

## Lecture 1 Notes. Talking About Your Job in English - Spoken English Lesson

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00:00:02,049 --> 00:00:05,969

Hi, I'm Mike and welcome to Oxford Online  
English!

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00:00:05,969 --> 00:00:11,789

In this lesson, you can learn how to talk  
about your job in English.

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00:00:11,789 --> 00:00:12,789

Where do you work?

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00:00:12,789 --> 00:00:15,239

What do you have to do in your job?

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00:00:15,240 --> 00:00:19,500

What kind of company do you work for?

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00:00:19,500 --> 00:00:26,539

In this class, you can learn how to answer questions like this in clear, detailed English.

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00:00:26,539 --> 00:00:27,539

Ready?

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00:00:27,539 --> 00:00:28,649

Let's start!

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00:00:28,649 --> 00:00:31,580

Part one: introducing your job.

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00:00:31,579 --> 00:00:37,719

"I'm a \_\_\_\_\_": "I work in \_\_\_\_\_";

"I work for \_\_\_\_\_."

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00:00:37,719 --> 00:00:41,268

How would you complete these sentences?

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00:00:41,268 --> 00:00:43,009

You could say something like:

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00:00:43,009 --> 00:00:44,479

"I'm a writer.

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00:00:44,479 --> 00:00:47,088

I work in online education.

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00:00:47,088 --> 00:00:50,049

I work for a publishing company."

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00:00:50,049 --> 00:00:55,189

'I work in...' is used with a field, meaning  
a type of work.

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00:00:55,189 --> 00:00:57,530

So, you can say things like:

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00:00:57,530 --> 00:00:59,060

"I work in finance."

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00:00:59,060 --> 00:01:02,249

"I work in digital marketing."

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00:01:02,249 --> 00:01:07,730

You can also use 'work in' with a place or  
a department of a company.

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00:01:07,730 --> 00:01:08,730

For example:

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00:01:08,730 --> 00:01:13,040

"I work in the HR department of a financial  
firm."

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00:01:13,040 --> 00:01:16,470

"I work in a school, teaching modern languages."

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00:01:16,469 --> 00:01:18,829

Confused?

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00:01:18,829 --> 00:01:24,349

You can see that if you use 'work in' to talk about the type of work you do, you don't

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00:01:24,349 --> 00:01:27,109

use an article like 'a' or 'the'.

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00:01:27,109 --> 00:01:34,269

If you use an article 'a' or 'the' after 'work in', it means you're talking about the place

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00:01:34,269 --> 00:01:36,759

or department where you work.

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00:01:36,760 --> 00:01:40,310

'I work for...' is used with a company.

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00:01:40,310 --> 00:01:41,590

So, you could say:

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00:01:41,590 --> 00:01:43,180

"I'm a salesman.

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00:01:43,180 --> 00:01:45,610

I work for a mobile phone company."

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00:01:45,609 --> 00:01:49,780

"I work for a law firm based in Frankfurt."

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00:01:49,780 --> 00:01:54,390

Or even:

"I run my own business, so I work for myself."

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00:01:54,390 --> 00:01:56,879

What can you say?

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00:01:56,879 --> 00:02:01,420

Can you make sentences like this to say something about your job?

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00:02:01,420 --> 00:02:04,290

Pause the video and try to make a sentence.

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00:02:04,290 --> 00:02:07,060

Say it aloud!

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00:02:07,060 --> 00:02:12,530

Next, let's add more details to your answer.

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00:02:12,530 --> 00:02:15,979

Part two: describing your company.

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00:02:15,979 --> 00:02:22,229

"I work for a \_\_\_\_\_ company which \_\_\_\_\_"

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00:02:22,229 --> 00:02:23,459

Look at this sentence.

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00:02:23,460 --> 00:02:28,530

We need one adjective, and the end of the sentence after 'which'.

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00:02:28,530 --> 00:02:30,919

Any ideas?

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00:02:30,919 --> 00:02:37,579

For the adjectives, think about these ideas:

is your company big or small?

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00:02:37,580 --> 00:02:40,420

Local or multinational?

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00:02:40,419 --> 00:02:45,299

For the part after 'which', ask yourself:

what does your company do?

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00:02:45,300 --> 00:02:49,300

Does it make things, sell things, organise things?



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00:02:49,300 --> 00:02:53,630

Does it provide products, services, or both?

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00:02:53,629 --> 00:02:55,250

So, you could say:

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00:02:55,250 --> 00:03:00,289

"I work for an international electronics company  
which makes tablet computers."

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00:03:00,289 --> 00:03:08,899

"I work for a German company which does market  
research for other companies."

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00:03:08,900 --> 00:03:11,580

What if you don't work for a company?

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00:03:11,580 --> 00:03:15,540

Here are some things you could say:

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00:03:15,539 --> 00:03:17,780

"I'm a freelancer."

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00:03:17,780 --> 00:03:22,759

Meaning: I work independently, for different people and companies.

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00:03:22,759 --> 00:03:24,310

"I'm self-employed."

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00:03:24,310 --> 00:03:30,150

Meaning: I work for myself, either freelance or I have my own business.

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00:03:30,150 --> 00:03:32,260

"I'm a business owner."

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00:03:32,259 --> 00:03:39,329

If you don't work, and people ask you what

you do, what can you say?

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00:03:39,330 --> 00:03:41,480

Here are some useful phrases:

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00:03:41,479 --> 00:03:44,479

"I'm between jobs at the moment."

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00:03:44,479 --> 00:03:48,949

Meaning: I've left one job, and haven't  
found another yet.

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00:03:48,949 --> 00:03:52,669

This sounds nicer than saying, "I'm unemployed."

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00:03:52,669 --> 00:03:58,429

"I'm taking some time out to...(travel,  
spend time with my kids, write a book, recover

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00:03:58,430 --> 00:04:04,370

from an illness, etc.)" Meaning: I'm not  
working at the moment because I want to focus

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00:04:04,370 --> 00:04:07,020

on something else.

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00:04:07,020 --> 00:04:10,739

"I'm retired."

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00:04:10,739 --> 00:04:12,400

What about you?

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00:04:12,400 --> 00:04:14,719

Do you work for a company?

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00:04:14,719 --> 00:04:15,979

What can you say about it?

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00:04:15,979 --> 00:04:23,240

If you don't work for a company, how would

you describe your work situation?

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00:04:23,240 --> 00:04:28,278

Part three: how to describe your job in more detail.

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00:04:28,278 --> 00:04:32,839

So what do you actually do all day?

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00:04:32,839 --> 00:04:37,959

Let's see how you can describe your job in more detail.

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00:04:37,959 --> 00:04:39,519

Look at these sentences:

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00:04:39,519 --> 00:04:45,620

"I have to \_\_\_\_\_"; "I'm responsible for \_\_\_\_\_"; "Most of my time is spent

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00:04:45,620 --> 00:04:46,829

\_\_\_\_\_".

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00:04:46,829 --> 00:04:49,609

Let's do some examples together.

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00:04:49,610 --> 00:04:51,919

We'll start with a simple example.

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00:04:51,918 --> 00:04:54,158

"I'm a nurse.

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00:04:54,158 --> 00:04:59,589

I have to look after patients, give them medicine  
and make sure they're comfortable.

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00:04:59,589 --> 00:05:04,549

I'm responsible for about 20-30 patients.

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00:05:04,550 --> 00:05:09,569

Most of my time is spent talking to patients  
and checking that everything is okay."

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00:05:09,569 --> 00:05:14,780

Next, let's do a more detailed example.

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00:05:14,779 --> 00:05:19,228

"I have to design websites to the client's  
specifications.

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00:05:19,228 --> 00:05:25,579

I'm responsible for the whole design process,  
so I have to take the client's ideas and

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00:05:25,579 --> 00:05:29,098

turn them into a finished product.

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00:05:29,098 --> 00:05:34,139

Most of my time is spent experimenting with  
different designs and ideas and seeing what

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00:05:34,139 --> 00:05:42,509

looks good, because attention to detail is important in this kind of work."

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00:05:42,509 --> 00:05:46,749

Can you say something like this about your job and what you do?

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00:05:46,749 --> 00:05:53,319

Try to add details if you can.

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00:05:53,319 --> 00:05:56,810

Part four: saying how you feel about your job.

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00:05:56,810 --> 00:06:01,759

Now, you can hopefully say something about your job and where you work.

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00:06:01,759 --> 00:06:06,930



But here's another question: do you like  
your job?

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00:06:06,930 --> 00:06:08,668

Why or why not?

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00:06:08,668 --> 00:06:11,748

Hopefully, you enjoy your job!

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00:06:11,749 --> 00:06:14,210

How could you describe a job which you like?

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00:06:14,209 --> 00:06:21,728

Of course, you could use general adjectives  
like 'good' or 'interesting', but here are

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00:06:21,728 --> 00:06:27,269

some specific adjectives you could use:

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00:06:27,269 --> 00:06:33,288

Stimulating :something which is stimulating  
is exciting and gives you energy.

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00:06:33,288 --> 00:06:39,449

Satisfying: means that your job gives you  
a sense of achievement.

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00:06:39,449 --> 00:06:44,960

Creative: you can use your imagination when  
you work.

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00:06:44,959 --> 00:06:50,288

Rewarding: this means your job gives you very  
positive feelings.

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00:06:50,288 --> 00:06:56,449

It's often used to talk about jobs in which  
you help other people.

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00:06:56,449 --> 00:07:01,669

For example, teachers or nurses might describe

their jobs as rewarding.

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00:07:01,668 --> 00:07:07,639

Challenging: challenging can be positive or negative, but if you use it to talk about

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00:07:07,639 --> 00:07:10,699

your job, it would have a positive meaning.

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00:07:10,699 --> 00:07:15,249

It means that your job is difficult, but in an interesting way which makes you think and

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00:07:15,249 --> 00:07:17,639

learn.

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00:07:17,639 --> 00:07:20,009

What if you don't like your job?

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00:07:20,009 --> 00:07:27,250

Again, you can use general words like 'boring'  
or 'difficult', which are fine but very basic.

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00:07:27,250 --> 00:07:31,459

If you want to be more creative with your  
vocabulary, here are some things you could

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00:07:31,459 --> 00:07:33,899

say:

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00:07:33,899 --> 00:07:40,628

Exhausting: describes work which makes you  
feel very tired, either physically or mentally.

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00:07:40,629 --> 00:07:48,899

Thankless: if your work is thankless, no one  
notices or appreciates what you do.

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00:07:48,899 --> 00:07:52,680

Mind-numbing: extremely boring.

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00:07:52,680 --> 00:07:56,929

Dead-end: describes a job which has no prospects for the future.

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00:07:56,928 --> 00:08:01,818

If you have a dead-end job, you will never get promoted and the job will always be the

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00:08:01,819 --> 00:08:03,639

same.

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00:08:03,639 --> 00:08:09,710

Soul-destroying: describes a job which is extremely unpleasant and boring, and which

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00:08:09,709 --> 00:08:14,089

you really, really hate.

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00:08:14,089 --> 00:08:16,668

Part five: how to make a longer answer.

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00:08:16,668 --> 00:08:24,368

At this point, you should be able to introduce your work, say where you work, give details

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00:08:24,369 --> 00:08:28,680

about what you do and say how you feel about your work.

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00:08:28,680 --> 00:08:33,629

Let's make some longer sample answers together.

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00:08:33,629 --> 00:08:35,229

First one:

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00:08:35,229 --> 00:08:37,490

"I'm a pharmacist.

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00:08:37,490 --> 00:08:42,719

I started my own small pharmacy, so I'm

also a business owner.

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00:08:42,719 --> 00:08:48,410

I have to work as a pharmacist, of course,  
giving advice to patients and making sure

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00:08:48,409 --> 00:08:50,509

they have the right medicine.

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00:08:50,509 --> 00:08:58,669

However, I'm also responsible for the pharmacy,  
so I have to manage my staff, do the accounts,

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00:08:58,669 --> 00:09:00,799

and so on.

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00:09:00,799 --> 00:09:06,129

It's stimulating work because I have to  
do many different things every day, so I never

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00:09:06,129 --> 00:09:08,000

get bored."

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00:09:08,000 --> 00:09:09,710

Clear?

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00:09:09,710 --> 00:09:11,860

Could you make an answer like this?

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00:09:11,860 --> 00:09:14,339

Let's do one more:

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00:09:14,339 --> 00:09:16,270

"I'm a writer.

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00:09:16,269 --> 00:09:19,610

I work in online education.

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00:09:19,610 --> 00:09:24,449

I work for a big publishing company, which



produces different educational materials that

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00:09:24,448 --> 00:09:27,559

are used all around the world.

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00:09:27,559 --> 00:09:33,639

I have to write lesson plans and materials  
for teachers to use in the classroom.

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00:09:33,639 --> 00:09:39,919

I spend most of my time thinking about how  
I can make different things fit together into

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00:09:39,919 --> 00:09:40,919

a lesson.

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00:09:40,919 --> 00:09:46,649

It's very challenging work and it can be  
exhausting, but it's also very creative

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00:09:46,649 --> 00:09:52,470

and satisfying, because I know people all around the world are using lessons which I

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00:09:52,470 --> 00:09:53,528

wrote."

149

00:09:53,528 --> 00:09:55,838

Okay, now it's your turn!

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00:09:55,839 --> 00:09:59,959

Try to make a longer answer like this talking about your job.

151

00:09:59,958 --> 00:10:04,179

Use the vocabulary and structure from this lesson to help you.

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00:10:04,179 --> 00:10:08,299

If you want, you can post your answer in the video comments on YouTube.

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00:10:08,299 --> 00:10:12,448

We'll give you some feedback on your answer.

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00:10:12,448 --> 00:10:16,208

That's the end of the lesson.

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00:10:16,208 --> 00:10:20,419

I hope you learned some new ways to talk about  
your job and what you do.

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00:10:20,419 --> 00:10:22,990

Thanks very much for watching.

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00:10:22,990 --> 00:10:23,749

See you next time!