

Oxymoron: Lesson Plan

Topic	
An oxymoron is a pairing of two opposing terms or phrases. This pairing can be used for a dramatic or humorous effect.	
Possible subjects/classes	Time needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Public Speaking 	30-45 minutes
Video link:	
https://academy4sc.org/topic/oxymoron-an-awfully-good-time/	
Objective: <i>What will students know/be able to do at the end of class?</i>	
<p>Students will be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define oxymoron. Identify oxymorons in everyday speech. Use oxymorons effectively in writing and speaking. 	
Key Concepts & Vocabulary	
Contradictory	
Materials Needed	
Worksheet, art materials	
Before you watch	
<p>Read the following statement out loud to the class, repeating it a few times to make sure the students remember it:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“Recently, Sean’s mother took a working vacation out of state. Sean says it’s a definite maybe that he’ll get to visit the aquarium. The only aquatic creatures he’s seen thus far have been the jumbo shrimp in their plastic glass containers in the supermarket.”</p> <p>The teacher then says: “I contradicted myself four times in this statement.”</p>	

Turn & Talk: students turn to the classmates around them and take two to three minutes to discuss the statement and try to identify the contradictions.

While you watch

1. Define oxymoron.
2. When might you use contradictory terms or phrases, or oxymorons?
3. How can oxymorons be useful or effective tools?

After you watch/discussion questions

1. What are some commonly used oxymorons?
2. When was the most recent time you used an oxymoron? Were you even aware you were using one?
3. How can you use oxymorons to enhance your everyday speech?

Activity Ideas

- Worksheet: students complete the Worksheet independently, check their answers in groups, and then work together to write their own sentences with 3-4 oxymorons each.
- Art project idea: students choose a common oxymoron and illustrate it or build a visual representation of it. Other students try to guess the oxymoron being represented.

Sources/places to learn more

1. Berner, R. Thomas. "Literary Newswriting: The Death of an Oxymoron." *Journalism Monographs*, vol 99, Oct 1986.
2. Carter, Steven. *Little House of Oxymorons*. Hamilton Books, United Kingdom, 2012. ISBN: 978-0-7618-5103-5.
3. Grother, Dr. Mardy. *Oxymoronica: Paradoxical Wit and Wisdom From History's Greatest Wordsmiths*. HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2015. ISBN: 978-0-06-053700-5.