

Older

a song by Alan Smith Robertson
for beginners to practise basic (A1) level English in the ESL classroom

https://youtu.be/EiLom_JqfVE

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Outline for teachers

This is a song for beginners (or even near absolute beginners) to practise English in the ESL classroom. Below is a list of the beginner's level language and grammar covered in this song.

VERSE 1	My name is... I'm a [job] I am ... years old	(personal information: name) (personal information: job) (personal information: age)
VERSE 2	I was born... My mum says... I was always... I like to...	(personal information: nationality) (third person singular) (verb "to be" in past simple + adverb of frequency) (the verb "like/love" + "to" + infinitive)
BRIDGE	I'm an only child I love drinking... I cannot tell... I can speak / see... your love for me will never end	(personal information: position in the family) (verb "like/love" + -ing) ("can" / "cannot" + infinitive without "to") ("can" / "cannot" + infinitive without "to") ("will" + adverb of frequency)
VERSE 3	My daughter loves... she tells... She always hugs me... she'll still be near	(third person singular) (third person singular) (third person singular + adverb of frequency) (contracted form of "will")

Depending on how long your pupils have been studying English, you will want to concentrate on certain elements over others, but regardless of when you use this song in the learning process, it should always allow you to practise grammar and vocabulary that you have studied with your pupils while at the same time exposing them to new expressions and words.

The worksheet that I have designed below will concentrate on the following A1-level contents:

- the third person singular form of the verb
- the form of the verb that comes after the verbs "like" & "love"
- the form of the verb that comes after the modal verb "can" & "cannot"

- making a richer, more interesting "presentation" writing

Note: There are quite a lot of words and expressions in the lyrics that your students will not be familiar with. I have written them in on purpose in order to keep the song as authentic as possible; your students will constantly be confronted with language that they have never seen before, and getting the gist of a text despite not understanding every single word is an integral part of the learning process.

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Pre-listening activities

You are going to listen to a song called “older”

Do you know the meaning of this word?

If not, do you know the meaning of “old”?

Choose the correct option of these phrases below, like in the example:

My name is Alan, I'm teacher / I'm a teacher

I am / have six years old

I born / was born in London

I like to take it easy / take it easy

I love talking / talk to a good friend

I cannot speak / to speak italian

I can see / to see my house from the classroom window

My son loves / love me very much

At 9 o'clock I come to home / I come home

Will you still love me when I will be / am 64 years old?

Now listen to the song, and choose the correct answer for the questions below:

What is the narrator's name?

Kavindra / Cassandra / Kevin

What is his job?

a teacher / a writer / a horse-rider

How old is he?

36 / 43 / 46 / 64

Where was he born?

in Sri Lanka / inside a car / inside a taxi

Does he have any brothers or sisters?

yes, he does / no, he doesn't

What does he love doing?

drinking wine / driving / going out to parties

Can he speak a foreign language?

no, he can't / yes; French / yes; Dutch

Does he have any children?

no, he doesn't / he has a son / he has a daughter

Now listen to the song again and check your answers:

My name is Kavindra, I'm a writer
I write about the things in my life
I am forty-six years old, but I feel older

I was born inside a car on the way to the clinic
My mum says I was always in a rush
But I like to take it easy now that I'm older

I'm an only child, when I'm alone I sing to myself
I love drinking wine, and talking to a good friend
I cannot tell a lie, but I can speak a little French
and I can see in her eyes that her love for me will never end

My daughter loves me so and she tells me
She always hugs me when I come home from work
But I wonder if she'll still be near when I'm older

Compare your answers in the first exercise with similar phrases in the lyrics of the song.
Did you always choose the correct option?

Post-listening activities

You are going to write about yourself.

Read the text below and match the gaps 1-6 with the extra phrases a-f.

My name is Alan, I'm a teacher
I teach English to adults ¹ _____
I am forty-six years old, ² _____

I was born in a small town in the north of England
My mum says that when I was a child I liked eating
But now I am fat ³ _____

I have two sisters, ⁴ _____
⁵ _____ I can speak Japanese
I like meeting new people, ⁶ _____

- a) we talk every day online
- b) so I am always on a diet
- c) they always say I'm an interesting person
- d) but sometimes I act like a teenager
- e) because I don't like children
- f) I love studying foreign languages and

The text uses the connectors “and”, “but”, “so”, “because”, & “when”
Do you know the meaning of these words?

Now write about yourself, and try to use connectors to make it more interesting!

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Teacher's answer sheet. Length: approximately 20 - 25 minutes

Pre-listening activities

You are going to listen to a song called "older"

Do you know the meaning of this word?

If not, do you know the meaning of "old"?

*it is the comparative of "old" (more old)
the opposite of "young", as in "15 years old"*

Choose the correct option of these phrases below, like in the example:

My name is Alan, I'm teacher / I'm a teacher

I'm a teacher

I am / have six years old

am

I born / was born in London

was born

I like to take it easy / take it easy

to take it easy

I love talking / talk to a good friend

talking

I cannot speak / to speak italian

speak

I can see / to see my house from the classroom window

see

My son loves / love me very much

loves

At 9 o'clock I come to home / come home

come home

Will you still love me when I will be / am 64 years old?

am

Now listen to the song, and choose the correct answer for the questions below:

What is the narrator's name?

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What is his job?

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I am forty-six years old, ² _____

e) because I don't like children
d) but sometimes I act like a teenager

I was born in a small town in the north of England
My mum says that when I was a child I liked eating
But now I am fat ³ _____

b) so I am always on a diet

I have two sisters, ⁴ _____
⁵ _____ I can speak Japanese
I like meeting new people, ⁶ _____

a) we talk every day online
f) I love studying foreign languages and
c) they always say I'm an interesting person

The text uses the connectors “and”, “but”, “so”, “because”, & “when”
Do you know the meaning of these words?

Now write about yourself, and try to use connectors to make it more interesting!

Your students will have probably already done a simple “presentation writing” before with basic personal information, family, hobbies & abilities, so the idea here is simply to make that same writing a little bit more interesting with some less common ideas and phrases, and introducing connectors like “and”, “but”, “so”, “because”, and “when”.

If you think that your students are not yet ready to do this, then leave it for later on in the school term.