

**“If the cuckoo don’t crow,
then you know there’s wind coming...”**

A 2 minute animation based on a recording from a local radio phone-in, featuring Doris from Melton, a cuckoo, a BBC telephone operator, Michael Fish, a Jack Russell Terrier called Biscuit and some good quality tea towels that came from Woolworths in 1975.

A delightful example of storytelling. Great listening material. Full transcript.
After, get students to retell the story!



ELT BUZZ

If The Cuckoo Don't Crow



On October 15th, 1987, renowned BBC weatherman, Michael Fish reported that a woman had phoned the BBC to ask if a hurricane was on its way. He reassured viewers that it wasn't.

IT WAS.

Who was this woman who could foresee meteorological events better than experts?



The answer was revealed years later on a local radio phone-in.

My mother Doris in Melton, she's 94 now ... she used to say "If the cuckoo don't crow then you know there's wind coming."

Now, she was listening most of the day, because she used to sit in the garden at all times of year as you do in Melton ... and she didn't hear a cuckoo crow, so she phoned the BBC about this and they said, "Don't be so daft!"

And of course, when Michael Fish come on the TV, he did say that a lady had phoned in and not to be so daft. Well, of course, that was my mother, Doris, from Melton and she is 94 now.

Now, we didn't bother, we didn't bother, not putting Biscuit, the Jack Russell (breed of dog), out that night. We thought, "we'll leave the little old thing indoors, just in case." But mother did leave her tea towels on the line. She had those tea-towels, mind, they come from Woolworths, in 1975, their good quality. She went out to get them in the morning, well sort of half way through the night when the wind wasn't gusting around the place. And of course, they'd gone by ... We'd lost the tea-towels. We'd lost the fence. We had a couple of trees come up and unbeknown to us, Biscuit the Jack Russell had come in while she was getting the tea-towels. And we'd come indoors, of course, we'd lost Biscuit and all.

– Oh, you lost the dog?

Oh no, that was found two days later in Ufford. It looked as if it had been in the Wizard of Oz. It lost an ear.

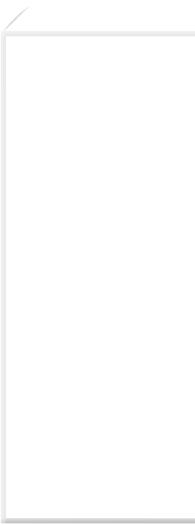
– An ear?!

Yes, it lost an ear. We never did find that.

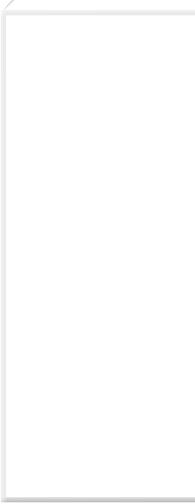
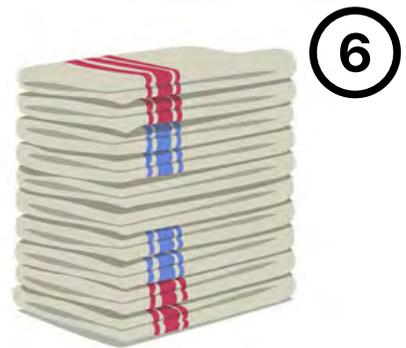
Discuss:

1. Have you ever been in a hurricane, a monsoon? What happened? How did you learn about it?
2. What sayings do you know about predicting the weather? Do people believe in them?
3. The man speaks with a strong accent. Where do you think he's from?
4. What kind of accents do you like in a person and find attractive?
5. What is an accent? How do we get an accent? Do you have one?

Retell the story by putting the images in order and telling the story.



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