Do it, do it again

KATE PICKERING

It wasn't all bad

When a university professor discovered that his laptop had been stolen, he was devastated. The computer contained ten years' worth of work, and the Swedish academic had not been vigilant about backing up his data. But a week later he received in the post an envelope containing a USB stick, and when he plugged it in to his computer he found all his documents were there. "I am very happy," said the unnamed professor. "This makes me feel there is hope for humanity."

THE WEEK 30 October 2010

ACTIVITY TWO

Peking Express is a reality show that follows a series of couples as they hitchhike to or

What word comes next?

from Beijing. The series was originally a joint Belgian/Dutch production but there have

Notice the words "originally" and "but" –what is the text going to say next?

since been versions in Germany, Sweden, Norway, Denmark & Spain.

The theme of the show is to demonstrate how various couples deal with the challenges

A preposition follows: what is it?

of attempting a long-distance hitchhike to a strange city, together with all the difficulties

presented by trying

What verb form comes next?

to communicate in a language they don't understand. The teams have just 1€a day to

spend. Tension was added by including couples who had broken

"Broken" is the first part of a phrasal verb. What's the other part?

(Clue: What would "add tension" to the situation?)

up "in real life", but were willing to work together for the sake of winning the race.

Couples that come in last as various checkpoints along the way are eliminated from

What could they be eliminated from?

further competition.

THINGS TO DO WITH TEXTS YOU RE-VISIT

Gap them - to focus on specific language or at random
Gap them again – different gaps

Reduce them to prompts & have students re-create the original

Dictate them – highlight language through student errors
Dictate them with differences from the original – have students spot them

Dictogloss them – read at natural speed 2 or 3 times; students take notes; students work together to recreate text from their notes

Translate them into Spanish & back again; compare versions, discuss differences

Chop them up & have students re-order them
Chop them up & have students predict what's coming at the start of the next line (raising std sensitivity to lexical & grammatical cohesion)

Doctor them – take words out (students have to replace them – cd be line by line or for whole text)
Doctor them – add words in (students have to find them)
Doctor them –remove topic sentences; have stds re-insert them or creat them

Analyse them – have stds find all the countable/uncountable nouns; or underline all the verbs and ID the tenses; or find collocations; or identify cohesive devices; or identify lexical cohesion, or identify reference of pronouns…

Reduce them – have stds reduce a text into fewer words, or key points

Re-write them – have students re-write text from the point of view of a different speaker; or in a different register; or in simpler language for students in a lower level

Remember
- You can use the text more than once
- You don't have to use the whole text