

Introduction

This support pack contains the following materials:

- a pre-reading vocabulary activity;
- the story that you can listen to;
- a comprehension activity based on the story;
- an activity in which you correct grammatical mistakes involving comparative and superlative adjectives.

Before you read.

Match the words in the left-hand column with the words in the right-hand column.

boring	a letter
local	a phone call
make	collection
stamp	job
world	newspaper
write	record

Now look at the answers. How do these things make a story? Read and find out.

Read the story

The Interesting Most Boring Man in the World
by Chris Rose



People often said that Thierry Boyle was the most boring man in the world. Thierry didn't know why people thought he was so boring. Thierry thought he was quite interesting. After all, he collected stamps. What could be more interesting than stamps? It was true that he didn't have any other hobbies or interests, but that didn't matter for Thierry. He had his job, after all. He had a very interesting job. At least Thierry thought it was

interesting. Everybody else said that his job was boring. But he was an accountant! Why do people think that accountants are boring? thought Thierry. Thierry thought his job was fascinating. Everyday, he went to his office, switched on his computer and spent seven and a half hours looking at spreadsheets, and moving numbers around on them. What could be more interesting than that?

But Thierry was unhappy. He was unhappy because people thought he was boring. He didn't want to be boring. He wanted people to think that he was a very interesting person. He tried to talk to people about his stamp collection. But every time he talked about his stamp collection he saw that people were bored. Because people were bored when he talked about his stamp collection, he talked about his job instead. He thought people would be very interested when he talked about his job, but no. People thought his job was even more boring than his stamp collection.

Sometimes, people even went to sleep when he talked to them.

Thierry thought about how to make himself more interesting. He decided that he needed to be famous for something. He thought about his stamp collection, and decided that perhaps his stamp collection could make him famous. Perhaps he had the biggest stamp collection in the world, or perhaps he had a very valuable stamp. Yes, this was it, he decided.

He wrote a letter to a local newspaper, and asked them if they wanted to come and write an article about a local man with the biggest stamp collection in the world. The local newspaper wrote a letter back to Thierry telling him that actually the Queen of England had the biggest stamp collection in the world. Thierry was very sad to learn this, but wrote back to the newspaper telling them that he thought he had the most valuable stamp in the world. The newspaper wrote back to him telling him that the most valuable stamp in the world cost 2, 240, 000 dollars, and asking him if he was sure that he had it. Thierry wasn't sure that he had it. In fact, he was sure that he didn't have it. Perhaps his whole collection was very valuable though... "Is it worth 10 million dollars?" asked the man from the newspaper on the telephone when Thierry called him. "Erm, no, I don't think so..." "Forget it then" said the man from the newspaper.

Thierry thought about other things to make himself famous. Perhaps he could be the best accountant in the world! Yes, this was it, he decided. He told a friend that he was the best accountant in the world. "How do you know?" asked his friend. "Well" thought Thierry, "I have a good job, I like it...it's very interesting ...spreadsheets...numbers...taxes...finance..." He saw his friend going to sleep. "Hmmm" he thought. "Perhaps I'm not the best or the most interesting accountant in the world."

"Listen Thierry" said his friend when he woke up again. "Perhaps you don't have the biggest or the most valuable stamp collection in the world. Perhaps you aren't the best or the most interesting accountant in the world. But there is one thing – Thierry, you are probably the most boring man in the world."

Yes! Of course! This was it. Thierry could be famous because he was the most boring man in the world. Now he saw that his friends were right. He phoned the newspaper again. "Hello!" he said. "Would you like to do an interview with the most boring man in the world?" "The most boring man in the world...?" said the man from the newspaper. "Now that's interesting!"

Next week there was a big article in the newspaper. "The Most Boring Man in the World!" There was a picture of Thierry in his office. There was a picture of Thierry with his stamp collection. There was an interview with Thierry, and interviews with his friends. His friends said they went to sleep when Thierry talked about his job or his stamp collection.

The next day the BBC and CNN called Thierry. They wanted stories about the most boring man in the world. "The most boring man in the world!" they said. "That's so interesting!"

And so, finally, Thierry Boyle, became the official Most Boring Man in the World. You won't find his name in the Guinness Book of Records, because they said that it was impossible to decide exactly how boring somebody is, but it was no problem for Thierry. Now he was famous, now he was so boring that he was interesting.

After reading**Exercise 2**

Decide if each of the following statements about the story is True or False.

1. Thierry Boyle thinks he is the most boring man in the world.
2. Thierry has a stamp collection.
3. Thierry has lots of hobbies.
4. Thierry thinks stamps are boring.
5. Thierry loves his job.
6. Thierry is an accountant.
7. Other people think accountants are boring.
8. Thierry wants to be famous.
9. Thierry has the biggest stamp collection in the world
10. Thierry doesn't have the most valuable stamp in the world.
11. People think Thierry is the best accountant in the world.
12. Thierry becomes the official most boring man in the world.
13. Thierry is so boring that he becomes interesting.

Exercise 3

Decide if the sentences below are grammatically correct or incorrect. Can you correct the mistakes?

1. The valuablest stamp in the world is worth more than two million dollars.
2. There was a bigger article about Thierry in the local newspaper.
3. Thierry thought nothing was more interesting than stamps.
4. Thierry was the most best accountant.
5. Thierry wanted to be the more famous accountant in the world.
6. Thierry was the most boring man in the world.

Answers

Exercise 1: boring job; local newspaper; make a phone call; stamp collection; word record; write a letter

Exercise 2: 1. False (F); 2. True (T); 3. F; 4. F; 5. T; 6. T; 7. T; 8. T; 9. F; 10. T; 11. F; 12. F; 13. T

Exercise 3:

1. The **most valuable** stamp in the world is worth more than two million dollars.
2. There was a **big** article about Thierry in the local newspaper.
3. CORRECT
4. Thierry was the **best** accountant.
5. Thierry wanted to be the **most famous** accountant in the world.
6. CORRECT