

What makes you laugh?

1. In pairs, discuss how to complete the jokes.

- a) Helvetica and Times New Roman walk into a bar. "Get out of here!" shouts the bartender. "We don't serve your" ."
- b) Parallel lines have so much in common. It is a shame they will never
- c) "What did the ocean say to the beach?" "Nothing, it just" ."
- d) A: Knock knock.
B: Who's there?
A:
B: who?
A: do anything we want!
- e) Why do we tell actors to "break a leg"? Because every play has a



2. Discuss the questions.

- What do you think of the jokes in ex. 1? Did any of them make you laugh?
- Did you think the way you finished them was better than the original version?
- Why do people laugh?
- How does our culture and background affect the way we laugh and the things we laugh at?

3. Watch the first part (to 00:42) of a [video](https://youtu.be/Nu5j_rODT9o) [https://youtu.be/Nu5j_rODT9o] about laughter and write the reasons people laugh that are outlined in the video.

4. Watch the rest of the [video](#) (00:42–05:21) and make notes on the following topics.


- a) kinds of laughter
- b) behaviourally contagious phenomena
- c) how apes and humans laugh
- d) darker side of laughter
- e) benefits of laughter

What makes you laugh?


5. Discuss the questions.

- Did you find anything surprising or new in the video?
- If laughter is so beneficial, should we fake it for health reasons?
- Did you start laughing at the end of the video when looking at the girl who couldn't stop laughing?
- What makes you laugh?
- Have you ever:
 - laughed at inappropriate times? When did that happen?
 - been unable to stop laughing? What was so funny?
 - laughed to mask your emotions? What emotion did you try to cover up with laughter?


6. Listen to the different types of laughter and read an example situation to see the context each can be used in. Then, write one more situation using each synonym of the verb *laugh*.

- a) cackle 


The great and evil mastermind **cackled** from the top of his castle thinking about his plan!

- b) giggle 

When a man resembling a young Brad Pitt entered the room, all the girls started **giggling**.


- c) chuckle 

“Do you remember the time when I mistook Auntie Christie for your mother?”
Steve **chuckled**.


- d) snigger (BrE) /snicker (AmE) 

Kate felt deeply hurt when she noticed a group of colleagues **sniggering** at her during her speech.


What makes you laugh?

- e) guffaw 

The play was so hilarious that you could hear the audience **guffawing** through almost the entire performance.

- f) titter 

For his age, James was really immature. He **tittered** whenever he heard the word kiss or date.

- g) chortle 

I was hesitant about giving her that present, yet when she unwrapped the gift and began to **chortle**, I knew it was a good choice.

7. Correct the mistakes in the definitions of the synonyms of the word *laugh*.

- Chuckle* means to laugh loudly, usually because you are thinking or reading something hilarious.
- Giggle* means to laugh in a high voice, usually because you are embarrassed or angry.
- Snigger* or *snicker* means to laugh quietly in a kind manner, especially when someone is hurt.
- Cackle* means to laugh quietly in an unpleasant way.
- Guffaw* means to laugh very loudly in a controlled way.
- Titter* means to laugh quietly about something that might be comfortable for someone else.
- Chortle* means to laugh because you are disappointed about something.

8. Choose the most suitable word in each sentence.

- Instead of helping the poor woman who dropped all her shopping on the pavement, a group of lads **sniggered/chortled/giggled** and called her names.
- The stand-up comedian's jokes were so hilarious that I was **sniggering/guffawing/giggling** for the whole show. I simply couldn't stop laughing.

What makes you laugh?

- c) The girl in front of me was **chuckling/cackling/sniggering** the whole journey. I guess the book she was reading was extremely funny.
 - d) Listening to Harry **cackling/chuckling/giggling** was a nightmare, I just wished he would stop making those awful laughing sounds.
 - e) When Ellen saw her date, she started **cackling/tittering/giggling** uncontrollably, I guess that was her way of covering her embarrassment.
 - f) I **chortled/tittered/cackled** with delight when I saw the financial report of our company.
 - g) The teenagers **chuckled/sniggered/tittered** when one of them started asking intimate questions.
9. Your teacher will give you some photos showing people laughing in different situations. Talk about the similarities and differences between the photos. Then, discuss some other aspects of laughing using the questions below the pictures.