



# English

Year **6**

#личные  
финансовые  
кризисы  
#English  
#6 класс

## Lesson Topic: Blue Cat Blues

*Lesson created by Maria Garder*

**Teacher's comments:** In this lesson, students watch an episode of Tom and Jerry, Blue Cat Blues, and talk about safe and unsafe financial behavior in difficult times.

**Aims.** By the end of the lesson the students will have managed the following, grouped by category:

1. **English:** watch a short cartoon, reconstructing meaning from context; practice and consolidate basic vocabulary related to credit and debt; learn about some wedding traditions in the 20<sup>th</sup> century USA; learn some idioms about personal crises.
2. **Financial Literacy:** think of life choices that alleviate or aggravate difficult financial situations, understand the connection between a person's financial situation and perceived (in)security.

**Key vocabulary and structures:** to give sb/sth up, to pay, a monthly payment, to borrow, to afford, can/cannot afford sth / to buy sth, interest, APR, to pay back, a loan, to charge, to cost an arm and a leg, slavery, sell sb/yourself into slavery, to go downhill, the gutter, a broken heart, to cost an arm and a leg.

**When to teach:** *Passive skills.* To benefit from the lesson, students should be generally familiar with Tom and Jerry, the characters of the American cartoon series, Tom and Jerry. They should be able to recognize separate key words in the stream of speech, aided by video context. *Active skills.* Students should be able to make simple sentences about a person's feelings, such as "Tom is depressed because he loves the White Cat and she chooses another one". They also need to be able to use linking in speaking such as *then, because, but.*

**Time:** 40 minutes.

**Resources:** Whiteboard, markers, OHP and screen / computer, Tom and Jerry Blue Cat Blues – video file of the episode, Can't Buy Me Love by The Beatles – audio file and printouts of the lyrics (see Materials folder), paper, pens.

### Lesson procedure

Timings	Activities	Goals
Warm up 5 min	Begin by showing a picture of Tom sitting on the rail track (see Materials folder). Ask your students if they know who that is, elicit “Tom the cat from the Tom and Jerry cartoons”. Ask them where he is (on the rail track), how is he feeling (depressed/sad), elicit or give the word blue and explain that it also means sad and that you can say “She/he’s got the blues” if a person is feeling melancholic, ask them if they remember the music style called “the blues” and why it might be called that (melancholic music of black American folk origin). Give your students the title of the episode, Blue Cat Blues, and ask them what it might mean (Russian: Блюз грустного кота / Тоска дымчатого кота). Next ask your students what they think is going on in the picture (Tom is sitting on the rail track) and why (because he does not want to live). Next ask why Tom doesn’t want to live. Elicit various reasons, do not reject any ideas at this stage (a broken heart, poverty, a disease...). Summarise that Tom has a crisis and he does not know what to do.	To activate schemata of personal crises, get the students’ interest and prepare them for the lesson.
First listening 15 min	Tell your students they are going to watch the episode, hand out comprehension questions for the first watching (see Teacher’s Materials file). Make sure they understand the questions (reading and translating them before watching is also a good prediction technique). Play both parts of the video of the episode, Blue Cat Blues, and give your students 2 minutes to answer the comprehension questions, then let them check in pairs before checking as a whole class (see the Key file for answers. For question 8, explain that driving through the town with a “Just married” sign is a 20 <sup>th</sup> century American tradition and people do it for luck.) Write <b>crisis</b> on the whiteboard. Elicit the kind of crisis Tom was in. (A financial crisis first – he spent all his money and took a loan he could not pay back, - then a health crisis when he started drinking, and an emotional crisis – a broken heart.) Tell your	To practice listening in the video context; to learn about an American wedding tradition; to practice speaking about personal crises using idioms.

Timings	Activities	Goals
	students that in the next part of the lesson they will understand why the financial part was so difficult for Tom.	
Speaking 10 min	Now ask your students how Tom lost all his money. (He spent all his savings on a diamond ring and then bought a car on credit / took a loan to buy a car.) If you also taught your students the How Banks Work lesson from these series, ask them to remember the main principle of borrowing money from the bank: you pay it back with an interest. Explain that some banks have a lower APR (annual percentage rate = interest per year), others can give you a lot of money but they have very high APRs. Also, when you take a loan, you sign a contract with the bank. In the contract, there is always a special part that says what happens if you cannot pay back on time. Tell your students to watch a part of the episode again and remember what Tom’s contract says. Play the part of the video where Tom signs his contract (from 00:43 to 01:05 in Part 2 of the episode) and ask your students to describe what Tom must do (see Key file for answers). Ask your students why Tom agrees to do it all. (The cartoon says “for love” but can money buy love?) Imagine what Tom could do so as not to get into such a bad situation (see the Key file for a possible answer).	To practice listening and reading key words; to refresh vocabulary related to banking and loans; to discuss the connection between a financial crisis and a personal crisis.
Listening, reading, closure 5 min	Hand out lyrics for “Can’t buy me love” by The Beatles (see Teacher’s Materials file) and let your students listen to the song while following the lyrics in their printouts. Ask them to translate the third verse and give the main idea of the song. If you have enough time, play the song again and let the students sing along.	To consolidate vocabulary and ideas, practice controlled speaking through singing, summarise the ideas of the lesson and give it a closure.

### **Potential problems and solutions**

1. The full narrative of the cartoon may be very hard for students to understand. Reassure them that this is not their goal right now, the meaning can be fully reconstructed from the video alone and understanding the key words will be enough for them to be able to work with the cartoon.

### **References**

1. Video, Tom and Jerry, Blue Cat Blues: <https://vimeo.com/93815930>
2. Can’t Buy me Love by The Beatles. Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srwxJUXPHvE>

## **Выводы по итогам апробации в Пироговской школе**

### **Наибольший интерес вызвало:**

- обсуждение мультфильма (хорошо знакомого ученикам) и личного и финансового кризисов Тома;
- подписание договора с банком с обязательством «расплатиться своей рукой и ногой»;
- обсуждение вопроса о том, почему Том пытался купить любовь за деньги;
- разбор текста песни The Beatles “Can’t Buy Me Love” и совместное ее исполнение на следующем уроке.

### **Наибольшую трудность представляло:**

- обсуждение на английском языке основных принципов кредитования, условий, под которые берется кредит, поскольку оперирование новой лексикой в спонтанной речи относится к заданиям высокого уровня сложности.

### **Рекомендации:**

- после обсуждения, но перед прослушиванием песни будет полезно дать учащимся мини-тест со множественным выбором для закрепления лексики (в том числе идиом), выученной в ходе урока.