

Fat and disruptive passengers on aeroplanes

Today, let's talk about fat and disruptive people on aeroplanes. It's a good topic to talk about, as most of us have to suffer sitting next to one of these or similar when travelling on an aeroplane. I will just add I do not wish to be discriminatory to anyone in particular whilst writing this article. However, in the last few weeks various news stories continue to be written that cover these two categories, so it makes a good talking point today!

Sitting next to a fat person on an aeroplane is not funny. Not for me, not for you and not for them. Now I read that Airbus is to give obese passengers an extra two inches (5cm) as complaints soar from fellow passengers. Aisle seats will increase to 20 inches wide, but economy class seats will reduce by one inch. Aeroplanes are thinking of charging for the premium seat. Airbus is estimating that a £6.50 fee will generate an estimated £2m over 15 years for each aircraft. That could help offset the extra fuel cost required to carry overweight passengers. Will my narrower seat be reduced in price?

Airbus has come up with the new design in response to requests from airlines who say travellers expanding sizes has become a major headache. The most frequent complaint is from passengers forced to sit next to an overweight person who is encroaching their space. A recent survey found that half of British flyers said overweight travellers should pay more for their ticket. Budget airline Ryanair even mooted such a "fat tax", to cover the extra cost of transporting obese people.

The other issue is; should disruptive kids be thrown off the aeroplane if they fail to quieten down before take-off or fail to fasten their seat belts? Airlines have a duty to protect fellow passengers and if their safety is in question then maybe this is a good thing. Frankly, I think parents should control their kids on planes. If that means a clip round the ear then I am all for it. In my opinion the pilot is quite right to remove them.

Likewise, if an adult passenger is disruptive they too should be removed from the plane. Of course, if the plane is mid-flight then some sort of restriction by the crew and other passengers might be necessary, so that the plane can land safely and not crash.

Category: Aeroplanes / Fat Passengers / Disruptive Passengers
Level: Intermediate / Upper Intermediate

EXERCISES

1. Fat and disruptive passengers on aeroplanes: Have you ever sat next to a fat or disruptive passenger on an aeroplane. Go round the room swapping details with others.

2. Dictation: The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self-correct your work from page one - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - you need to do some work!

3. Reading: The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

4. Vocabulary: Students should now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

5. The article: Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?

6. Fat and disruptive passengers on aeroplanes: In pairs think of five solutions for fat passengers on aeroplanes. Then add five solutions to combating disruptive passengers on aeroplanes. Write them below. Discuss together.

Fat passengers - solutions	Disruptive passengers - solutions
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

7. Let's roleplay 1: In pairs/groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the *Debate FM* radio studio. Today's interview is about: *Fat and disruptive passengers on aeroplanes*.

1	A fat person who has had challenges on an aeroplane
2	A parent of a disruptive child who was removed from an aeroplane
3	Someone who has seen air rage by a disruptive person
4	An airline pilot

The teacher will choose some pairs to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

8. Let's draw an aeroplane: On the board as a class draw a picture of the outside of an aeroplane. Next to it draw another of the inside of it. Label them!

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9. **Let's roleplay 2:** You are on a plane that is about to take off. One of you is with a disruptive child. The other is an airline hostess/steward who asks the parent of the child to get it to settle down otherwise they will be removed. *5-minutes.*

10. **Let's do 'The Article Quiz':** Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A

- 1) Name the airline
- 2) Name the aircraft builder.
- 3) What is an obese passenger?
- 4) What is a fat passenger?
- 5) Who mooted a "Fat tax"?

Student B

- 1) What does the author think about disruptive kids on planes?
- 2) How much will a premium seat be?
- 3) Aisle seats will increase by how many inches?
- 4) Inside seats will reduce by how many inches?
- 5) If a person is disruptive in flight what might happen?

11. **Airlines:** In pairs think of three things you like about aeroplanes then add three things you don't like about them. Write them below. Discuss together.

What you like	What you dislike
1	1
2	2
3	3

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

12. **Favourite and non-favourite airlines:** In pairs think of three airlines you like then add three you don't. Write them below. Discuss together.

Airlines you like	Airlines you dislike
1	1
2	2
3	3

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

13. **Presentation:** Prepare in class or at home a two minute presentation on: ***Fat and disruptive passengers on aeroplanes.*** Present it to the class.

14. **Let's write an e-mail:** Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about: ***Fat and disruptive passengers on aeroplanes.***

15. **Sentence starters:** Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- a) Fat passengers _____
- b) Disruptive air passengers _____
- c) Pilots should _____

DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) Surely fat passengers should be treated the same as any other air passenger when on board a flight?
- 3) Will my seat on a plane be cheaper if it is one inch narrower?
- 4) Is the extra width on the aisle seat justified? Explain.
- 5) Should really fat air passengers pay for two seats?
- 6) If a "fat tax" was introduced would it encourage passengers to go on a diet?
- 7) Should a "fat tax" be introduced in other areas?
- 8) Will Ryanair introduce a "fat tax"?
- 9) What advice would you offer the airlines over fat passengers?
- 10) Should a child be given 'a clip round the ear' to get the child to shut up if they are being disruptive before a plane takes off?

Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you've read?
- 2) Have you learnt anything in today's English lesson?
- 3) Have you ever encountered any disruptive children on an aeroplane? Explain.
- 4) What is the worst aeroplane journey you've undertaken? Why?
- 5) Have you ever encountered air rage where someone got mad and bad?
- 6) Have you ever seen a passenger removed from a plane? Explain.
- 7) Should fat people pay a "fat tax"? Explain!
- 8) Why should ordinary passengers "suffer" when a really fat person sits next to them?
- 9) Should fat passengers pay extra as it costs more in fuel to transport them?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

SPEAKING

Let's discuss! Fat and disruptive passengers on aeroplanes

Allow 10 minutes – As a class / small groups / pairs / 1 to 1

10 things about fat passengers on aeroplanes and 10 things about disruptive passengers on aeroplanes
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The teacher can moderate the session.

GAP FILL: READING:

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Fat and disruptive passengers on aeroplanes

Today, let's talk about (1)_____ and (2)_____ people on aeroplanes. It's a good topic to talk about, as most of us have to suffer sitting next to one of these or similar when travelling on an (3)_____. I will just add I do not wish to be discriminatory to anyone in particular whilst writing this article. However, in the last few weeks various news stories continue to be written that cover these two categories, so it makes a good talking point today!

Sitting next to a fat person on an aeroplane is not funny. Not for me, not for you and not for them. Now I read that Airbus is to give obese passengers an extra two inches (5cm) as complaints (4)_____ from fellow passengers. (5)_____ seats will increase to 20 inches wide, but economy class seats will reduce by one inch. Aeroplanes are thinking of charging for the premium seat. Airbus is estimating that a £6.50 fee will generate an estimated £2m over 15 years for each (6)_____. That could help offset the extra fuel cost required to carry (8)_____ passengers. Will my (7)_____ seat be reduced in price?

Airbus has come up with the new design in response to requests from airlines who say travellers expanding sizes has become a (1)_____ headache. The most (2)_____ complaint is from (3)_____ forced to sit next to an overweight person who is encroaching their (4)_____. A recent survey found that half of British flyers said overweight travellers should pay more for their ticket. Budget airline Ryanair even mooted such a "fat tax", to cover the extra cost of transporting (5)_____ people.

The other issue is; should disruptive kids be thrown off the aeroplane if they fail to quieten down before take-off or fail to fasten their seat belts? Airlines have a (6)_____ to protect fellow passengers and if their safety is in question then maybe this is a good thing. Frankly, I think parents should control their (7)_____ on planes. If that means a clip round the ear then I am all for it. In my opinion the (8)_____ is quite right to remove them.

aeroplane

aisle

aircraft

soar

disruptive

narrower

overweight

fat

frequent

passengers

space

obese

major

pilot

kids

duty

GAP FILL: LISTENING: edited

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Fat and disruptive passengers on aeroplanes

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Sitting next to a fat person on an aeroplane is not funny. Not for me, _____ for them. Now I read that Airbus is to give obese passengers an extra two inches (5cm) as complaints soar from fellow passengers. Aisle seats will increase to 20 inches wide, but economy class seats will _____. Aeroplanes are thinking of charging for the premium seat. Airbus is estimating that a £6.50 fee will generate an estimated £2m over 15 years for each aircraft. That could help offset the extra fuel cost required to carry overweight passengers. Will my narrower seat _____?

Airbus has come up with the new design in _____ response to requests from airlines who say travellers expanding sizes has become a major headache. The most frequent complaint is from passengers _____ to an overweight person who is encroaching their space. A recent survey found that half of British flyers said overweight travellers should pay more for their ticket. Budget airline Ryanair even mooted such a "fat tax", to cover the extra cost of _____.

The other issue is; should disruptive kids be thrown off the aeroplane if they fail to quieten down before take-off or fail to fasten _____? Airlines have a duty to protect fellow passengers and if their safety is in question then maybe this is a good thing. Frankly, I think parents _____ kids on planes. If that means a clip round the ear then I am all for it. In my opinion the pilot is quite _____.

GRAMMAR

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

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Airbus has come up with the new design (1)___ response to requests from airlines who say travellers expanding sizes has become a major headache. The most frequent complaint is from passengers forced to sit next to (2)___ overweight person who is encroaching their space. A recent survey found that half of British flyers said overweight travellers should pay more for their ticket. Budget airline Ryanair even mooted such a "fat tax", (3)___ cover the extra cost of transporting obese people.

The other issue is; should disruptive kids be thrown off the aeroplane if they fail to quieten down before take-off (4)___ fail to fasten their seat belts? Airlines have a duty to protect fellow passengers and if their safety is in question then maybe this is a good thing. Frankly, (5)___ think parents should control their kids (6)___ planes. (7)___ that means a clip round the ear then I am all for it. In (8)___ opinion the pilot is quite right to remove them.

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SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings:

Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20

1	continue	11	headache
2	disruptive	12	major
3	fat	13	passengers
4	obese	14	categories
5	soar	15	aeroplanes
6	aisle	16	discriminatory
7	premium	17	particular
8	overweight	18	whilst
9	travellers	19	likewise
10	encroaching	20	necessary

LINKS

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2160322/Chub-class-Airbus-makes-wider-airline-seat-fat-flyers-extra-inches--slimmer-travellers-lose-space.html>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/travelnews/9009842/Fat-airline-passengers-should-pay-more.html>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2141297/Fat-passengers-blast-seat-belts-Scientists-warn-aircraft-safety-failing-American-bellies.html>

<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/disruptive-passengers-force-plane-to-return-midair/731124/>

<http://www.bellaonline.com/articles/art172684.asp>

http://www.wpri.com/dpp/rhode_show/the-buzz-family-kicked-off-flight

<http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/lifestyle/2012/03/toddler-kicked-off-plane-not-the-first/>

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