

A Baby... Maybe?

■ Before reading

Lead-in

Discuss teenage pregnancy with your students. In what ways does having a baby when you are still at school affect your life? Ask the students to brainstorm a list of jobs you have to do when you are looking after a baby.

Vocabulary

Ask the students to complete **activity 1, Vocabulary** before they read the article.

■ During reading / feedback

Reading for gist

Tell the students they are going to read about special dolls that American high schools are giving their students to teach them how difficult it is to look after a baby. Ask the students to predict the things that the dolls do. They can use the vocabulary from the earlier exercise to help them with these predictions.

As they read, they should underline the things that the dolls do. Were the students' predictions correct? Was there anything that the dolls did that surprised them? Was there anything that the dolls didn't do that the students thought would have been useful?

Reading comprehension

Ask the students to re-read the text to complete **activity 2, Comprehension**.

■ Follow-up activities

Vocabulary (phrasal verbs)

As a class, ask the students to explain the meaning of the

phrasal verbs in **activity 3, Phrasal verbs**. Then tell the students to work alone to put them into the correct places. They should check their answers with their partner.

Discussion

Ask the class the following questions and encourage debate among the students:

- Is it a good idea to give students dolls to look after?*
- In what ways are the dolls like / unlike real babies?*
- Would it be a good idea to give the dolls to students at your school?*
- Do you think that these dolls prevent teenage pregnancies?*

Designing a doll

Tell the students that they work for the company that makes the baby dolls. The babies have been a great success, but now they want to make a second range of dolls. These dolls are going to be toddlers (one to two year-old children). The students must work in groups to make a list of things the dolls will do. Point out to the students that the main difference between babies and toddlers is that toddlers can move and talk. You may have to teach your students some useful vocabulary beforehand.

Answers

1. **Vocabulary** 1f, 2d, 3c, 4b, 5e, 6a, 7g.
2. **Comprehension** 1 true, 2 false, 3 false, 4 true, 5 false (because the dolls record the response of the person who picks them up), 6 true, 7 true.
3. **Phrasal verbs** 1 look after, 2 wake up, 3 pick up.

Timesaver Reading Lessons • Photocopiable Activities

A Baby... Maybe?

1. Vocabulary

Match the words and phrases with their definitions.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| 1. to increase | 5. at random |
| 2. rapidly | intervals |
| 3. to admit something | 6. to record |
| 4. to look after | 7. a response |
- a) to store or copy information or sound
 b) to care for someone or something, such as a child or a pet
 c) to tell someone something (usually that you are ashamed of)
 d) quickly
 e) at any time (rather than every ten minutes or every hour)
 f) to get bigger
 g) a reaction to something

2. Comprehension

Read the article and decide if the following sentences are true or false.

1. There are a lot more teenage pregnancies in the USA.
2. The dolls cry every twenty minutes.
3. The dolls don't cry as loudly as real babies.
4. The dolls record how many minutes it takes for someone to pick them up.
5. It's impossible to tell whether someone was angry when they picked the doll up.
6. Most high school teenagers enjoy looking after the dolls.
7. Most high school teenagers are happy to return the dolls.

3. Phrasal verbs

Write one phrasal verb in each gap.

1. It's isn't easy to a baby.
2. Babies often many times during the night.
3. You have to the baby and hold it to stop it crying.

• pick up • look after • wake up •

A Baby... Maybe?

Why are American high schools giving dolls out to their teenage students?

The answer is simple. They are worried about teenage pregnancy. The number of teenage girls who get pregnant in the USA is increasing rapidly. Many teenagers do not realise what it is like to have a baby until they have one. They admit that they thought babies were easy to care for. Schools want teenagers to THINK before they have children.

They cry during the day and the night.

They are giving these dolls to both boys and girls who have to look after them for three days. It

sounds easy, doesn't it? However, these are special computerised dolls. They contain computer programs which cause them to cry at random intervals. They cry during the day and the night (as loudly as a real baby). The only way to stop them crying is to hold them for twenty minutes. This is as long as the time you need to feed a real baby.

These dolls also record how many minutes they cry before someone picks them up. In fact they are so clever that they also record the response of the person who picks them up, so it is possible to hear if the person is angry or not. Most

schools say that the teenagers enjoy having the dolls though they are normally extremely happy when they can return them.

After they had had the dolls for three days, most of the students said they wanted to wait a long time to have children.

Is this a good experiment for your school?

Yes No

Do you want to look after the doll for three days?

Yes No

