Level: B1

Focus: Pronunciation for listening

Theme: Misheard song lyrics

Activity: Match mistakes and corrections

WHITE CHRISTMAS
_____

This is a fun awareness-raising activity based on the song *I'm dreaming of a white Christmas* by Irving Berlin, sung by Bing Crosby. Most people have had the experience of hearing a song in their own or another language, and misunderstanding some of the lines of the lyric. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, we may hear wrongly, either because the singer pronounces strangely, or because the language has in-built ambiguities and homophones. Secondly, we may interpret wrongly. We think the singer is singing about X when in fact s/he is singing about something else completely. This causes us to think we heard one thing when in fact we heard another. This activity raises awareness of these kinds of misunderstanding.

PROCEDURE

1. Ask the students if they can recall any examples of when they have misunderstood the words of a song. Prompt them by sharing with them an example of your own.

2. Explain to the students that they will hear a famous song which has been badly misunderstood. Ask them to spot the mistakes. Then play the video or audio, once or twice.

3. Give out the worksheet. Ask students to work together and try to guess what the correct lyrics should have been. Tell them that the actual lyrics sound almost the same as the wrong lyrics. If they're having difficulty, give clues, or play a version of the actual song.

Key:
1/6 – I'm dreaming of a white
2 – like the ones I used
3 – Where the tree
4 – children listen to
5 – hear sleigh bells
7 – card I write
8 – days be merry
9 – your Christmases be white

Christmas Song

[1]I dream enough, oh why? Christmas!

Just [2]lied the once – are you to know?

[3]Wear the three tops! Glisten!

And [4]chilled run, listen too,

[5]Here's labels in the snow

[6]I dream enough, oh why? Christmas!

With every Christmas [7]car, die-ride!

May your [8]daze beam airy and bright

And may all [9]York wrist masses be wide