping on Saturday.)

    9.5.   He hasn't returned his homework.   ✔

    9.6.   Why didn't you tell me that you hated Canto Pop?   ✔

    9.7.   He wish to be considered for the job.   ✘
    (He wishes to be considered for the job.)

    9.8.   She sent me postcard from Sydney.   ✘
    (She sent me postcards/a postcard from Sydney.)

    9.9.   The cooker was chopping the onions.   ✘
    (The cook was chopping the onions.)

    9.10.   He was there since 1975.   ✘
    (He has been there since 1975)

    9.11.   Our school was founded 120 years ago.   ✔

    9.12.   The volleyball team has won every match for five years.   ✔

    9.13.   John can drive but Harry doesn't.   ✘
    (John can drive but Harry can't.)

    9.14.   My piano teacher is migrating.   ✘
    (My piano teacher is emigrating.)

    9.15.   Give me the ruler please.   ✔

9.16.   Thank you for your coming.   ✖

        (Thank you for coming.)

9.17.   She want to be a nurse when she grow up.   ✖

        (She wants to be a nurse when she grows up.)

9.18.   I didn't break the glass, did I?   ✓

9.19.   What time does the plane leave?   ✓

9.20.   He ate six bowls of rice, wasn't it?   ✖

        (He ate six bowls of rice, didn't he?)

(This activity can be recreated by the teacher at any time, using common mistakes that the class does not self-correct sufficiently.)

When the auction is over, go through the sentences telling the class whether each sentence was a "good buy" or not. Everybody should join in correcting the incorrect sentences. Point out the mistakes: *(3rd person singular, article missing, incorrect tags, incorrect vocab., present perfect with since, direct translation.)*

10. The class will now work with matching graphs and texts. They are reading for specific information. Elicit or pre-teach: quarter *(as in the financial year)* profit. Refer students to BW 1.2. for graph and text matching.

11. When the class has finished, ask students to check their answers in pairs. Then check with the whole class.

12. Ask students to underline words in the company descriptions which show movement *(fell, rose, fallen, down, boost, up)* and words which describe that movement *(slightly, stable, sharply, maintained).* Explain that these words are often used to describe the profits of a company or how the market *(the Hang Seng Index for example)* is behaving. Write up a list of words/verbs and adjectives on the board with a list of adverbs.

Ask students to check meanings with a dictionary:

i.e.   rise/rose   dramatic(ally)

     fall/fell   sharp(ly)

     dip   slight(ly)

     decrease(d)   increase(d)

     go up   consistent(ly)

     remain(ed)   stable

     fluctuate(d)

Ask students to complete the following sentence using the given vocabulary items:

remained	stable
rose	sharply

The Cocoil company's profits _____   _____ last year.

went	down
dipped	slightly

This can be an oral exercise, asking students to think on their own and produce entences quickly.

13. Now move onto the next graph-based activity. Ask students to study the CD Sales graphs on BW 1.3.

    Refer to RK - BW 1.4 - CD Sales sentences which describe the graphs. (There is a photocopy master in the Resource Kit.)

    Copy one set for each group of six students and cut the sentences into strips. Jumble them up and put them in an envelope ready for group work.

14. Divide the class into groups of six and tell them to look at the graphs. Read out a description of one of the graphs and ask them to identify the graph. Then tell them that one member of each group is to read sentences to their group members who have to guess which graph it matches.

15. When the groups are ready, check that each group agrees. The next step could be for students to copy out the sentences in an exercise book for their future reference, or use the sentences as group dictation: one student dictates a sentence to the group and then another student dictates and so on until all the sentences are written out.

16. When this step is complete, ask the students to look at the sentences and to identify all the examples of the present perfect tense.

17. These are:
    - have fallen
    - have fluctuated
    - have maintained
    - have grown
    - have increased
    - have been (stable)

    Now ask them to find an example of the present perfect continuous:
    - have been decreasing

Now ask them to find examples of the simple past tense:
- rose
- dipped
- fell
- remained
- were

Finally ask them to find examples of the simple present tense and the present continuous:
- are
- continue
- continuing

18. The focus on the forms or structures in the sentences is to show students how many tenses can be used in this context. It is apparent that the present perfect is used the most as it links the past and the present, does not mention a specific point in time but does refer to a definite time:
- last six years
- have fluctuated ever since (two months ago)
- last ten years
- throughout the ten years
- last two years
- for nine years

A more specific point in time needs the past tense:
- two years ago
- this year
- first three years
- ten years ago
- eight years ago
- for three years

Although these specific points are not labelled with dates *(1994, 1996),* it is possible to give dates when working with the graphs. The present perfect tense refers to a less specific point in time.

19. Ask the students to make a sentence using each of the tenses – present perfect, present simple, past simple and present perfect continuous – about one of the following:
- The price of gold
- Rice imports
- The HK$ - US$ exchange rate
- Public transport costs

Use this as an oral quiz, so that they produce the sentences quickly *(using notes if necessary).*

20. Put the following sentence on the board: Time is money. Explain that this is a saying in English which people use when they are costing work or making decisions about big projects. In English, there are many phrases about time which make it seem like a commodity *(check the concept of commodity - timber, rice, cotton, wool, something which is needed and can be bought and sold).*

21. Write this sentence on the board:

    • I lost time when I missed the train connection at Lo Wu.

    Ask the students if the word money can be substituted for time - does the sentence still make sense? *(YES!)*

    Refer students to BW 1.5. time/money worksheet.

    Students can compare answers before the teacher checks with the class.

22. Elicit the names of countries around the world and write them in a column on the board. Ask the class for the nationality word, i.e. France - French, and add that as a second column. Now see if the class can provide the name of the currency of the country and add that as a third column. Now play the tape of the "Currency Chant" and encourage the class to repeat or join in. Ask students to complete BW 1.6. and then check with the class.

23. The last classwork teaching activity is a short listening task where the class fill in the gaps as they listen to some financial news. Write the title of the tape on the board. "The Financial News". Ask the class to call out vocabulary items they expect to hear and write them on the board. Refer students to the listening worksheet BW 1.7. Answers for BW 1.7 is inside the Tapescript booklet.

24. Finally, refer the class to BW 1.8. Time to Think *(TTT),* a reflection activity where they note down what they have learnt during the three hours' input of BW 1.

    The students can repeat some of their thoughts to the class teacher.

Teacher's Key BW 1.1

Look at these sentences which tell the story of a man and his business.

Reorder the sentences and then write them out to make a paragraph using *so, and, because, who* to link the ideas.

> he had cheated the public
>
> a man saved $10,000
>
> he bought 250,000 recycled plastic bottles
>
> the bottles of water were not sealed properly
>
> decided to test the water
>
> they prosecuted him
>
> he decided to invest it in a bottled water business
>
> filled them with tap water
>
> they found that the water was not pure mineral water
>
> people complained to the Consumer Council
>
> he was fined $10,000

A man saved $10,000 <u>so</u> he decided to invest it in a bottled water business. He bought 250,000 recycled plastic bottles <u>and</u> filled them with tap water. Because the bottles of water were not sealed properly, people complained to the Consumer Council <u>who</u> decided to test the water. They found that the water was not pure mineral water <u>so</u> they prosecuted him. He was fined $10,000 <u>because</u> he had cheated the public.

Teacher's Key BW 1.2.

Look at the following graphs and then read the texts. Match the names of the companies with the profit figures for that company. Write the names under the graphs.

These companies all make fax machines:

Key
A=last year
B=this year
C=next year

A B C	A B C	A B C	A B C	A B C
FIXITFAX	**FASTFAX**	**MULTIFAX**	**FIRST FAX**	**JENSEN AND FITCH**
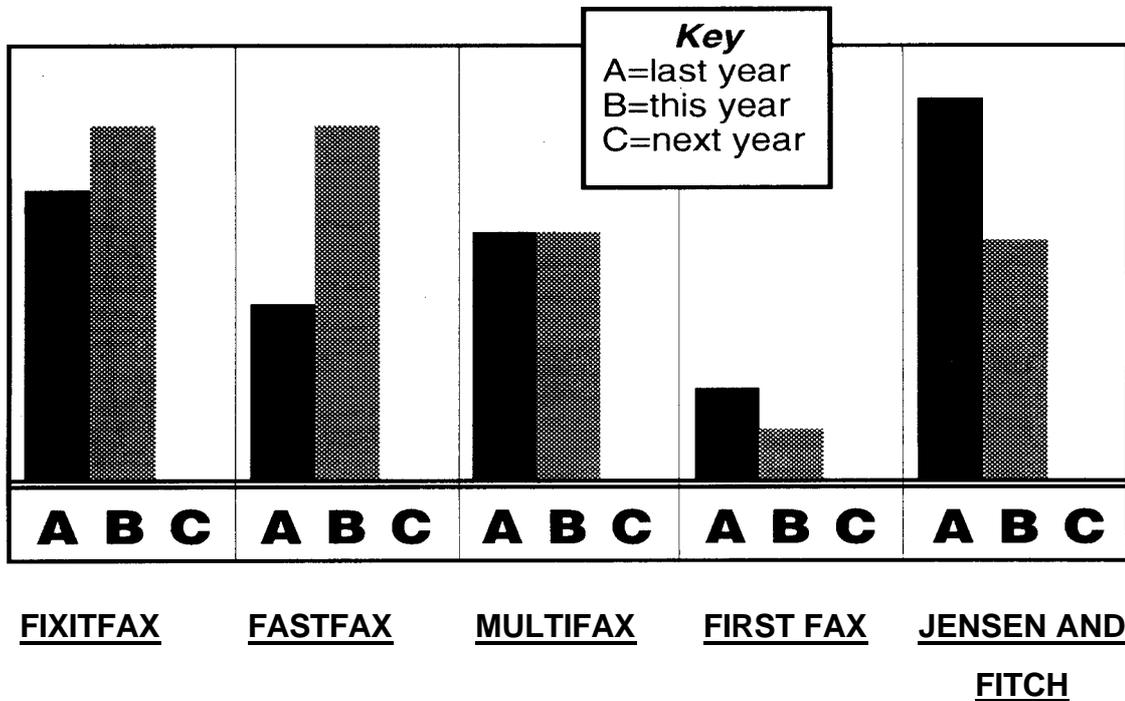
It has been a good year for FASTFAX. Sales fell slightly in the first quarter but then rose throughout the year. The end of year position shows a healthy profit.

FIRSTFAX made a successful entry into the market last year but they have been unable to maintain progress. Sales remained stable but have now fallen sharply. Overall profit is down by 50%.

It has been business as usual for MULTIFAX which launched a new model at the beginning of the year. The MX 791 model was expected to boost sales considerably but this did not happen. However, profits were maintained at the same level as last year.

New management structure created a difficult time for JENSEN AND FITCH with production problems delaying the introduction of a new model. Profits have fallen from last year's high but the company expects a better result next year.

The mini-plug-in-anywhere fax introduced by FIXITFAX has been a contributing factor to the firm's steady growth. The small but reliable fax has been popular with the public and the sales figures reflect good results. Profits are up on last year.

TRK - BW 1.4.

CD Sales Sentences

--✂--

Sales have fallen consistently over the last ten years.

--✂--

Sales rose two years ago but have fluctuated ever since. They are currently stable.

--✂--

Sales have maintained steady growth for the last ten years but dipped slightly this year.

--✂--

Sales have grown steadily with minor fluctuations throughout the ten years.

--✂--

Sales rose slowly in the first three years and have been decreasing ever since. They are now at their lowest for ten years.

--✂--

Sales have not changed for the last ten years and are continuing to be stable.

--✂--

Sales have fallen dramatically over the last ten years.

--✂--

Sales rose dramatically ten years ago and continue to grow.

--✂--

Sales fell sharply eight years ago and then remained stable. They have increased in the last two years.

--✂--

Sales fell consistently over the last eight years and then, two years ago, rose dramatically.

--✂--

Sales were stable for three years and then rose sharply before falling again. They rose sharply a year ago but then fell again, just as sharply.

--✂--

Sales have been stable for nine years with a slight rise over the last two years.

Teacher's Key RK - BW 1.4.

CD Sales Sentences

1. Sales have fallen consistently over the last ten years.

2. Sales rose two years ago but have fluctuated ever since. They are currently stable.

3. Sales have maintained steady growth for the last ten years but dipped slightly this year.

4. Sales have grown steadily with minor fluctuations throughout the ten years.

5. Sales rose slowly in the first three years and have been decreasing ever since. They are now at their lowest for ten years.

6. Sales have not changed for the last ten years and are continuing to be stable.

7. Sales have fallen dramatically over the last ten years.

8. Sales rose dramatically ten years ago and continue to grow.

9. Sales fell sharply eight years ago and then remained stable. They have increased in the last two years.

10. Sales fell consistently over the last eight years and then, two years ago, rose dramatically.

11. Sales were stable for three years and then rose sharply before falling again. They rose sharply a year ago but then fell again, just as sharply.

12. Sales have been stable for nine years with a slight rise over the last two years.

Teacher's Key BW 1.5.

Time is money.

Is it possible to change the money word in these sentences to a time word? Is the sentence still correct?

1. I spent $2,000 in China.   ✓
   (two days/weeks/months/years)

2. I wasted a lot of money on the course.   ✓
   (a lot of time)

3. We invested a lot of money in research.   ✓
   (a lot of time)

4. My grandfather gave me $100.   ✗

5. We won money on that project.   ✓
   (time)

6. If we get a computer, we'll save a lot of money.   ✓
   (a lot of time)

7. The shop gave me a discount.   ✗

8. I ran out of cash in Macau.   ✓
   (time)

9. He didn't have enough money, so he couldn't buy you a present.   ✓
   (enough time)

10. I found $10 on the bus.   ✗

Teacher's Key BW 1.6.

Fill in the chart. Add any extra countries you know.

Country	Nationality (adjective)	Currency
France	French	Francs
Germany	German	Marks
China	Chinese	Yuan
Australia	Australian	Dollars
America	American	Dollars
Italy	Italian	Lira
Spain	Spanish	Peseta
England	English	Pound
Indonesia	Indonesian	Ringit
Thailand	Thai	Baht
Japan	Japanese	Yen