

## LISTENING COMPREHENSION

It has been my general experience that using pictures in listening comprehension works very well. Large pictures which can be used with the whole class are convenient since the students' attention is then focused on the same feature of the picture. They can be used with different ages and different levels and in different ways to practice different skills within the same lesson. Using pictures certainly makes the audio-based lesson both more effective and more enjoyable.

The input material I used is a tape-recording lasting 2'13". It is on Discipline and Punishment in British schools taken from Tom Hutchinson's *Crime and Punishment* (package 3), Škola za strane jezike, Varšavska 14. Though the speaker's English is not quite standard the students should not have any difficulties in gathering information while listening. They should be looking for general information, not trying to understand every word or get every fact. The pictures enable the students to focus on the specific information they need. It is important to give the students a task to do while listening. Putting the pictures in a logical order is a very simple task and it does not interfere with listening. Giving them a written task, as well, while listening concentrates their attention. These tasks help with follow-up work because reference is made to the pictures and written points.

The teaching unit was designed to cover two lessons. Lessons were taught to students in their final year of schooling i. e. after seven years of English. The essential format of the lesson:

1. setting the scene
2. listening comprehension
3. gathering information (based on aural, visual and note-type input)
4. comprehension check (cloze exercise)

### Presentation

Step 1: The story you are going to hear is about discipline and punishment in British schools.

How about your school? Is discipline very strict? What sort of punishment is used? How effective is it? Is corporal punishment allowed? Do you ever get a whack across your hand? etc.

Step 2: Listening

Step 3: Look at these pictures. They are in random order. Say what they suggest.

Step 4: Listen to the tape-recording once more. As you listen put the pictures in a logical order. (The teacher will stop the tape after each short episode).

Step 5: Listening and taking down notes. (After each short sequence the teacher will stop the tape and write down the key words).

Step 6: Put together your notes and the ideas the pictures suggest.

Step 7: Do the following cloze exercise:

BLACKBOARD

Fig. 1:  
cane,  
a quick  
whack  
across the  
hand

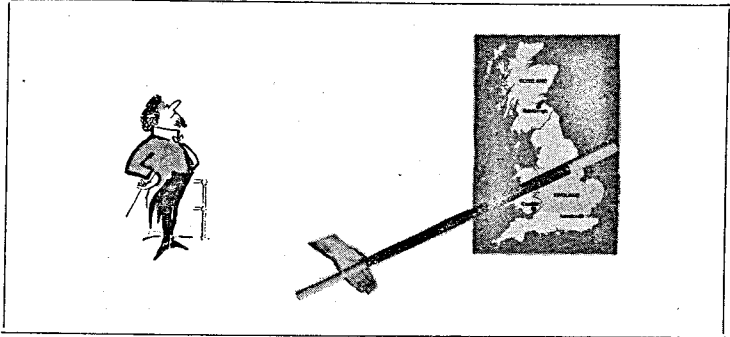


Fig. 2:  
give lines

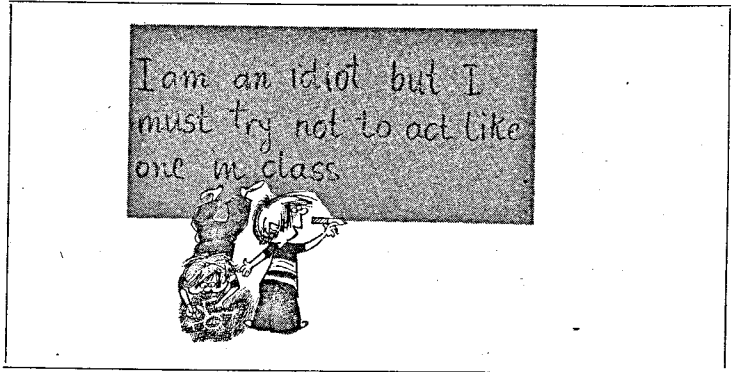


Fig. 3:  
set an  
essay on

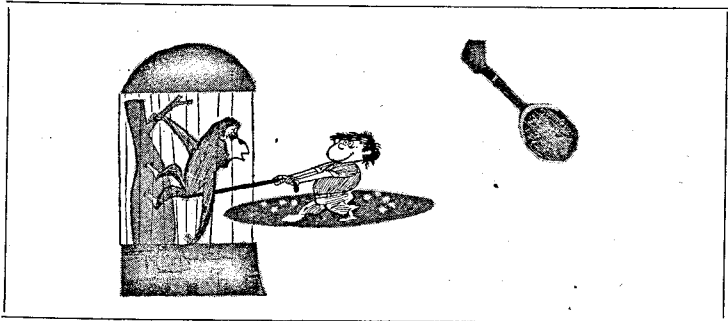
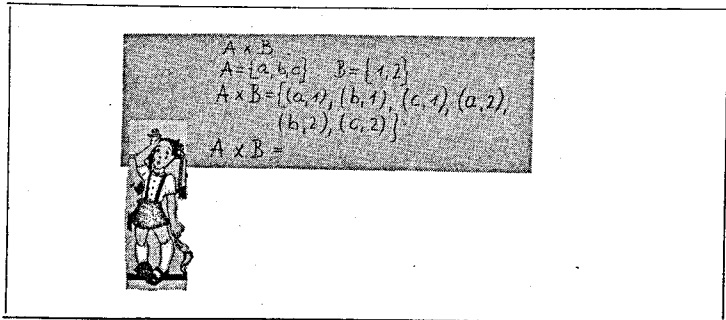


Fig. 4:  
give a  
detention



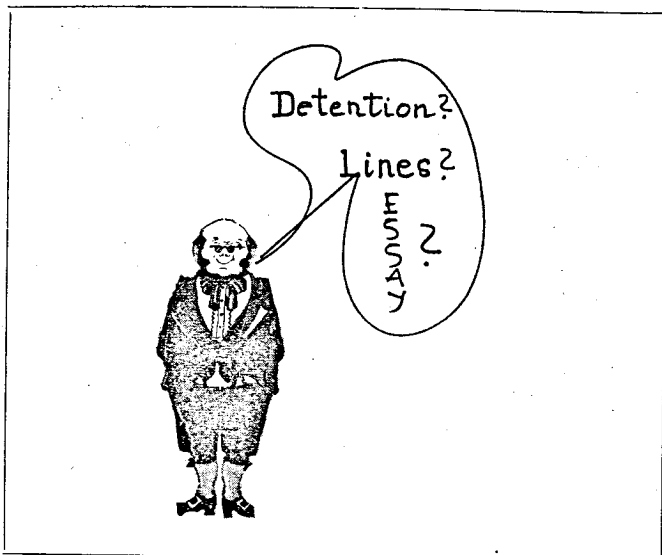


Fig. 5:  
supervise

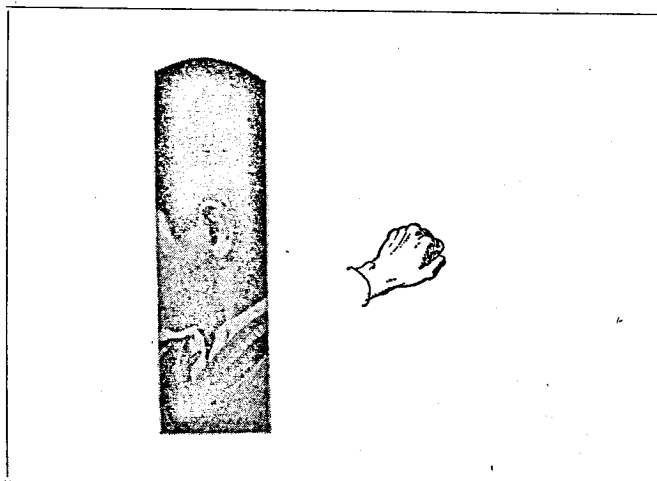


Fig. 6:  
a clout round  
the ear,  
a bang across  
the knuckles

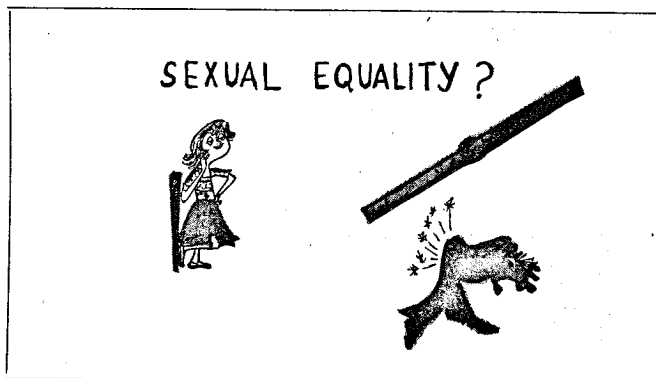


Fig. 7:  
get belted

When I was at school they ..... use the cane very much. Though, ..... I went to school for a ..... time in the North of England, ..... there they used the cane like ..... business. You'd get a quick whack ..... the hand just for talking when ..... weren't supposed to. I was certainly ..... to get away from that school, ..... can tell you.

Mind you they ..... plenty of more subtle ways of ..... out the punishment in the other ..... I went to. You could be ..... lines: write out 200 times "I ..... an idiot but I must try ..... to act like one in class". ..... another favourite trick was to set ..... essay on some silly subject like "..... balls" or "Why monkeys have long .....". You should try some time writing ..... words about tennis balls. If you ..... something a bit more serious you ..... be given a detention, which meant ..... had to stay behind for an ..... after school and pick up all ..... litter in the playground or clean ..... the blackboards in the school or ..... like that. If you had more ..... 5 detentions in one term, I ..... it was, you could be caned.

..... generally the teachers didn't like giving ..... or detentions very much, because it ..... they had to stay behind after ..... themselves to supervise you, or they ..... to remember to collect the lines ..... the essay. So, if you messed ..... in class, you'd more than likely ..... get a clout round the ear ..... a bang with a ruler across ..... knuckles.

To conclude: the advantages of such a lesson as I see them are:

1. A native speaker input
2. Visual content to aid comprehension
3. Follow-up work is easier. You can refer back to the pictures and notes.
4. Apart from checking comprehension the cloze test provides a closely-related written text.