

UNIT 12

Proverbs

This Unit continues the process of widening circles and takes us to the ideas of wise sayings, homilies, metaphor, allegory and even (by extension) fables. Learning to speak in English includes learning about the target culture and proverbs express common truths and realities of that culture. There are many parallels and overlaps with L1 proverbs of course and these show that there are many universal truths that have stood the test of time.

This Unit therefore helps students to explore and respect ideas that are a sort of world heritage. This is particularly important in these days of World Englishes (see Unit 17), when English is a lingua franca (ELF), used around the world. It is no longer the property of 'native speakers', but belongs to the world community. It is a universal language of communication in business, tourism, medicine, science, the arts, academia, and other fields. Even students who have no intention to work abroad will interact with English in business, publications, or the Internet. It is interesting, therefore to explore the wisdom of many cultures as expressed in their proverbs.

Page 97

Brainstorming (individuals)

- Students set up the learning schema by brainstorming about proverbs. They also think about Korean proverbs. This is relevant, since they will notice some parallels with English proverbs.

Task 1 (pairs)

- Students complete a matching activity about proverbs.
- The solution is in the Answer section of the students' book.

The two tasks on this page show ways of learning or confirming vocabulary and phrases. This matching activity gets students to deduce the second half of each proverb and therefore encourages cognition, which makes acquisition more meaningful.

Task 2 (pairs)

- Students write the relevant proverbs above their meanings.
- The solution is in the Answer section of the students' book.

This task also encourages cognition and deduction by asking students to match the proverbs to their meanings. Instead of the teacher explaining the meanings, the students find them out through deduction and even inference (Discovery learning).

Page 98

The Early bird (groups)

- Students talk about the title.
- Teacher: Play the audio CD (Track 55) and ask students to read the passage silently while they listen.

- Ask students to read the passage again together and discuss any vocabulary or idioms they don't know.
- While they read, students should **match the words and phrases** at the bottom of the page.

chattering	→	a small town or community
unique	→	deep sadness
captive	→	not free; prisoner
village	→	saying opposite things
Old Testament	→	soup; stew
grief	→	talking about nothing special
contradictory	→	the first part of the Christian bible
hesitate	→	the only one; single
broth	→	to pause; to wait a short while

Hopefully students will be curious about proverbs in different countries and how they match up with Korean proverbs. This can be a topic for an assignment or a project. Students can give a presentation to the class on this topic and the results of their research.

Further Reading: The note at the bottom of the page reminds students about the extra reading passages and other resources on the online site.

Page 99

Comprehension Check (pairs or groups)

- Students answer the questions to confirm their comprehension of the reading passage.
- Students check their answers with each other.

Answers:

1. According to the passage, proverbs tell us simple, basic truths that have been passed down by our ancestors.
2. Similar proverbs turn up in different countries because human beings face similar problems wherever they are.
3. The Danish proverb in the passage means that freedom is better than power. The bird has no power or wealth but it can do what it wants. It can fly wherever it wants. The king has power and money, but he is trapped in his castle, his duty and his role.
4. The second African proverb in the passage ('It takes a village to raise a child') means that it is the duty of the community (not just the parents) to pass on values, ideas and skills to its children.
5. Another word that means 'ancestors' in the passage is 'ancients'.
6. 'Look before you leap' means that we should be careful and take time before making a decision. On the other hand, 'He who hesitates is lost' means that we should make the decision as soon as possible.
7. 'Many hands make light work' means that a task can be done best by working together with many people. However, 'Too many cooks spoil the broth' means that it is best to do things with one person or a small number of people.

Think for Yourself

Students think about the English proverbs that they know.

They also think up their own proverbs. In this sense they are adding their own wisdom to the wisdom of the ancients.

Background Information

As always, this information can be read when waiting for other groups to finish, or it can be an interesting read at any time. Again, it is hoped that this information will spark curiosity in the students. This can lead to a presentation to the rest of the class - an effective assignment or end-of-course activity.

Page 100

Discussion (groups)

- Students read the **Conversation Strategies** at the bottom of the page.
- Then they read and do the instructions.
- Students discuss the questions, using the Conversation Strategies: 'Giving unusual information' and 'Responding'.

It can be helpful to ask students to use one conversation strategy phrase every time they speak. They should also be using conversation strategies from previous Units.

Suggested answers:

1. Yes, I know lots of Korean proverbs. For example ...
2. Yes, I know some Aesop's fables. Let me tell you about the wind and the sun.
 - a) The Wind and the Sun were arguing about which was the stronger. Suddenly they saw a traveller coming down the road, and the Sun said: 'I see a way to decide between us. Whichever of us can make that traveller to take off his coat will be the stronger.' So the Sun went behind a cloud and the Wind began to blow as hard as it could. But the harder he blew the more the traveller wrapped his coat round him. At last the Wind had to give up. Then the Sun came out and shone upon the traveller, who soon found it too hot and took his coat off.
 - b) The lesson is that kindness is stronger than force.
3. My favorite proverb is 'The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.' This tells us that we should be thankful for what we have, instead of envying other people.
4. - Yes, I think ancient proverbs are still true in modern life. I think proverbs are universal. They tell us everything about our lives. They will always be true.
- No, I don't think ancient proverbs are still true in modern life. Our lives now are much different to those of our ancestors. They didn't have cars, computers, smart phones, even electricity. They didn't have to catch a bus, ride a subway train, or suffer modern stress. So I think we need lots of new proverbs.
5. I think the modern proverbs on this page have the following meanings:
 - a) 'You can't recycle wasted time.' You can recycle paper, plastic and other things, but you can't go back in time. Once time has gone, it has gone for ever.
 - b) 'If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.' If you can't do something just admit it and let someone else do it. If something is too difficult for you, just admit it and let someone else do it. If something is too stressful for you, just admit it. Don't complain or blame other people.

- c) 'If you break it, you buy it.' We have to be responsible for our actions. We have to pay for what we break.
 - d) 'Wake up and smell the coffee.' We have to be practical. We have to be real. It's no use living in a fantasy world.
 - e) 'When the going gets tough, the tough get going.' When life is difficult or stressful, this is when we really find out what people are made of. We can see someone's true character in difficult times.
 - f) 'If you want your dreams to come true, don't oversleep.' Don't wait for your dreams to come true by themselves. You have to make them come true through your hard work.
 - g) 'Ideas won't work unless you do.' It's OK to have lots of ideas, but you have to back them up with actions. Otherwise nothing will come of them.
 - h) 'A friend walks in when everyone else walks out.' we find out who our real friends are when we are having a difficult time.
5. The words I would like to put on a T-shirt are: 'Keep calm and carry on.' I love this saying. It tells us to keep living our lives despite the difficulties. I think this saying started in WWII in England.

Page 101

Dialogue (pairs)

- Students read the instructions.
- They read the dialogue together, checking the vocabulary in the [Key Words and Expressions](#) box.
- The teacher plays Track 56 (CD-Rom).
- Students read the dialog again, changing roles.
- Finally, they answer the questions in the [Dialogue Quiz](#).

Dialogue Quiz (pairs)

Suggested answers:

1. Jenny and Mrs. Brown are shopping for a present for Mr. Brown.
2. They don't know what to buy him.
3. Mrs. Brown thinks that the purple jacket would not suit Mr. Brown.
4. The book department is on the next floor down.
5. Mr. Brown was born in Scotland.
6. Jenny can't understand the proverbs because they are Scottish. She has never heard them before and she does not know about Scottish culture.

Page 102

Debate Corner (groups of 4 or 5)

- Students in groups choose one of 4 topics for debate.
- Students read the useful phrases on this page.

These hints and phrases are about presenting arguments strongly and questioning the previous speaker, in addition to the Timekeeper/Chairperson's phrases, which are the same as in previous debate Units.

Students should use these phrases in the debate (see the sample arguments on page 104). They should also use the phrases from previous debates.

Page 103

Let's Prepare! (groups of 4 or 5)

- Pro and Con students write three arguments and a conclusion.
- The first speakers can simply write their arguments.
- The second speakers need to think about how they will disagree with the other team (see pages 55, 62, 70, 86 and 102).
- The Timekeeper/Chairperson should look at the sample debate on page 72 and the phrases on page 102.

Let's Begin! (groups of 4 or 5)

- The Timekeeper/Chairperson starts the debate using the phrases on page 102 and following the structure on this page (see page 72).
- Students should use the phrases on pages 55, 62, 70, 86 and 102.

Sample arguments appear on the next page.

It will be good for the teacher to consider whether students are ready to have a public debate. In this case, there will be a Pro team, a Con team, a Timekeeper/Chairperson and an audience. This means that everyone else in the class will watch the debate and vote on the proposition when the two teams have presented their conclusions.

If students are dealing with the debate format well, it can be an idea either to add another member to each team or to add a rebuttal section. In this case the structure would look like this:

Speech 1: The first affirmative speaker introduces the topic and states the affirmative team's first argument.

Speech 2: The first negative speaker states their first argument.

Speech 3: The second affirmative speaker states their second argument.

Speech 4: The second negative speaker states their second argument.

Give a 5-10 minute break for each team to prepare their rebuttal speech.

Speech 5: The negative team states two rebuttals for the affirmative team's two arguments and summarizes their own two reasons.

Speech 6: The affirmative team states two rebuttals for the negative team's two arguments and summarizes their own two reasons.

<http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Krieger-Debate.html>

Teachers can experiment with the debate structure, matching it to the abilities of the students.

If students are ready for this sort of upgrade, then the two teams could have a week to prepare their arguments. This can be an assignment or a project.

Page 104

Argument Samples

- Students listen to Tracks 57 and 58 on the CD-Rom.
- At the same time, they read the Argument Samples.
- They can try reading these out loud if they wish and practice using suitable stress and emphasis.

These Argument Samples show Pro Speaker 1 giving an argument and Con Speaker 1 giving an opposing argument about motion number 4, 'Ancient proverbs are no use the 21st century' (page 102).

Students should look for the debate language (page 102) in these samples.

Here are some more Argument Samples based the first motion: 'Proverbs help us solve our problems'.

Pro Speaker 1: I don't need to tell you that proverbs help us solve our problems. However, let me give you three reasons. First of all, proverbs have been handed down by our ancestors. They had similar problems to us and they put the solutions in simple sentences. You agree? Second, proverbs and fables tell us about life. They give us guidance. Know what I mean? Third, proverbs can help us think about our problems. Even if they are contradictory, they help us to analyze the situation and make a decision. Got it?

Con Speaker 1: Really? Are you sure? Let me give you three reasons why you are barking up the wrong tree. First, our ancestors lived a long time ago. Our problems are much different now. They didn't have to think about what to do if all their files disappeared from the computer hard drive. Are you with me? Second, many proverbs are contradictory. They tell us different things. This doesn't help us. In fact it confuses us. Know what I mean? Third, proverbs are too simple. They give easy answers to difficult problems. But we all know there are no easy answers in life. Right?

Here are some more Argument Samples based the second motion: 'The grass is always greener on the other side of the hill'.

Pro Speaker 1: I support this motion for three reasons. First, it tells us that people always want something they haven't got. Know what I mean? Second, people are always chasing after things. They always want to be richer, wiser, stronger and happier. Are you with me? They are never satisfied with what they have. Third, this proverb tells us about life in general. People always envy other people, or want what other people have. They always think life will be better if they can get something that they can't have. They always say 'If only ...' The proverb tells us that happiness is here and now.

Con Speaker 1: I disagree and oppose this motion. Let me give you three reasons for this. First of all, this proverb is very negative. It tells us that we must not try to improve ourselves. You understand? Why shouldn't we improve ourselves? Surely progress is important to society. Are you following me? Second, the proverb tell us that we are fooling ourselves. Got me? It says that the things we aim for are impossible. Third, this proverb tells us not to follow our dreams. Right? This just shows that proverbs all tell us different things. I prefer the proverb 'Where there's a will there's a way'.

Here are more Argument Samples based the third motion: 'Proverbs contain the culture of a country'.

Pro Speaker 1: I strongly believe in the truth of this motion. Let me give you three reasons why. First, it's obvious that our ancestors made proverbs to suit their situations. Okay so far? Second, they made the proverbs using examples from their own culture. Are you with me? Surely this is common sense. Third, although many proverbs are similar in different countries, they always have

important differences. These come from the unique nature of the culture. We might say the same thing, but we say it in different ways, according to our culture.

Con Speaker 1: As usual, the previous speaker cannot be serious. Let me give you three different reasons against the motion. First, the truths in proverbs are universal truths. They are timeless. They are true any time, anywhere. Got me? Second, our ancestors made these proverbs, but their culture was much different to our culture now. Third, proverbs are very similar around the world. In other words, people around the world have found these proverbs to be true. Proverbs are universal. They don't belong to any one culture. If you agree with me on this, please vote to reject this motion.

Hidden Proverbs (pairs)

- Students identify the proverbs written on a brick wall. The proverbs have no punctuation and are all in capital letters. Students need to decipher them.
- The answers are in the Answer section of the Student Book.

This helps students to confirm their knowledge of proverbs, along with some practice in cognition.

The activity should be done in English, with students using classroom English when working on the proverbs: 'What do you think?' 'How about this?' 'Let's try this?'

There are other activities on the website: www.pearson.co.kr.