

## Lazy Stories – student Centred Writing/speaking Activities

- Source:

<https://designerlessons.org/2012/01/21/esl-lesson-plan-student-centred-writing-activities/>

A designer lessons ESL Lesson plan developed by George Chilton

These are so-called Lazy Stories because they leave all the hard work to the imagination of your students.

Lesson aims

- Past modals/conditionals
- Discussion
- Writing

**Stage one** – Pre-teach /revise the 3rd conditional

See optional activity.

**Stage Two** – Reading & discussion

Read each text together, focusing on pronunciation, vocabulary and meaning. Ask your students how they would feel in each situation.

Here are the four texts proposals by George Chilton

### Text One

I awoke one night to the sound of an insistent scratching at my bedroom window. The wind was howling loudly and, very close-by, there was the distinctive cry of a baby wailing in distress. Where was it? On my window-ledge? This could not be! My whole body shook with fear. Then I turned over and went back to sleep.

– **Vocabulary**: scratching, [howling](#), close-by, [wailing](#), window-ledge. The majority of these words can be demonstrated by the teacher.

You may also use youtube clips to reproduce the sounds.

- **Activity** – Ask your students to discuss what they would have done, felt and perhaps what they would have seen in that situation. Get them to agree on a course of action and then share it with the class. Force ss use the third conditional: If I had been there...

Possible examples:

I wouldn't have gone to sleep, I think I'd have opened the window to see what was there and I would have felt quite frightened.

### Text Two

I was walking through the park at night, past the river. As I went by the bridge, the same old brick bridge I go past every night, I noticed something odd. A vivid green glow was emanating from under the arches and a horrible, guttural chanting carried through the night air. I felt strangely drawn to the sound. I heard my name being said over and over, in deep, demonic voices. But I decided to ignore it and went home instead.

\_ **Vocabulary:** [chanting](#). Emanating, brick, arches, drawn to, guttural (you may have chanting or guttural voices in youtube)

-**Activity A)** ; Ask your students to speculate what the noise and light could have been, in their groups.

-Possible answers: It could have been a witches' coven. The person walking by the bridge could have been very drunk. There could have been a very simple explanation...etc.

**Activity B)** Then ask them to write individual third conditional sentences to say what they would have done.

If I had seen the green glow and heard the chanting of my name, I would have run away screaming.

### Text 3

I was on holiday in Japan and had only been there a day. I was exploring the streets of Tokyo, when I noticed an old man standing by a café table where he left an envelope. I bent down to look at it. It said "(your name), follow me." But I didn't.

\_Vocabulary: bent down.

\_ **Activity A)** Ask students to speculate what the old man might have wanted, what you should have done.

\_Possible answers He might have wanted to kidnap you, you should have called the police.

- **Activity B)** Ask your students to write a third conditional to say what they would have done in this situation.

Get them to create a conditional chain (please see optional activity, if you're not sure what this is) relating to this story their groups

### Text 4



As I was walking along the beach, I noticed a bottle had washed up on the seashore. Inside there was a map. A treasure map, perhaps. I don't care. I recycled them both in the paper and glass bins.

- Vocabulary: washed up.

**Activity:** Use this as the beginning of a story that your students have to write in 10 minutes. They can then share this story with the rest of the class or in their groups. They must include at least one conditional.

- Prison Break: live listening comprehension and a review of the 3rd conditional.  
(designerlessons.wordpress.com)
- Drawing dictation – FCE Speaking Exam Focus (designerlessons.wordpress.com)