



## The Fortune Teller



1. Student ability: **High Beginner ~ Intermediate**
2. Approximate length of lesson: **30+**
3. Number of students necessary: **2+**
4. Preferred age/maturity: **HS, HS, College, Adult**
5. Type of lesson: **Pair Work Activity**

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**Language Target:** Conversion from simple present to future tense. Predicting someone's future; practice with **will** and **won't** while offering *Good News* and *Bad News*.

**Setting Up Note:** Start the class with a few *Good News – Bad News* jokes. For example: Wife calling her husband at work:

Wife: *Honey, I have some good news and some bad news.*

Husband: *OK. Tell me the good news.*

Wife: *We won't need to spend all that money for a new roof.*

Husband: *That's great. What's the bad news?*

Wife: *A tornado just destroyed our house.*

Another one, a doctor talking to his patient:

Dr.: *I have some good news and some bad news.*

Patient: *All right. What's the good news?*

Dr.: *You have less than 24 hours to live.*

Patient: *That's terrible! What's the bad news?*

Dr.: *I tried calling you all day yesterday!*

Before handing out the worksheet, ask the students what they want to do in the future. If they need a little guidance, ask them questions such as: *Do you want to take a vacation? Do you want to write a book? Do you want to start your own business?*

Then, having a little fun, assume the role of a highly inspired **Fortune Teller**. To the student who said he/she wanted to take a vacation, make a prediction similar to the following:

*You will take a vacation. The good news is you will travel overseas before the end of the year. The bad news is you will be hijacked and held prisoner for three months!*

--OR--

*You will take a vacation. The good news is that you will go to (some exotic place). The bad news is that you will break your leg on the first day and have severe diarrhea the rest of the time.*

**Getting Started:** Pair the students and hand out the A and B worksheets. Review any unfamiliar vocabulary.

First, students simply ask each other the questions *Do you want to...* as provided at the top of the worksheet, checking the boxes (yes or no) for their partner's answers to the questions. This part of the lesson is very straightforward and should move along fairly quickly.

Students should be encouraged to ask some of their own questions as well.

Next, directing their attention to the bottom portion of the worksheet, students assume the role of **Fortune Teller**. And **Fortune Tellee**.

For example, Student A predicts Student B's fortune. To begin, Student A selects one of the answers from the upper section, i.e. *Do you want to find a new boy / girl friend?* Answer: *Yes, I do.* Using future tense, Student A makes the prediction with good and bad news about finding a new boy / girl friend: ***The good news is that you will find a new boy (girl) friend. The bad news is that you will live 1,000 kilometers away from him!***

Student B writes (in first person) what the **Fortune Teller** says on his/her paper, i.e., [The Good News is...] ***I will find a new boy (girl) friend.*** [The Bad News is...] ***I will live 1,000 miles away from him!***

Higher level students should offer several elements of both the **Good** and **Bad** news as well as include specific expressions of time: ***You will travel overseas before the end of the year.***

**Variation 1:** Introduce **not**. ***You will travel overseas. The good news is that you're not going to get sick. The bad news is that you will not be able to find your passport so you will not be able to get off the plane.***

**Variation 2:** The Fortune Teller predicts the future for one of the items not checked—that's the bad news. Then adds the good news. For example, perhaps a student doesn't want to become famous – that box remains unchecked. The partner says something like: ***The bad news is that you will become famous. The good news is that you will also become rich.***

**Variation 3:** When finished, re-pair students and have them describe the fortunes of their previous partners (using third person) i.e., ***The good news is that he will..., The bad news is that she will...***

**Variation 4:** Read today's horoscope to the students and encourage them to add: **But the Bad News is...** to each prediction.

**Building Fluency:** Higher-ability students will have a lot of fun by expanding the conversation from ***I want to... and I will... to elements such as I might..., I should... I probably will/won't..., There's a possibility that I will/won't..., It's not very likely that I will..., I'm pretty sure that I will/won't...***, etc.

**Writing Practice:** Students write a short prediction on a sheet of paper and expand it with a detailed description including specific dates, times, places, etc.

This essay could be about themselves, a classmate, the teacher, the school, an up-coming event, politics, or just about any topic in which the future can be predicted. Silly predictions can be a lot of fun; more serious predictions are useful for discussions.

Contributed by Kurt Scheibner

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