G *can, could, be able to*
V *-ed / -ing* adjectives
P sentence stress

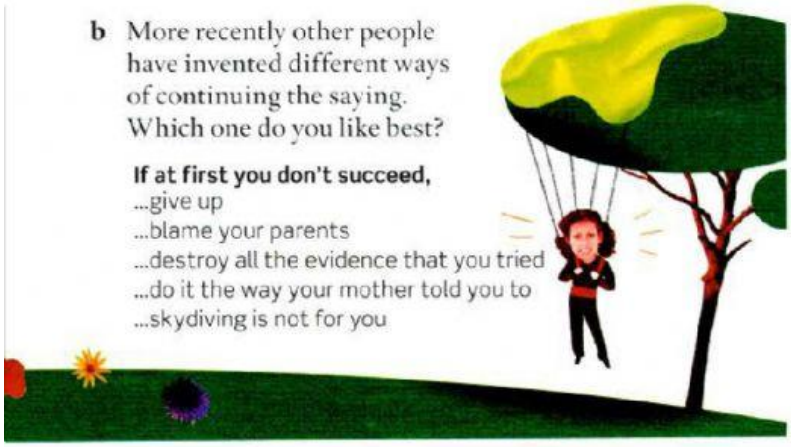
4A Failure and success

1 GRAMMAR *can, could, be able to*

a *'If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again'* is a well-known English saying. What does it mean?

b More recently other people have invented different ways of continuing the saying. Which one do you like best?

If at first you don't succeed,
...give up
...blame your parents
...destroy all the evidence that you tried
...do it the way your mother told you to
...skydiving is not for you



c Look at the definition of *be able to*. What other verb is it similar to?

be able to (do something) to have the ability, opportunity, time, etc. to do something: *Will you be able to come to the meeting next week?*

d Read about three people who have tried (but failed) to learn something, and complete the texts with A–G.

A I was able to
B Not being able to
C I just wasn't able to
D I will never be able to
E I would suddenly be able to
F I've always wanted to be able to
G we would never be able to

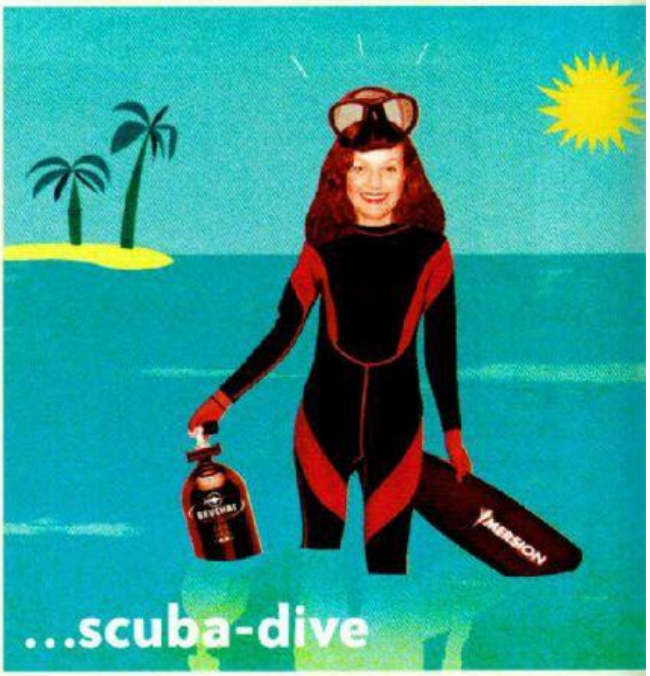
e Read the article again. Why did they have problems? Have they completely given up trying? Have you ever tried to learn something and given up? Why?

f Look at phrases **A–G** again. What tense or form is *be able to* in each one? What tenses or forms does *can* have?

g ➤ **p.138 Grammar Bank 4A.** Learn more about *can, could,* and *be able to,* and practise them.

h ➤ **Communication** *Guess the sentence* **A** *p.105* **B** *p.109.*

I've **never** been able to...

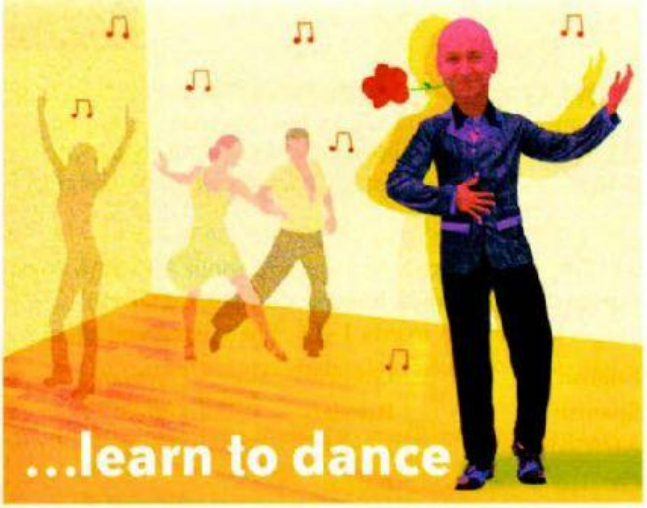


I really wanted to learn. Maybe it was because of that scene in one of the very first James Bond films, where a beautiful actress comes out of the sea looking fabulous, with oxygen bottles on her back – I could see myself looking just like her. So, two years ago I booked a holiday which included a week's intensive course. On the first day of the course I was incredibly excited. First we had two hours of theory, and then we went into the sea to put it into practice. But as soon as I went under the water I discovered that I suffered from claustrophobia. [1]_____ do it. After about half an hour I gave up. Every evening for the rest of my holiday I had to listen to my scuba-diving classmates talking about all the wonderful things they had seen that day on their diving excursions. [2]_____ join in the conversation was very frustrating.

I still love swimming and snorkelling, but I think that I have to accept that [3]_____ scuba-dive.

Bea, USA

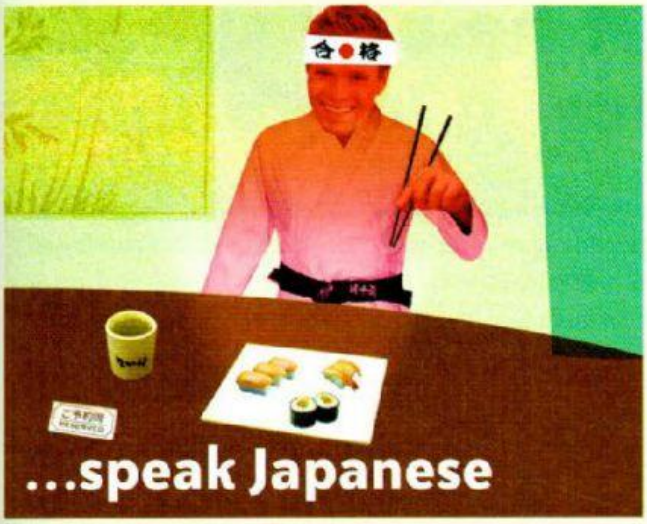
LIVEWORKSHEETS



...learn to dance

[4]_____ dance salsa, and when I was working in Ecuador there were free classes, so I joined. But the art of salsa is to keep your arms still and move your hips, and I just couldn't do it. When I hear music my arms start moving, but my hips don't. After about ten hours of classes [5]_____ do the basic steps, but I was dancing like a robot! I didn't give up, but soon everyone in the class was dancing and I was just slowly moving from side to side and counting out loud 'one, two, three, four'. It was a bit embarrassing. I was sure that one day [6]_____ do it – but that never happened. I can still remember the first two steps and I still try to dance when I hear a salsa tune – as long as nobody is watching!

Sean, UK



...speak Japanese

I love Manga – Japanese comics – and I tried to learn Japanese, but I found it incredibly difficult and I gave up after two years. I think oriental languages, which have symbols instead of words, are extremely hard to learn for people who are more used to Roman letters. Also my teacher, a Japanese woman, didn't speak Spanish very well, which didn't help! She was a very charming woman, but she was a bit disappointed with us, and you could see that she thought that [7]_____ learn. However, one day she invited us to dinner and gave us some delicious traditional Japanese food, and since then I often go to Japanese restaurants. So I learnt to love the food, if not to speak the language!

Joaquin, Spain

2 PRONUNCIATION sentence stress

a 2.36 Listen and repeat the sentences. Copy the rhythm.

1 I'd **love** to be **able** to **ski.**
2 We **won't** be **able** to **come.**
3 I've **never** been **able** to **dance.**
4 She **hates not** being **able** to **drive.**

b 2.37 Listen again. Make new sentences with the verbs or verb phrases you hear.

I'd love to be able to ski. ***Ride a horse***
I'd love to be able to ride a horse.

We won't be able to come. ***Park***
We won't be able to park.

3 SPEAKING

a Look at the topics. Choose two or three and think about what you could say for them.

Something you've tried to learn, but have never been able to do well.

Something you learnt to do after a lot of effort.

Something you can do, but you'd like to be able to do better.

Something new that you would like to be able to do.

Something you are learning to do and that you hope you'll soon be able to do well.

Something you think all young people should able to do before they leave school.

b Work with a partner. Tell him / her about the things you chose in **a**. Give reasons or explanations for each one.

I've never been able to ski, and now I don't think I'll ever learn. I always wanted to learn, but I don't live near mountains...

LIVEWORKSHEETS

4 VOCABULARY *-ed / -ing* adjectives

a Look at the photo. Complete the sentences with *bored* or *boring*.

1 The film was _____.
2 The audience were _____.

> **-ed and -ing adjectives**
> Many adjectives for feelings have two possible forms, either ending in *-ed* or in *-ing*, e.g. ***frustrated*** and ***frustrating***.
> We use the adjective ending in *-ed* for the person who has the feeling (*I was very frustrated that I couldn't scuba-dive*). We use the adjective ending in *-ing* for a person or situation that produces the feeling (*I couldn't join in the conversation, which was very frustrating*).

b Read the information box. Then complete the adjectives with *-ed* or *-ing*.

1 What do you think is the most **excit**___ sport to watch?
2 What's the most **amaz**___ scenery you've ever seen?
3 What music do you listen to if you feel **depress**___?
4 Have you ever been **disappoint**___ by a birthday present?
5 Which do you find more **tir**___, speaking English or listening to English?
6 What's the most **embarrass**___ thing that's ever happened to you?
7 Are you **frighten**___ of heights?
8 Do you feel very **tir**___ in the morning?
9 Who's the most **bor**___ person you know?
10 Do you ever get **frustrat**___ by technology?

c 2.38 Listen and check. Underline the stressed syllable in the adjectives.

d Ask and answer the questions in pairs. Ask for more information.

5 READING & SPEAKING

a Do you know anybody who speaks more than two languages? Which languages do they speak? How did they learn?

b 2.39 You are going to read an article about Alex Rawlings, who speaks 11 languages. Before you read, match the languages below with words **1–11**. Then listen and check.

☐ English	☐ Greek	☐ German
☐ Spanish	☐ Russian	☐ Dutch
☐ 1 Afrikaans	☐ French	☐ Hebrew
☐ Catalan	☐ Italian	

c Read the article. Which language(s)...?

1 did he learn as a child
2 is he studying at university
3 does he like best
4 is he planning to learn next
5 did he wish he had been able to speak when he was a child
6 was the first one he taught himself
7 did he find the most difficult

He's English, but he can speak eleven languages

Alex Rawlings has been named the UK's most multilingual student, in a competition run by a dictionary publisher.

The German and Russian student from London, who is only 20 years old, can speak 11 languages fluently. In a video for the BBC News website he demonstrated his skills by speaking in all of them, changing quickly from one to another. Rawlings said that winning the competition was 'a bit of a shock'. He explained, 'I saw the competition advertised and I heard something about a free iPad. I never imagined that it would generate this amount of media attention.'

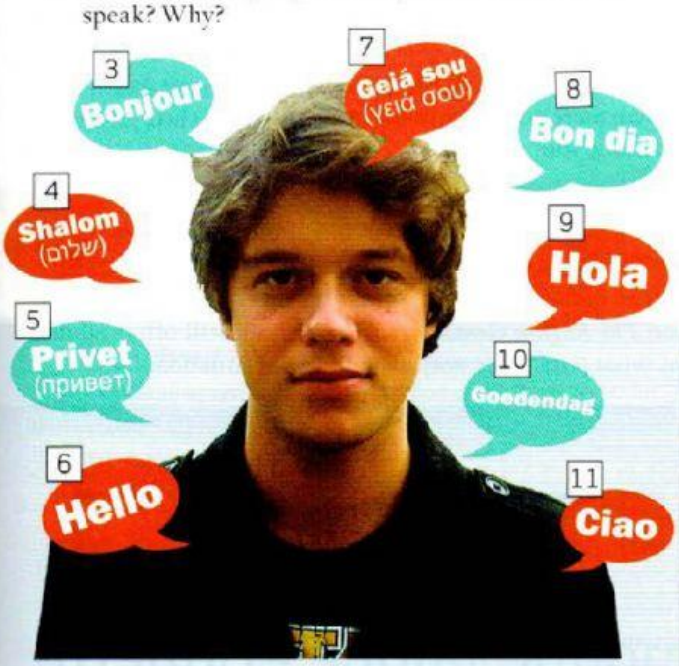
As a child, Rawlings' mother, who is half Greek, used to speak to him in English, Greek, and French, and he often visited his family in Greece.

He said that he has always been interested in languages. 'My dad worked in Japan for four years and I was always frustrated that I couldn't speak to the kids because of the language barrier.' After visiting Holland at the age of 14 he decided to learn Dutch with CDs and books. 'When I went back I could talk to people. It was great.'

LIVEWORKSHEETS

d Look at the highlighted words and phrases related to language learning, and work out their meaning from the context. Then ask and answer the questions with a partner.

1 Can you or anyone in your family speak another language fluently?
2 Do you know any basic phrases in any other languages?
3 Do you have a personal link to another country or language? Why?
4 Have you ever travelled to another country and felt that there was a real language barrier?
5 What other languages would you like to be able to speak? Why?



He taught himself many of the languages with 'teach yourself' books, but also by watching films, listening to music, and travelling to the countries themselves.

Of all the languages he speaks, Rawlings says that Russian, which he has been learning for a year and a half, is the hardest. He said, 'There seem to be more exceptions than rules!' He added, 'I especially like Greek because I think it's beautiful and, because of my mother, I have a strong personal link to the country and to the language.'

'Everyone should learn languages, especially if they travel abroad. If you make the effort to learn even the most basic phrases wherever you go, it instantly shows the person you're speaking to that you respect their culture. Going around speaking English loudly and getting frustrated at people is tactless and rude.'

The next language Rawlings hopes to learn is Arabic, but 'only once I've finished my degree and got some more time on my hands. For now I need to concentrate on my German and Russian, so I can prepare for my finals.'

Glossary
finals the last exams that students take at university

e Read the grammar information box. Then complete 1–5 with a reflexive pronoun.

Reflexive pronouns
*He taught **himself** many of the languages with 'teach **yourself**' books.*
We use reflexive pronouns (*myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves*) when the object of a verb is the same as the subject, e.g. *He taught himself Russian.* = he was his own teacher.
We also use reflexive pronouns to emphasize the subject of an action, e.g. *We painted the kitchen ourselves.*

1 I always test _____ on new vocabulary – it's a good way to remember it.
2 My uncle built the house _____. It took him three years.
3 This light is automatic. It turns _____ on and off.
4 Did you fix the computer _____? Well done!
5 My sister's so vain! Every time she passes a mirror, she looks at _____ in it!

6 LISTENING & SPEAKING

a 2.40 You're going to listen to six advanced students of English giving a tip which has helped them to learn. Listen once and complete their tip. Then compare your notes with a partner.

TIP 1: Change the language to English on all the _____ you have, for example on your _____, or _____, or _____.

TIP 2: Do things that you _____ _____, but in English.

TIP 3: Try to find an English-speaking _____ or _____.

TIP 4: Get a _____ _____ app for your phone.

TIP 5: Book yourself a _____ in an _____-_____ _____.

TIP 6: Listen to as many _____ as possible in English, and then _____ _____ _____ them.

b Listen again. Try to add more details about each tip.

c Talk to a partner.

- Do you already do any of these things?
- Which do you think is the best tip?
- Which tip could you easily put into practice? Try it!
- What other things do you do to improve your English outside class (e.g. visit chat websites, listen to audio books)?

LIVEWORKSHEETS