



The Zippo Lighter (B2 - Upper Intermediate)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. Does anyone in your family or circle of friends smoke cigarettes or cigars?
2. If so, how do they light them? With matches or a cigarette lighter?
3. What else do people use cigarette lighters for?

B – Listen and answer

Read these incomplete statements. Then listen (without reading) and fill in the blanks.

1. George G. Blaisdell worked for the family _____ company in Bradford, Pennsylvania.
2. He had the idea for a new cigarette lighter in _____.
3. He founded the Zippo Manufacturing Company during the _____.
4. The first Zippos cost _____ each.
5. The company slogan was: "It _____ we fix it free."
6. Since starting production, the company has produced over _____ lighters.

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. What does the article say about the design style of the Zippo lighter?
2. What defects did earlier cigarette lighters have?
3. What inspired Blaisdell to design a better lighter?
4. What features made his lighter better than previous ones?
5. When were the first Zippo lighters sold?
6. What changes did Blaisdell make to the casing in the 1940s?
7. Why have some of the lighters used during the Vietnam War become collectors' items?
8. Why has the Zippo lighter been used on music and film tracks?

D – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense.)

1. The average rent has risen _____ in England over the past few years to £1,348 per month.
2. If you're not satisfied with your mobile phone network, you can easily _____ to another one.
3. _____ is a golden metal used to make musical instruments like the trumpet and saxophone.
4. Remember to put the _____ back on the biscuit tin, otherwise the biscuits will go soft.
5. The repair shop said it would cost too much to _____ our TV, so we bought a new one.
6. Tom _____ the spider off the chair with his hand and watched it run across the floor.

E – Ready for the B2 FIRST Certificate in English? (Reading and Use of English, Part 2)

Read the text and think of the word which best fits each gap. Use only one word for each gap.

During the Golden Age of Hollywood movies, from the 1920s to the 1960s, characters who smoked were often ¹_____ as cool and sophisticated and their cigarette lighters were part of this aura. As ²_____ as an attractive lady reached inside her handbag ³_____ her cigarette case, a gallant stranger would be ready with his cigarette lighter to ⁴_____ it for her. Offering a cigarette to a new acquaintance was a ⁵_____ of breaking the ice. Rarely ⁶_____ screen characters seen without a cigarette in their hands. This was partly ⁷_____ to the fact that tobacco companies paid large sums of money to film companies to make ⁸_____ that their products were highly visible.

F – Write about it

Write about your favourite gadget or useful piece of equipment. Mention:

- what it's used for;
 - whether it has any special features;
 - what it's made of;
 - where it was made;
 - where/when/how you got it;
 - why it's your favourite.
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Answers: The Zippo Lighter (B2 - Upper Intermediate)

B – Listen and answer

1. machinery 2. 1932 3. Great Depression 4. \$1.95 5. works or 6. six hundred million

C – Read and answer

1. It says it's an art deco design classic. 2. They were unreliable and difficult to use even with two hands. 3. He observed a friend struggle to light a cigarette. 4. It could be operated with one hand. It also had an improved chimney and a lid that could be used as a wind shield, so the flame burnt steadily whatever the weather. 5. In 1933. 6. The casing was made of steel instead of brass and had a black crackle finish. 7. Because their owners personalised them with engraved slogans and stuck-on icons. 8. Because it has a unique click when it's opened, ignited and closed.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. steadily 2. switch 3. brass 4. lid 5. fix 6. flicked

E – Ready for the B2 FIRST Certificate in English?

1. seen/regarded 2. soon 3. for 4. light 5. way/means/method 6. were 7. due 8. sure