

Neckties

Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Do most businessmen in your country wear neckties?
2. Is the bow tie popular in your country?
3. Do you know where the custom of wearing neckties originated?
4. When do you think men first started wearing neckties?
5. Have you ever seen a woman wearing a necktie?



B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.

Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- | | | | | |
|-----|----|-----------|----|--|
| ___ | 1. | impressed | a) | a formal black-and-white men's suit |
| ___ | 2. | import | b) | deeply affected by something in a positive way |
| ___ | 3. | lace | c) | to bring in from another country |
| ___ | 4. | military | d) | overly decorative |
| ___ | 5. | fussy | e) | army |
| ___ | 6. | afford | f) | to be able to pay for |
| ___ | 7. | tuxedo | g) | a wide variety (usually of colors) |
| ___ | 8. | rainbow | h) | ornamental fabric made of threads |

Reading

1. A necktie is a piece of cloth that is worn around the neck, usually by a man.
2. The modern necktie developed from the colorful scarves that soldiers in Croatia wore in the 1600s. When some Croatian soldiers were sent to France to fight in the Thirty Years War, the French were very **impressed** with the soldiers' neck scarves. King Louis XIV of France liked them so much that he started wearing one. Soon gentlemen all over France and the rest of Europe were wearing neck scarves.
3. King Charles of England was living in France at this time, and when he returned to England in 1660, he introduced the neck scarf to Englishmen. Beginning in the late 1600s and throughout the 1700s, scarves were made out of fine **lace imported** from Belgium and Italy. Fashionable men in Europe and the United States wore lace at their necks whether they were **military** leaders or gentlemen.
4. In the 1800s, leaders of men's fashion decided that lace was too **fussy** and men began to wear a simple, white neck cloth instead. Even poor men could **afford** this fashion.
5. Since then, the neck scarf has gone through several changes. An American developed the shape of the modern necktie and the English were among the first to use color and patterns in their ties. Bow ties were created to be worn with **tuxedos** for formal wear.
6. Ties are now made in a **rainbow** of colors and patterns from many different types of material. Business suits and ties are worn by businessmen all over the world.
7. Women have worn ties in the past. They wore them during World War I when they worked in businesses and factories while men were off fighting. Today, not many women wear ties, but almost 80% of the ties sold in the United States are bought by women for men.

"A well-tied tie is the first serious step in life."

—Oscar Wilde, poet

Comprehension

A. True or False?

Read the statements below.

If the statement is true, write T beside the sentence.

If it is false, write F and correct the information.

- _____ 1. The modern necktie developed from a 17th-century Croatian custom.
- _____ 2. The French started to copy the style of the Croatian soldiers.
- _____ 3. In the 1700s, most fashionable European men wore lace scarves.
- _____ 4. In the 1800s, only rich men wore neck scarves.
- _____ 5. Nowadays, in the US, women buy more ties than men.

B. Ask and Answer

Practice asking and answering the following questions with your partner. Then write your answers in complete sentences in your notebook.

- 1. How did men's neck scarves become popular in France?
- 2. Who introduced the neck scarf to England?
- 3. Who wore neck scarves in the 1700s?
- 4. What were neck scarves made out of at this time?
- 5. How did men's neck scarves change in the 1800s, and why did this happen?
- 6. How has the neck scarf changed since the 1800s?
- 7. When did women wear neckties?

Vocabulary Review

A. Matching

Match the type of clothing with a common material used to make it.

There may be more than one correct answer.

- | | |
|------------------|------------|
| _____ 1. sweater | a) leather |
| _____ 2. shirt | b) lace |
| _____ 3. scarf | c) wool |
| _____ 4. shoes | d) denim |
| _____ 5. jeans | e) silk |
| _____ 6. collar | f) cotton |

Vocabulary Review cont.

B. Choose the Correct Word

Choose the word or phrase with the closest meaning to the underlined word or phrase in the following sentences.

1. The French were very impressed with the Croatian soldiers' neck scarves.
 - a) angry at
 - b) influenced by
 - c) laughed at
2. In the 1700s, scarves were made out of fine lace imported from Belgium.
 - a) sold in another country
 - b) made in another country
 - c) brought into the country
3. Fashionable men wore lace scarves whether they were military leaders or gentlemen.
 - a) army
 - b) political
 - c) presidents
4. In the 1800s, leaders of men's fashion decided that lace was too fussy.
 - a) fancy
 - b) plain
 - c) expensive
5. Even poor men could afford this fashion.
 - a) copy from rich men
 - b) wear every day
 - c) have enough money to pay for
6. Bow ties were created to be worn with tuxedos for formal wear.
 - a) business suits
 - b) casual suits
 - c) fancy suits
7. Ties are now made in a rainbow of colors and patterns.
 - a) cool
 - b) large variety
 - c) half circle
8. Her scarf was made of lace.
 - a) ornamental thread
 - b) fussy
 - c) pretty yarn

Discussion

1. Do you think men should be required to wear a necktie if they work in an office? Are male teachers required to wear ties in schools in your country?
2. How do fashion trends develop? Do you like to follow current fashion trends?
3. Why do you think that almost 80% of ties sold in the US are bought by women?
4. Have you ever been to a restaurant that requires men to wear ties or dress jackets? What do you think of this policy?
5. Do you think it is a good idea for children to have to wear uniforms to school? Explain your answer.