

UOW College Hong Kong / Community College of City University
Student English Enhancement Unit (SEE U)
Daily English Practice

Week 3

#64 Ronald Reagan: His Wit and Wisdom

Skills/ Objectives: Listening and speaking

PART 1: Before you watch...

Preparatory questions

1. Many people learn American English by listening to and studying the speeches made by US presidents. Do you?
2. Off the top of your head, can you name three American presidents?
3. Did you say Ronald Reagan?
4. From the vocabulary list below, can you find one appropriate word to complete the following sentence?

Freedom of speech is a _____ right guaranteed to each US citizen.

Vocabulary

1. Humour (noun): the ability to see the fun side of things
2. Cynical (adjective): believing that people are not sincere
3. The Kremlin (noun): the seat of the Russian government, located in Moscow
4. Constitutional (adjective): allowed by the rules governing a country
5. George Washington (noun): the first US president

Answer(s) to the relevant questions above will be provided in the next exercise.

Answers to relevant questions in the preceding set of exercises:

Question 1:

Try "un-a-bomber."

Question 2:

Hotel lobbies.

Question 3:

The word is "suspicion."

PART 2: Video

This video presents a small selection of Reagan's speeches, revealing the fun-loving personality of the man:

The Best of President Reagan's Humour (click the link below to watch the video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pgs-LaWyUJI>

(Source: YouTube)

PART 3: Speaking

In most English words “ea” is pronounced /i:/, but in the case of “Reagan” it takes the /ei/ sound. This is true of surnames of Irish origins. Another example is “Yeats,” as in the celebrated Irish Poet W. B. Yeats. Learn how to pronounce it here:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/features/pronunciation/diphthongs8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HAJMzhe2Zig>

PART 4: Learn further

1. Follow the time line from Reagan's birth to his post-presidency years:
<https://www.reaganfoundation.org/ronald-reagan/reagans-life-times/>
2. “Reagan Quotes and Speeches” is a comprehensive collection of video clips showcasing Reagan's thoughts on many of the issues of his days—and, surprisingly, of the present times:
<https://www.reaganfoundation.org/ronald-reagan/reagan-quotes-speeches/?topic=Peace&search=&sort=>