



ON A ROLL - ASHLEY O (Miley Cyrus)



Description:

This song-based activity lesson plan for English language teaching features the song On a Roll by Ashley O (Miley Cyrus) and its official music video. Students talk about success and do a vocabulary exercise, watch and compare music videos, listen to the song, and do a listening exercise with the lyrics.

Language level: B1 and above

Learner type: All ages

Skills: speaking, reading, listening and writing (with backchannel)

Topics: success, music

Language: success idioms, expressing opinions, comparisons

Materials: Youtube videos, worksheets, and mp3 file

Duration: 1 hour - 1h 30 min

Downloadable materials: instructions; [vocabulary and lyrics worksheet](#); [song mp3](#)

PART ONE - WARM UP + Vocabulary

Step 01.

Write the following words on the board and ask the whole class: What do you think these words have in common? Do you know their meaning? Get some guesses and answers, to verify students' previous knowledge, before going to the next step.

Heavy hitter Highflier In the ascendant top-rated triumphant

Step 02.

Tell your students that those words are all connected to SUCCESS or being SUCCESSFUL in some way. Tell them they are going to learn their meaning in exercise 1.

Step 03.

Hand out the worksheets. Tell students to read the definitions and examples of the words from the previous exercise, and fill the spaces. Give them some time to do it, and have them compare their answers in pairs before you give the right answers.

ANSWERS. 1. Triumphant 2. In the ascendant. 3. Top-rated 4. highflier

songactivityfactory.com

Step 04

On the board, write: POLITICS MUSIC MOVIES SPORT

Divide students into small groups. Have them discuss successful people or companies/teams in the four areas, and come up with sentences using the words in the previous exercise to describe them. Example: Korean pop is in the ascendant at the moment. Everybody is talking about this now, and many groups have been regularly on the news. (name of an athlete/team) his top-rated in football, etc. Give them some time to come up with the sentences. (5 - 10 min), and then share them with the whole class. (obs. As an alternate idea, students can share their ideas via **backchannel**, keep reading to learn how)

AN ALTERNATE IDEA TO MAKE THIS STEP MORE ATTRACTIVE FOR YOUR STUDENTS WITH THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

In case your classroom is equipped with a computer connected to a projector and internet access, and your students are allowed to use their mobile devices, this activity can be much more interactive and attractive with Backchannel <http://backchannelchat.com/>

Backchannel is an online tool you can use to create a chat room and a code which your students can use to join! It is very simple and practical. Your students don't have to download, nor sign up to anything. All they need is the code to your chat room.

This idea was inspired by an article by Nik Peachey published on the Oxford TEFL Blog about tools for making the classroom paperless, see the article [here](#). In there, you can find information on how to use Backchannel as well as other nice and useful tools for your ESL classes..

Now, back to step 04

You should create your chat room in advance, and have the link or QR code handy to share with the students. After you give them some time to come up with the sentences, have them join your backchannel and share their sentences there. They will be projected on the board and all students will be able to see the answers there, and also on their devices. They can even like each other's sentences. This is very interactive and fun!

This way you can also ask students to find grammar mistakes or misspellings in the sentences and ask them to correct them (if you find it suitable for your class)

PART 2 - MUSIC VIDEOS

Step 05.

Ask your students if they know about Miley Cyrus' participation in the third Black Mirror episode of season five on Netflix, "Rachel, Jack, and Ashley Too". Ask them who has watched it and their opinions about it. If they haven't (or if YOU haven't) tell them to watch it (WATCH IT!). It is very good! Here is some info about this episode and Miley's character:

“‘On A Roll’ is a song performed by American singer Ashley O, a character performed by Miley Cyrus. (...).

The song is a rewrite of the Nine Inch Nails' industrial rock track “Head Like A Hole”, released in 1990, only adapted into an upbeat electro-pop remix.

The music video, directed by Anne Sewitsky, premiered on June 13, a day before the episode's soundtrack was released globally.” Text extract from [genius.com](https://www.genius.com)

Step 06

Tell them, the song is a rewrite of Nine Inch Nails 90's song "Head Like a Hole", and that you are going to play **1:30 seconds** of the original and **1:30 seconds** of Miley Cyrus' version for them to compare.

<https://youtu.be/nOVW938sr0k>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BTsW30Ur0sg>

Step 07

Have students work in pairs and talk about which video, song version they liked better and why, and also talk about the differences between them. After some time, the pairs share their opinions with the whole class. Have a vote to see which one the class liked more.

PART 3 - SONG LYRICS

Step 08

Tell your students that you are going to work with Ashley O's (Miley Cyrus) version of the song. Her version is titled: ON A ROLL. write the title on the board and tell them what it means:

According to the [Oxford Learner's Dictionary](#) **TO BE ON A ROLL** is an informal IDIOM which means *to be experiencing a period of success at what you are doing*

Example: Don't stop me now—I'm on a roll!

Ask your students to give you examples of people who are on a roll in their fields. They can rephrase the examples they used in step 04, and come up with new ones, too.

Step 09

Tell them they are going to watch Ashley O's video again, and this time, they have to pay attention to the lyrics because she sings the phrase "I'm on a roll" a number of times. Their task as they watch the video is to count down how many times she sings the phrase.

Play the video again

Answer: 4

Step 10

Hand out the worksheet with the exercise 02. As the students listen to the song, they have to cross out FOUR extra words in the lyrics.

Answer key

ON A ROLL - ASHLEY O (Miley Cyrus)

[Verse 1] Oh honey, kiss me up **NOW** against the wall

[Pre-Chorus] 'Cause I'm going down in **YOUR** history

[Post-Chorus] I'm gonna get **ALL** what I deserve

[Verse 2] Oh honey, you know we just can't **EVER** lose

That's it for this week!



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Happy teaching! :)