**Level:** B1-B2

**Speaking and Vocab Practice**

**Lesson Topic:** A Rich Life with Less (Part 1)

**Text Source:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GgBpyNsS-jU>

**Lesson Aims**

* Identify lexical units related to the lesson text and the content of the lesson.
* Listen for general and specific comprehension.
* Read out loud for pronunciation purposes.
* Practice the pronunciation of -ed endings in regular simple-past verb forms.
* Re-express words and phrases at a given context.
* Form word families following a model.
* Talk fluently about

**Warm Up**

* Have you ever heard about the so called “minimalism”?
* What is it about?
1. **Vocabulary: New Words and Expression (5 min)**

**Directions:** Get familiar with the following words from the lesson main text.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Word/Phrase** | **Pronunciation** | **Text Context** | **Meaning** |
| **NOUNS** |
| clutter  | /ˈklô-rer/ | Imagine a life with less *clutter*.  | untidy accumulation of things [**Spanish:** *desorden, confusión*] |
| discontent  | - | Imagine a life with less *discontent*.  | unhappiness [**Spanish:** *infelicidad, descontento*] |
| figure | /ˈfɪ-gior/ | Maybe six *figures* was rich! | digit, number[**Spanish:** *cifra*] |
| pursuit  | /per-ˈsut/ | All in the *pursuit* of the American dream.  | the action of following, searching[**Spanish:** *búsqueda*] |
| corporate ladder  | /ˈkor-pŏ-retˈlᴂ-*r*er/ | I quickly started climbing the corporate ladder. | hierarchy of a company structure[**Spanish:** *escala coorporativa*] |
| inflation | /ɪn-ˈfleɪ-shon/ | I tried to adjust for inflation.  | the action of inflating something[**Spanish:** *inflación*] |
| **ADVERBS** |
| radically | /ˈrᴂ-*r*ɪ-klɪ/ | My life was radically different. | extremely [**Spanish:** *radicalmente*] |
| ostensibly  | /ŏs-ˈten-sɪ-blɪ/ | I was ostensibly successful.  | apparently, but not actually.[**Spanish:** *ostentosamente*] |

1. **Listening Comprehension: Watch and Talk! (5 min)**

**2.1. General**

**What’s Ryan mainly talking about in this excerpt?**

**A.** About how to accomplish the American Dream.

**B.** About his unhappiness as an apparently rich man.

**C.** About the true value of money in America.

**2.2. Specific**

**Listen again and answer the following questions:**

**a)** What was Ryan’s prior idea of “being rich”?

**b)** How did he feel as he earned more money and accumulated material wealth?

**c)** Instead, what was other people’s opinion about his life?

1. **Video Transcript. Read and practice! (10 min)**

**Directions:** Under your teacher’s supervision, practice reading the video transcript out loud for pronunciation purposes.

|  |
| --- |
|  Blending Flapped *t* or *d*  |

My name is Ryan Nicodemus and this is Joshua Fields Millburn; and the two of us run a website called “*theminimalists.com*”. And today we *wanna* talk to you about wha*t* it means to be part of a community. But first, I *wanna* share a story with you about how I became rich. Imagine your life a year from now, two years from now, five years from now. What’s it gonna look like?

Imagine a life with less: less stuff, less clutter, less stress, and debt, and discontent. A life with fewer distractions. Now, imagine a life with more: more time, more meaningful relationships, more growth and contribution (…). But what you’re imagining is an intentional life. It’s no*t* a perfect life. It’s no*t* even an easy life, bu*t* a simple one. What you’re imagining is a rich life. The kind of rich that has nothing to do with wealth.

You know, I used to think rich was earning $50,000 a year. Then, when I star*t*ed climbing the corporate la*dd*er in my 20s, I quickly began earning 50 grands, bu*t* I didn’t feel rich. So, I tried to adjust for inflation. Maybe $75,000 a year was rich. Maybe $90,000. Maybe six figures! Or, maybe owning a bunch of stuff. Maybe that was rich. Well, whatever rich was, I knew that once I got there, I would finally be happy. So, as I made more money, I spent more money. All in the pursuit of the American dream. All in the pursuit of happiness. But the closer I got the further away happiness was.

Five years ago, my entire life was different from what i*t* is today. Radically different. I had everything I ever wanted. I had everything I was supposed to have. I ha*d* an impressive job title with a respectable corporation, a successful career managing hundreds of employees. I earned the 6-figure income. I bough*t* a fancy new car every couple of years. I owned a huge three-bedroom condo. I*t* even had two living rooms. I have no idea why a single guy needs two living rooms. I was living the American dream. Everyone around me said I was successful. But… I was only ostensibly successful (…) Chasing the American dream, it cost me a lot more than money. My life was filled with stress, and anxiety, and discontent. I was miserable. I may have looked successful, but I certainly di*d*n’t feel successful.

**3. Vocabulary (10 min)**

**3.1. Rewording**

**Directions:** Say the underlined phrases another way, using synonymic words or expressions.

1. Two of us run a site called “The Minimalists”.
2. Imagine a life with less: less stuff, (…) less discontent.
3. Imagine a life with more (…) meaningful relationships.
4. The kind of rich that has nothing to do with wealth.
5. Maybe $90,000. Maybe six figures!
6. Maybe owing a bunch of stuff was “rich”.
7. As I made more money, I spent more money.

 **3.2. Word Families**

**A. Complete the chart with word families (adjectives and nouns). The first example has already been done for you.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Adjective** | **Noun** |
|  | distraction |
|  | stress |
|  | discontent |
|  | passion |
| intentional |  |
| simple |  |
| respectable |  |
| miserable |  |
|  | wealth |

**B. Which verb gave origin to the following nouns or adjectives?**

* grow : growth (n.)
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: contribution (n.)
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: relationship (n.)
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: purchase (n.)
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: successful (adj.)
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: wide (adj.)

**4. Grammar: Pronouncing Regular Past Tense Forms (15 min)**

The -ed ending in regular verbs can be pronounced three different ways according to the last sound in the simple verb form. See the summary chart below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **/t/****Voiceless Sounds** | **/d/****Voiced Sounds** | **/-ɪd/****Verbs Ending in /-t/ or /-d/** |
| /p/ shopped | /b/ grabbed | /t/ visited, invited |
| /k/ worked | /g/ begged | /d/ needed |
| /s/ missed | /l/ called |  |
| /sh/ washed | /m/ named |  |
| /tch/ watched | /n/ planed |  |
| /dch/ managed | /r/ remembered |  |
|  /f/ laughed | /v/ loved |  |
|  | /z/ buzzed |  |
|  | vowel sounds: studied, played |  |

It is very important to keep in mind that the pronunciation of English words may vary in the context of a sentence depending on the adjacent sounds. Regular past tense forms (-ed endings) are not an exception to the rule. Below, we present four main phonetic features to which the -ed ending pronunciation is subject in the context of a clause.

a) **Obscuration:** The final /t/ or /d/ sounds are obscured (hardly pronounced) because of the adjacent consonant sounds.

**E.g.:** *We cleaned the house last weekend; I listened to some music yesterday night.*

b) **Assimilation:** When the final /t/ or /d/ sounds is followed by an identical sound, /t/ or /d/ sounds are pronounced just once.

**E.g.:** *I watched TV yesterday night; I called David, but he was not home.*

c) **Blending:** The final consonant sound of a word is blended with the initial vowel sound of the following word, so that we move smoothly from one word to the next one without making any sudden stops.

Eg: I worked out this morning at the gym; The teacher talked about the test scores.

d) **Blending + Flapping:** As you already know, phonetic blending is often combined with flapping in the in American English speech. Flapping is –perhaps– one of the most distinguishing features of American English, according to which /t/ and /d/ sounds are pronounced similarly to Spanish “ere” when they appear between vowel sounds. Analyze these examples with your teacher’s help:

**E.g.:** *I played in the park for a while; I waited in my room until he came.*

**5. Grammar Practice: Pronouncing -ed Forms**

**Directions:** Identify the pronunciation of the *-ed ending* in the underlined verb forms. The first item has been done as an example.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Sentence** | **Pronunciation** |
| **/t/** | **/d/** | **/ɪd/** |
| I used to think rich was earning $50,000 |  | x |  |
| I started climbing the corporate ladder. |  |  |  |
| I tried to adjust for inflation.  |  |  |  |
| I had everything I ever wanted.  |  |  |  |
| I earned the 6-figure income.  |  |  |  |
| I owned a huge three-bedroom condo. |  |  |  |
| I had everything I was supposed to have.  |  |  |  |
| My life was filled with stress and anxiety.  |  |  |  |

**6. Speaking: Monologue (15 min)**

**Directions:** Answer the following questions in the form of a brief monologue. Feel free to add any information you consider necessary to make your presentation engaging.

* Have you ever heard about the so-called American Dream? What is it about?
* In your opinion, what’s true happiness made up of? Is it about money, material belongings or wealth?
* How can minimalism and happiness be possibly related? Could a simpler life certainly make us happier?
* Would you consider adjusting your life to a minimalistic trend? Tell us about it!