Unit 3  What makes us laugh?

Vocabulary Skills: Using a dictionary

1. Use your dictionary to match each word or phrase with its definition.
   a. black humor 1. the use of humor to criticize someone or something and make them seem silly
   b. irony 2. a form of humor in which you use words to express the opposite of what the words really mean
   c. satire 3. The ability to use words in a clever way. To make people laugh
   d. slapstick 4. Humor that is based on physical actions such as people hitting each other or falling over
   e. wit 5. An amusing way of looking at sad or unpleasant things, such as death or illness

2. Use your dictionary to complete this chart.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Adverb</th>
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<tr>
<td>amusing</td>
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3. Use your dictionary to check the meanings of these words and phrases. Then complete the sentences.

Kidding  giggling  cartoons  make fun of  sense of humor

a. I like watching _______________ on TV. They make me laugh.
b. Every country has jokes that _______________ people from another country.
c. Why aren’t you laughing? Don’t you have a _______________?
d. I wasn’t serious. I was only _______________
e. The story was so funny, we couldn’t stop _______________
Predicting
You’re going to read six jokes. With a partner, answer these questions.

a. Do people from different countries find different things funny?
b. Is it in bad taste to make a joke out of death or illness?

Have you heard the one about …?

The magic bottle

James, Philip, and Nick were there unemployed friends with no money and no luck. One day, they were walking along a country road when Philip saw a small, old-fashioned bottle on the ground. He picked it up and rubbed it with his hand. A magic genie appeared and said, “Thank you for releasing me from the bottle. In return, I will grant you three wishes.” James, Philip, and Nick decided to use one wish each. James said, “I wish I were a millionaire, living in luxury.” The genie waved his hand, and James disappeared. Philip said, “I wish I were one at a sunny beach, surrounded by beautiful women.” The genie waved his hand, and Philip disappeared. Then it was Nick’s turn. “Hmm. I can’t decide what I want!” he said, shaking his head, and added, “I wish James and Philip were here to give me some ideas.” The genie waved his hand and suddenly James and Philip both reappeared. “Your three wishes are finished,” said the genie and vanished.

The helpful hunter

Two hunters, Kurt and Otto, went into the woods to look for rabbits. Suddenly, Kurt clutched his chest and collapsed to the ground. Otto ran over and panicked when he saw his friend’s face — his face had turned bright red, and he didn’t seem to be breathing. Fearing the worst, Otto quickly called the emergency service on his cell phone: “My friend is dead! What can I do?” he shouted.
The operator replied, “Calm down, I can help. First, let’s make sure he’s dead.” There was a silence, then a gunshot. Otto came back on the phone, his voice shaking, “OK, now what?”

Understanding the text
1. Answer these questions.

   a. Who was the golfer thinking about when the funeral procession passed?
   b. How many people fell from the rope attached to the helicopter?
   c. Where were James, Philip, and Nick after the genie disappeared?
   d. What did Otto think when he saw his friend had collapsed?
   e. How much time does the patient have left to live?
2. Correct the mistake in each sentence.

   a. Thanks to James, the three men found a genie.
   b. Otto called for help from a payphone because he was worried about Kurt.
   c. Sam used a small “talking clock” to help him tell the time.
   d. After the woman’s speech, some of the men applauded.
   e. The golfer continued playing when he saw the funeral procession.

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3. What a partner, find …

   a. Why the helicopter pilot said someone would have to let go of the rope.
   b. Three ways the golfer showed his respect as the funeral procession passed.
   c. Two reasons why Otto thought Kurt was dead.
   d. Which of the three men wished he were very wealthy.
   e. Who was Sam’s “talking clock.”
4. Who or what do these words describe?
   a. shaking  b. emotional  c. touching  d. massive  e. terrible

Reading skill: Identifying the topic

1. Look again at the jokes. Write the title of the joke that involves …
   a. extremely inconsiderate behavior. ________________________________
   b. one individual outwitting several others. __________________________
   c. an unfortunate misunderstanding. ________________________________
   d. a sensitive situation handled very tactlessly. _________________________
   e. an excessive interest in sports. _________________________________
   f. a foolish waste of a lucky chance. _________________________________

2. Read this text. Check (✓) the most appropriate topic.

Jackie Chan

Jackie Chan, possibly the biggest movie star in the word, is famous for his action movies. In fact, Chan’s movies are more than simple action movies – they are action-comedies. His use of comedy goes back to the early days of his career when he was preparing to be the next Bruce Lee. It soon became apparent that his friendly face would prevent him from getting “tough” roles like Lee, so he decided to go down a different route, using comedy. Chan combined slapstick comedy with amazing action stunts to make a style of his own. Although he became a huge star across Asia, Chan found that success in the U.S. was much tougher to achieve. After several failures, he finally found success with Rush Hour, which was a huge hit in the U.S. and Europe but strangely didn’t do so well in Asia. Chan says this was because in different countries, people find different things funny. “The movies that are popular in the West are often not as popular in Asia and vice versa. There’s no doubt that Asians and Westerners have different tastes when it comes to film.” Chan still admits to not understanding American humor. He says he makes different movies for the Asian market and for the American market. Everyone likes humor, but the humor everyone likes is different!

   a. ☐ the life and work of Jackie Chan
   b. ☐ Jackie Chan’s most successful movies
   c. ☐ humor in Jackie Chan’s movies
   d. ☐ reasons for Jackie Chan’s success in Asia and the west
   e. ☐ the importance of understanding American humor