

The Easter Bunny

- Level:** Pre-Intermediate & Up
- Objective:** Modals of Deduction (Present & Past)
Language of Possibility
Language of Comparison
Making Inferences

Videos: The Easter Bunny Hates You <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BPb0po2jzfg>
Easter Begins http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLTPZ_m9NTY

The Easter Bunny Hates You!

Part 1 (Create Tension & Mingle): Write “Who or what is the Easter Bunny?” on the board. Get guesses and ideas from the class. Tell the class everybody will be given a card. On the card is different information about the Easter Bunny. Be sure to explain that since these are people’s ideas they may not be correct. Pre-teach the necessary vocabulary.

Hand out the cards. Be sure to tell students that you will take the cards back, so they must remember the information. Demonstrate the activity to the students.

This is a mingle activity. The students should talk to each other and find out what everybody knows about the Easter Bunny and who or what they think it is. They should repeat their information and incorporate anybody else’s information that they’ve learned (That’s the part you really need to demonstrate). Usually I set a time limit for this of about 5-10 minutes depending on class size. This way the students feel a bit more rushed and won’t just stand in a circle and explain their cards one by one. The goal is to get student’s to explain their emerging sketch of the Easter Bunny rather than just repeat the info on the cards. If your students are not familiar with mingling, as many Turkish students aren’t, sometimes it helps to direct this. Tell the students to find a partner and give them 30 seconds to share their info then say “Switch.” Give the next pair 1 minute and so on, always telling the students when to switch.

Hopefully some students will use some possibility phrases with maybe, probably, might, must, etc. Highlight these on the board. If not you will have to provide this language when appropriate.

Now put the students in groups of 3 - 4 and have them compile all the info they’ve acquired. Write these three questions on the board: “Who or what is the Easter Bunny?”, “What does he/she/it look like?”, and “What does he/she/it do?” Give the students 5-10 minutes to prepare a report on their opinions and then have them present their ideas to the class, preferably using language of possibility.

Auxiliary Vocabulary – to hide, a basket, a mall, a miracle, magical, a creature, a yard, a bow tie, a tradition, (adj) pagan,

Student 1:

What do you know? Your family just moved to America from China. You have never heard of the Easter Bunny.

What have you seen? Nothing.

Student 2:

What do you know? The Easter Bunny comes to your house the night before Easter and hides baskets full of candy all over the house.

What have you seen? You always try to stay up really late the night before Easter, but you always fall asleep. When you wake up the baskets are already hidden.

Student 3:

What do you know? Your dad told you that the Easter Bunny isn't real. He said you shouldn't believe in such silly things.

What have you seen? Nothing.

Student 4:

What do you know? The Easter Bunny always brings you baskets of candy the night before Easter. He visits all the kids in your neighborhood. Sometimes you trade the candy you don't like with friends for candy that you do like.

What have you seen? You've seen the Easter Bunny at the mall, but you know that he isn't the real Easter Bunny. Nobody has seen the real Easter Bunny because he is magic. Your mom told you people dress up like him just for fun for the kids.

Student 5:

What do you know? Easter is a very special day because Jesus rose from the dead on this day. The Easter Bunny is a reminder of this miracle. He brings happiness to children.

What have you seen? You've never seen him in person, but in pictures he looks kind of like a half person half rabbit.

Student 6:

What do you know? Your older brother told you that the Easter Bunny isn't real, but you don't believe him. The Easter Bunny always hides your basket in your room, but you never hear him. Only a magical creature could hide your basket in your room at night without waking you.

What have you seen? Nothing.

Student 7:

What do you know? The Easter Bunny hides painted eggs in your yard the night before Easter and you have to find them with your brothers and sisters in the morning.

What have you seen? One time you woke up in the middle of the night and saw a big white shape moving around in the yard at night. It was dark, so it was hard to see, but you are pretty sure it was the Easter Bunny.

Student 8:

What do you know? The Easter Bunny is a magical creature that visits children once a year to give them candy. It would be very difficult for one bunny to visit every child's house in the world, so you think that there is more than one Easter Bunny or that he has many helpers.

What have you seen? You've only seen pictures in stories. He always wears a bow tie around his neck.

Student 9:

What do you know? Your mom said that the Easter Bunny is an old pagan tradition. Before Christianity people believed in many gods and one of them was Eostre. Later the church got angry with people and decided to make Easter a Christian holiday. The Church said people should only believe in one god. Your mom says the Easter Bunny is just a story for children.

What have you seen? Nothing.

Student 10:

What do you know? The Easter Bunny comes to your house on Easter morning and hides eggs in your yard. The Easter Bunny is very busy, so when he comes your parents make you stay inside the house.

What have you seen? You've seen the Easter Bunny through the windows, but he is always far away. Also, strangely enough, your uncle Steve is always missing during this time.

Part 2 (Satisfying Curiosity & Personalization):

Give the students the wikipedia reading (pre-int) or the mother's explanation reading (Int) depending on their level. Have them compare their ideas to the real thing. Answer any questions the students have about Easter or the Easter Bunny and open up discussions on holidays and traditions in your students' country.

Auxiliary Vocabulary (Pre-Int): a nest, to depict, to spread, an origin, edible, to consider, a legend, to trace



The **Easter Bunny** (or Easter Hare) is a character depicted as a human-like rabbit. In legend, the creature brings baskets filled with colored eggs, candy and toys to the homes of children on the night before Easter. The Easter Bunny will either put the baskets in a designated place or hide them somewhere in the house for the children to find when they wake up in the morning.

The Easter Bunny is very similar to Santa Claus, as they both bring gifts to good children on the night before their respective holiday. Its origin, mentioned in print as early as 1620, can be traced to the German fertility goddess Ēostre.

Origins

The Easter Bunny as an Easter symbol seems to have its origins in Alsace and southwestern Germany, where it was first mentioned in German writings in the 1600s. The first edible Easter Bunnies were made in Germany during the early 1800s and were made of pastry and sugar.

The Easter Bunny was introduced to America by the German settlers who arrived in the Pennsylvania Dutch country during the 1700s. The arrival of the Easter Bunny was considered one of "childhood's greatest pleasures," similar to the arrival of Santa Claus on Christmas Eve.

According to the tradition, children would build brightly colored nests, often out of hats, in secret areas of their homes. The Easter Bunny would, if the children had been good, lay brightly colored eggs in the nest. As the tradition spread, the nest has become the manufactured, modern Easter basket, and the placing of the nest in a secret area has become the tradition of hiding baskets.

Who is the Easter Bunny?

"Who is the Easter Bunny?" my daughter asked me the other day.

"Well...he's a big rabbit who delivers eggs?"

"How do you know he's a boy?"

"Well..."

"What's the Easter Bunny's name?"

"Ummm...Easter Bunny!"

"What does he look like? Can you show me a picture of him?"



My 6-year-old daughter poses a good question: Who is the Easter Bunny? Is he a rabbit who makes chicken sounds and lays Cadbury eggs? Or is he simply an anthropomorphic bunny who hops from house to house delivering baskets? The rabbits who make the rounds at egg hunts and hang out at shopping malls lead us to believe this. He's got white fluffy fur, ears that stand up tall, and maybe a goofy bow tie.

Santa Claus is clearly defined in books, in movies, in our minds. He's a man who wears a red suit with black boots. He rides in a sleigh--unless he's in Hawaii where he gets around on a surfboard--that's led by reindeer. He's married to Mrs. Claus and together they live in the North Pole with a bunch of elves. Where does the Easter Bunny live? Is he married? Who helps him out?

The Easter Bunny occasionally pops up in movies--though often the interpretations are unfavorable. Remember the scene in Mallrats? Jay and Silent Bob beat up the Easter Bunny. And in Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey there's the scene where a demented bunny shows up to punish Ted for stealing his little brother Deacon's basket years earlier. A more positive portrayal might be the six-foot, three-and-a-half-inch rabbit that earned Jimmy Stewart a Best Actor nomination for the film Harvey.

As for kid-appropriate bunny flicks, there are few. The 1977 the Easter Bunny Is Coming to Town stars an animated Fred Astaire and tells a predictable story of a bunny named Sunny who "invents" the tradition of passing out gifts in baskets to children. It's the Easter Beagle, Charlie Brown is a far better children's Easter special--though in this Charles Schulz film a dog is delivering the eggs. Now that's confusing!

Next Easter two new movies might help clear up some questions--or confuse us more. According to the Hollywood Reporter, Sony Animation is making "Hip Hop," in which the Easter Bunny decides to retire and hides out as a domesticated pet with an ordinary suburban family. Illumination Entertainment is making "I Hop," in which the Easter Bunny is hit by a car, making it impossible to make his rounds and forcing the slacker who drove the car to deliver the eggs for him.

What's the origin of the Easter bunny anyway? The exact origin is unknown but ancient pre-Christian

cultures, regarded the rabbit and his close cousin, the hare, as a herald of spring. Bunnies are famous for their skill in reproducing so they were seen as symbols of spring's promise of new life.

The Germans in the 16th century incorporated the old pagan view of the hare into a slightly modified new role as Oschter Haws, who was believed to lay a nest of magically colored eggs for all the good girls and boys. When German settlers came to the U.S. colonies in the 1700s, they brought with them their Easter Bunny tradition.

Are we certain the Easter Bunny is male? My all-time favorite Easter book, the Country Bunny and the Little Gold Shoes by Dubose Heyward, suggests that a female can deliver eggs. In this story, several bunnies deliver the eggs. The boastful jackrabbits and aristocratic snobby rabbits--all of them males--laugh when the Country Bunny tells them she will grow up to become to be one of the revered Easter Bunnies. They are wrong! The Country Bunny grows up, has children, and through the pure goodness of her heart and common sense catches the eye of the Wise Old Grandfather Bunny. Now this is a rabbit worth telling my daughter about.

What do you think? Who is the Easter Bunny?

Part 3 (Video Humor): Establish that today is not Easter. Then write the question, “What is the Easter Bunny doing right now?” on the board. Either as a class or in groups get as many ideas as possible and put some of them on the board. Language of possibility is desired here (i.e. He **might be painting** eggs for next year). This language can be demonstrated and analyzed if necessary. Show them the video:

The Easter Bunny Hates You <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BPb0po2jzfg>

Compare students' guesses on the board to the actual video.

I think videos are a great way to provide context, change up the routine, and intro material in the classroom.

And I think an important feature of any classroom is humor. Humor is one of the things that makes sitting in a class and learning English for 4 hours bearable. It also increases motivation, creates a good atmosphere, and helps build relationships in the class. For these reasons I love to use lesson materials that contain humorous elements and what is funnier than the Easter Bunny kicking some ass? :)

Part 4 (Creative Writing): Inform the students that the Easter Bunny wasn't always like this. Tell them that there was a point in his life where he changed. Elicit some ideas from students about what could have or must have happened in the Easter Bunny's past to make him so violent, how he knows kung fu, etc. If the students keep using present sentences remind them that this is about the Bunny's past. Elicit or demonstrate the structure if necessary. Put the students into groups and have them come up with an origin story for the Easter Bunny's current demeanor and activities. Then have them present this story to the class. Make sure different people do the writing or speaking this time around.

Finally, show the video:

Easter Begins http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLTpZ_m9NTY.

Have the students compare their stories and the video's.

Do final error correction, get feedback, drill problem areas, etc.

Grammar Outline

Present Simple (+)	(-)	Certainty
S + must + v1	S + can't + v1	95%
S + might/may/could + v1	S + might/may not + v1	50%
Present Continuous (+)	(-)	Certainty
S + must be + v-ing	S + can't/couldn't be + v-ing	95%
S + might/may/could be + v-ing	S + might/may not be + v-ing	50%
Past (+)	(-)	Certainty
S + must have + v3	S + couldn't have + v3	95%
S + might/may/could have + v3	S + might/may not have + v3	50%