

Learning English podcasts... from the
Hellenic American Union©

Level: Lower Intermediate

Lesson: 2

Title: "The History of Beer"

Summary:

Vanessa and Nick are in the middle of a live show and they are talking about beer through history.

In this broadcast, Vanessa and Nick are in the middle of a live show in a radio studio. Listen to their conversation and answer the question that follows about the main idea.

Dialogue:

Vanessa: Hi there! We're going back in time today to talk about one of the oldest products of civilization that **lightens our mood**. **Take a guess** while I welcome Nick to our program; hello Nick – thanks for being here.



Nick: Hi Vanessa! I'm sure **you've aroused our listeners' curiosity** with your quiz.

Vanessa: Let's give them the answer **then**. Today we're talking about beer, the history of beer. So Nick how popular was beer in ancient times?



Nick: Well, it was quite popular until wine became more easily available. Especially, in Rome beer became known as a barbarian drink and was only brewed in places where wine was rare.



Vanessa: When was beer first brewed?

Nick: According to historians in 10,000 BC beer was already being brewed by ancient Mesopotamians and Sumerians. **Likewise**, the ancient Egyptians and Chinese brewed beer.



Vanessa: How similar was it to today's beer?



Nick: Well, firstly the product was probably different from today's bottled varieties. Another thing is that in many cases corn was used instead of barley. But the interesting thing is that women were the master brewers at the time not men!

Vanessa: **You're joking?!**



Nick: No, seriously; and in ancient Babylon women brewers were also priestesses.



Vanessa: But beer had its bad moments as well, didn't it?

Nick: Yes, it did. In America in the 1920s, despite its popularity, beer **was prohibited**; of course not everyone stopped drinking but many

breweries **went out of business** and the only production of beer was made by gangster-controlled operations.



Vanessa: I suppose they were not known for their high-quality products. So, when was beer legalized again?

Nick: At the end of 1933; beer quickly regained its popularity and mass production took over.

Vanessa: Nick, thank you so much.



Now answer the following question . . .

1. What are Vanessa and Nick talking about?

They're talking about the history of beer.

Now listen again to the extract in parts. After each part there will be 3 to 4 questions on the details . . .

Part 1

Vanessa: Hi there! We're going back in time today to talk about one of the oldest products of civilization that **lightens our mood**. **Take a guess** while I welcome Nick to our program; hello Nick – thanks for being here.

Nick: Hi Vanessa! I'm sure **you've aroused our listeners' curiosity** with your quiz.

Vanessa: Let's give them the answer **then**. Today we're talking about beer, the history of beer. So Nick how popular was beer in ancient times?

Nick: Well, it was quite popular until wine became more easily available. Especially, in Rome beer became known as a barbarian drink and was only brewed in places where wine was rare.

Now answer some questions . . .

1. Vanessa says: "We're going back in time today to talk about one of the oldest products of civilization that **lightens our mood.**" What does 'lightens our mood' mean?

It means 'make happier'. So Vanessa says that beer is a drink that makes us feel happier.

2. Vanessa says: "**Take a guess** while I welcome Nick to our program." What does 'take a guess' mean?

It is an expression that means 'try to find the answer'; it is another way to ask somebody to think about something and express their opinion.

3. Nick says: "I'm sure **you've aroused our listeners' curiosity** with your quiz." What does '**arouse somebody's curiosity**' mean?

It is an expression that means 'make somebody want to know something'; so, Nick says that Vanessa has made the listeners think about the quiz and now they want to know the answer.

4. Vanessa says: "Let's give them the answer **then.**" What does '**then**' mean and why is it used here?

It means 'so' and it is used in spoken English at the end of what somebody says to indicate result. Vanessa says 'so, let's give our listeners the answer to the quiz because they want to know if they are right'.

Now listen to the second part of the dialogue . . .

Part two

Vanessa: When was beer first brewed?

Nick: According to historians in 10,000 BC beer was already being brewed by ancient Mesopotamians and Sumerians. **Likewise**, the ancient Egyptians and Chinese brewed beer.

Vanessa: How similar was it to today's beer?

Nick: Well, firstly the product was probably different from today's bottled varieties. Another thing is that in many cases corn was used instead of barley. But the interesting thing is that women were the master brewers at the time not men!

Vanessa: **You're joking?!**

Nick: No, seriously; and in ancient Babylon women brewers were also priestesses.

Vanessa: But beer had its bad moments as well, didn't it?

Nick: Yes, it did. In America in the 1920s, despite its popularity, beer **was prohibited**; of course not everyone stopped drinking but many breweries **went out of business** and the only production of beer was made by gangster-controlled operations.

Vanessa: I suppose they were not known for their high-quality products. So, when was beer legalized again?

Nick: At the end of 1933; beer quickly regained its popularity and mass production took over.

Vanessa: Nick, thank you so much.

Now answer some questions . . .

1. Nick says: "**Likewise**, the ancient Egyptians and Chinese brewed beer." What does 'likewise' mean?

It is a linking word that means 'in the same way' and it is used at the beginning of a sentence to show that you are adding something to the previous point.

2. Vanessa says: "**You're joking!**" Why does Vanessa use this expression?

To show that she is surprised with what Nick told her about women and not men making beer. We use 'you're joking!' to emphasize that what somebody said is very surprising.

3. Nick says: "In America in the 1920s, despite its popularity, beer **was prohibited**." What does 'prohibited' mean?

It means 'not allowed'. So, according to the law people had to stop producing, selling or buying beer.

4. Nick says: ". . . many breweries **went out of business**." What does 'went out of business' mean?

'To go out of business' means to stop operating / working as a company because there is no more money or work available.

Please visit our site at www.hau.gr to find the transcripts, explanations and activities.

GLOSSARY

Arouse (verb): to make somebody have a specific interest, feeling or attitude. You can arouse somebody's interest / curiosity / suspicion
e.g. It's a subject which has aroused a lot of interest.

Brew (verb): (1) to make beer (2) If you brew tea or coffee, you add boiling water to it to make a hot drink, and if it brews, it gradually develops flavor in the container in which it was made
e.g. He brewed us some coffee.

Brewer (noun): the person or company that makes beer

Brewery (noun): the factory that makes beer. In *American English* it is called a **brew-house**.

Curiosity (noun): the desire to know something not necessarily because you are interested in it. The person who asks a lot of questions because they want to know something is **curious** (adjective).
e.g. I'm burning with curiosity - you must tell me who's won!

Find out (phrasal verb): to get information about something or someone by asking, reading etc.
e.g. The holiday was a complete surprise - I only found out about it the day before we left.

Legalize (verb): to make something legal; to be allowed by law
e.g. The Irish government announced it was to legalize gambling.

Popularity (noun): when someone or something is liked or supported by others (win / lose / have popularity). The adjective to describe a person or thing is **popular**
e.g. the increasing popularity of organic food

Rare (adjective): it is used to describe something which is not common or doesn't happen often
e.g. The museum is full of rare and precious treasures.

Take over (phrasal verb): to have control or responsibility for something
e.g. The company he works for has recently been taken over.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1

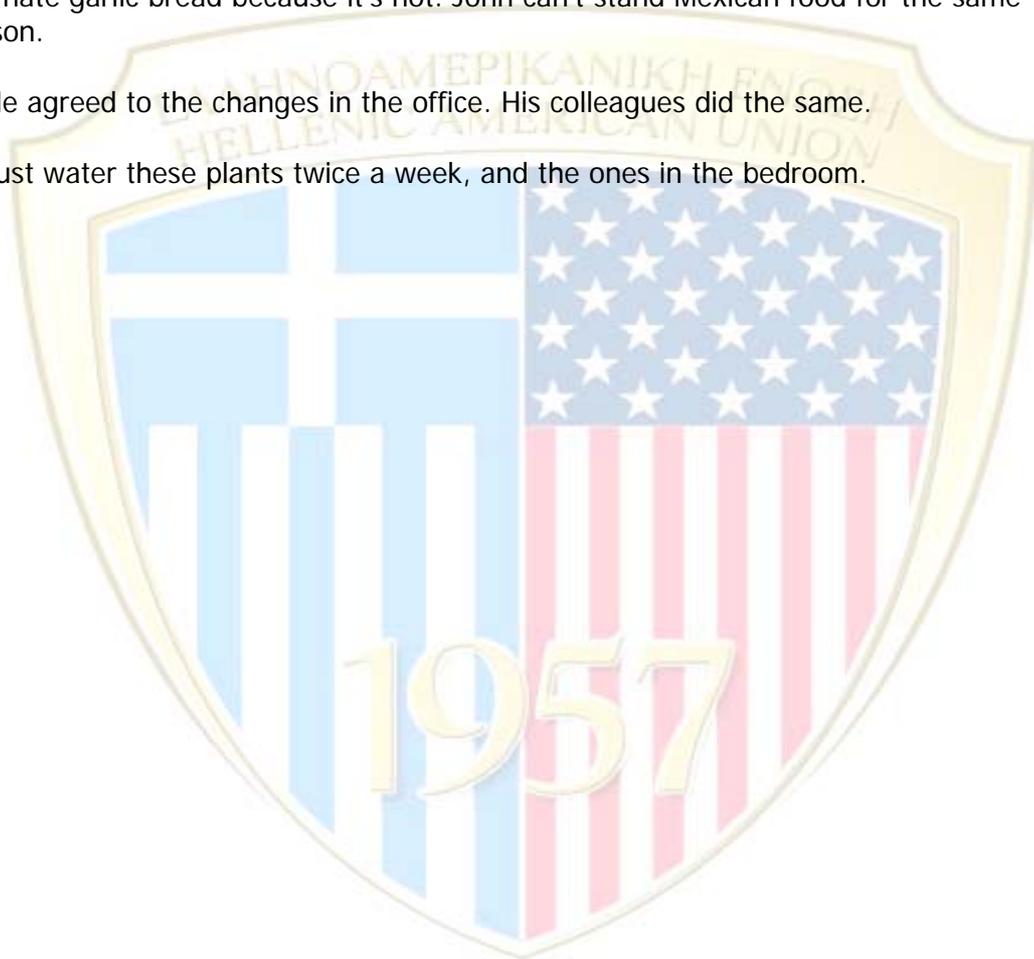
Practice using the words in the glossary. Choose the most appropriate word to fill in the blanks.

1. Can you ___ what time the film begins?	A. Arouse
2. Artists agree to participate in charity events in order to gain___.	B. Brew
3. It is ___to be this hot in December.	C. Curiosity
4. While our teacher was in the hospital the principal agreed to ___ our class.	D. Find out
5. He kept asking questions out of ___	E. Legalize
6. Sit down and I'll ___ us a nice cup of tea.	F. Popularity
7. Stop looking around or you will - ___ the store detective's suspicion.	G. Rare
8. There was international protest when the Dutch government decided to ___ drugs.	H. Take over

Activity 2

Connect the sentences using the word *'likewise'*.

1. The US won most of the field games. In swimming the three first places went to Americans.
2. I hate garlic bread because it's hot. John can't stand Mexican food for the same reason.
3. He agreed to the changes in the office. His colleagues did the same.
4. Just water these plants twice a week, and the ones in the bedroom.



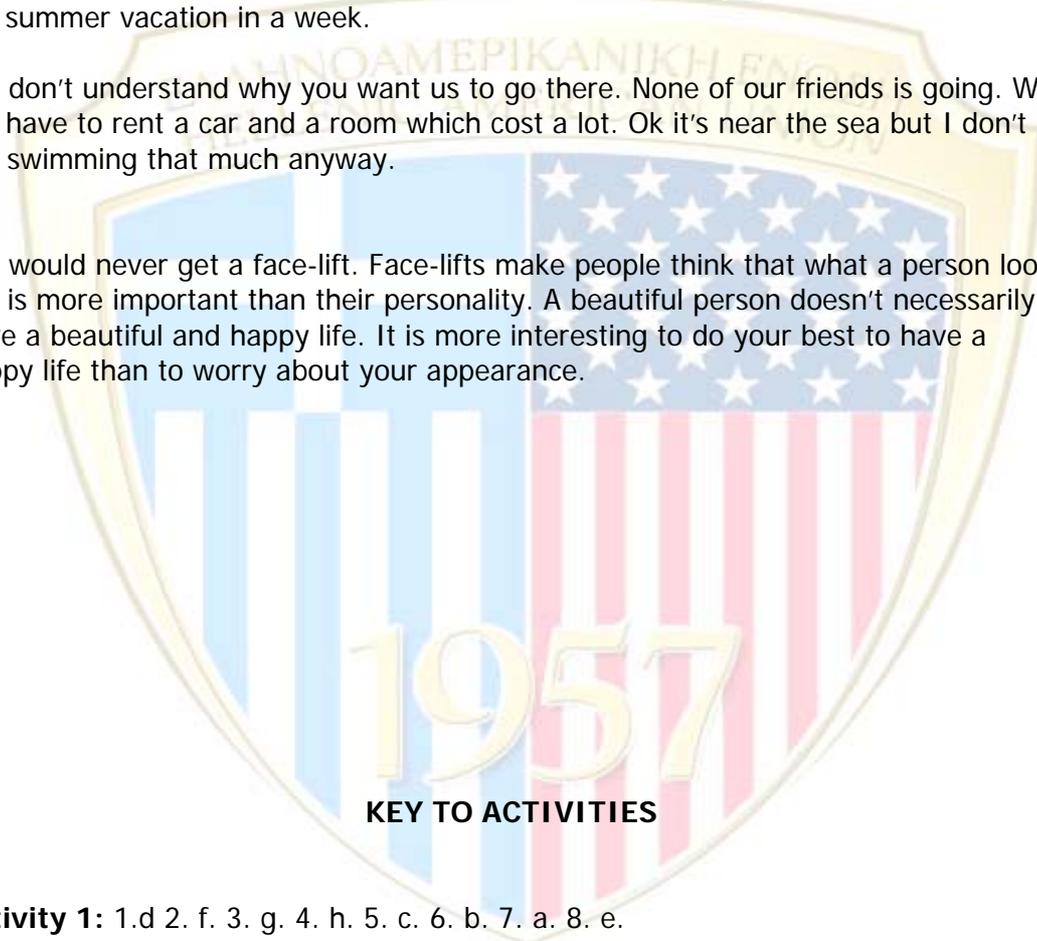
Activity 3

List the points made in the following paragraphs using the connectors '**Firstly**', '**Another thing is that . . .**', and '**The interesting / bad / sad / good thing is that . . .**'

1. I don't enjoy my English class. My teacher speaks very fast and is not patient. My classmates laugh at me whenever I make a mistake. Luckily, we are breaking up for the summer vacation in a week.

2. I don't understand why you want us to go there. None of our friends is going. We will have to rent a car and a room which cost a lot. Ok it's near the sea but I don't like swimming that much anyway.

3. I would never get a face-lift. Face-lifts make people think that what a person looks like is more important than their personality. A beautiful person doesn't necessarily have a beautiful and happy life. It is more interesting to do your best to have a happy life than to worry about your appearance.



KEY TO ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: 1. d 2. f 3. g 4. h 5. c 6. b 7. a 8. e.

Activity 2: 1. The US won most of the field games. Likewise, in swimming the three first places went to Americans. 2. I hate garlic bread because it's hot. Likewise, John can't stand Mexican food. 3. He agreed to the changes in the office and his colleagues did likewise. 4. Just water these plants twice a week, and likewise the ones in the bedroom.

Activity 3: 1. I don't enjoy my English class. Firstly, my teacher speaks very fast and is not patient. Another thing is that my classmates laugh at me whenever I make a mistake. The good thing is that we are breaking up for the summer vacation in a week. 2. I don't understand why you want us to go there. Firstly, none of our friends is going. Another thing is that we'll have to rent a car and a room which cost a lot. Ok the good thing is that it's near the sea but I don't like swimming that much anyway. 3. I would never get a face-lift. Firstly, face-lifts make people think that what a person looks like is more important than their personality. Another thing is

that a beautiful person doesn't necessarily have a beautiful and happy life. The interesting thing is to do your best to have a happy life than to worry about your appearance.

