

## Did you know?



### World Emoji Day

**Emojis have become such a fundamental part of our online life it's hard to remember a time without them.**

If a picture paints a thousand words, then an emoji does a similar task – why explain how you feel when you can select a face that does the job for you? Or why type twenty characters when one little image will do just as well? Think how easy it is to tease a friend or send a discreet message with an emoji.

In the far past – maybe twenty or thirty years ago - we used emoticons (a blend word of *emotion* + *icon*) which employed punctuation marks, numbers and letters. We can thank Scott Fahlman a computer scientist at US university Carnegie Mellon who in 1982 formalized their use on bulletin boards. A smiley face :-)) indicated that the post was light-hearted, and a sad face :-( meant a serious post. These emoticons were soon adopted universally and became part of many people's typewritten lexicon.

25 years later, the Japanese, who were very early adopters of mobile phones, introduced *emojis*. Despite sounding like the English word emotion, the word emoji comes from the Japanese and is a blend of *e* (meaning picture) and *moji* (meaning character). Originally there were around 90 images – numbers, sports, time, moon phases and the weather - and this has now grown to around 3,300 on the official Unicode list, including many emotional representations such as happiness, sadness, boredom, anger, disappointment and love.

These days all devices have emojis built into their language options and these are now divided into emotions, activities, animals, weather, plants, food and drink, vehicles, travel and places, and objects. Emojis have become more inclusive, so that users are able to select appropriate skin tone and gender, and family groups are not so stereotyped and now include same sex partners and single parents. Some emojis are country specific, particularly so in Japan – ramen noodles, dango, Japanese curry and the symbol for beginner drivers, for example. Other emojis have taken on other meanings: the aubergine to represent a phallus and thus used in a sexual context; nail polish has been used to indicate 'non-caring fatuousness'. And they have also been used for awareness purposes: for malaria and for menstruation for example.

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## Did you know?

Oxford Dictionaries president described the emoji system as 'flexible, immediate, and infuses tone beautifully' - something that is increasingly important in our visually focussed 21<sup>st</sup> century communication. In 2015, Oxford Dictionaries named the *Face with Tears of Joy* emoji the *Word of the Year* as it was the most frequently used emoji globally:



And why is **World Emoji Day** on July 17? Because it's the date shown on the calendar emoji on Apple products (which happens to coincide with the Apple launch of iCal on July 17 2002).

If you would like to use **World Emoji Day** in your lesson, then we have three activities for you, at A2 level. You will find the activities in the **Teacher's notes** and the **Worksheet**.

### Teacher's notes

- Make a copy of the **Worksheets**, one for each student. If you are doing this as an online exercise, then make the **Worksheets** accessible to each student before the lesson (by email, for example).

### Emojis – happy or sad (Level A2 and above, 10+ mins)

- On the board (or shared whiteboard, if online) write *emoji* and ask students if they know what these are. (*The pictograms used in texting*). Explain that emoji is a Japanese word and means *e* (meaning picture) and *moji* (meaning character).
- Ask students to open the first exercise **Emojis – happy or sad** and to complete it.
- Check answers together in class. Key: 1 c, 2 d, 3e, 4a, 5f, 6g, 7i, 8h, 9j, 10 b
- Discuss the questions below the table.

### Which answer? (Level A2 and above, 10+ mins)

- Ask students if they send emojis to answer text messages.
- Tell students to complete the second exercise. Help with any unknown vocabulary.
- Check answers together in class Key: 1c, 2b, 3c, 4b, 5a (You may find that students have different answers – ask them why they have chosen a different answer.)
- Ask students to write a text message and ask the class to find the appropriate emoji response.

## Did you know?

For the interactive whiteboard or online teaching:

### **Random stories (Level A2 and above, 15+ mins)**

- If you can add emojis to your screen, then show 12 of them at random (from all the sections: emotions, activities, animals, weather, plants, food and drink, vehicles, travel and places, and objects) and then ask each student to write (or together to orally create) a short story including as many of the emojis as possible.
- Alternatively, ask students to choose 6 emojis at random from their own phones and then write a short text to include them all.

# Emojis – happy or sad?

Match the emoji to the description.




	Emoji	Description
1		___ a I'm laughing with tears of joy.
2		___ b I'm thinking.
3		___ c I'm a very good person.
4		___ d I'm sleepy.
5		___ e I'm angry.
6		___ f I've hurt my head.
7		___ g I'm sad.
8		___ h I'm sending you a kiss.
9		___ i I'm surprised.
10		___ j I can't speak.

Which emoji do you use most often?  
Which one do you like the most?  
Which one is the most annoying?




## Which answer?

You receive the following text messages.  
Choose the most appropriate emoji response.




1 "I've broken my hand! It hurts!"

- a)  b)  c) 




2 "It's going to be a sunny day tomorrow."

- a)  b)  c) 



3 "We're getting married!"

- a)  b)  c) 

4 "I helped my neighbours with their shopping today."

- a)  b)  c) 

5 "I made a chocolate cake yesterday and I forgot to add the sugar!"

- a)  b)  c) 