

e-lesson

Week starting: 17th March 2008

1. Environmental crisis?

This week's lesson looks at differing views on the global environmental situation.

Level

Intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level B1 and above)

How to use the lesson

1. Brainstorm on the subject of the environment. Explain the meaning of 'crisis', then ask students what they think are the main environmental problems around the world. Introduce the terms 'optimistic' and 'pessimistic', and ask students which word they would apply to themselves with regard to the global environmental situation, and why.

2. Divide the students into pairs, then hand out Worksheet A. Give the students at least five minutes to do Exercise 1, in which they have to match the words in the table with the definitions and then fill in the gaps in the examples given. Encourage them to look up new vocabulary.

3. Check answers in open class.

Answers: 1. environment 2. atmosphere 3. deforestation 4. developed 5. developing
6. lifestyle 7. environmentally friendly 8. greenhouse gas 9. global warming
10. natural resources 11. recycle 12. standard of living

4. Keeping the students in their pairs, hand out Worksheet B and give the students five to ten minutes to read through the text, encouraging them to look up new vocabulary.

5. When the time is up, hand out copies of Worksheet C and give the students a few minutes to do Exercise 2, in which they have to answer true/false/doesn't say questions.

6. Check answers in open class.

Answers: 1. F 2. T 3. D 4. T 5. F 6. T

7. Finally, move on to Exercise 3, and give the students plenty of time to work together to discuss answers to the questions.

8. Check answers in open class.

Answers:

1. Louise is the most optimistic; Rob is the most pessimistic.
2. He means the developing countries are trying to achieve a standard of living that is closer to that of the developed countries.
3. He says the global population is too high, and the amount people consume is increasing.
4. He says the world is soon going to run out of natural resources, and that millions of people will soon leave certain areas because it will be impossible to live there.
5. Nuclear power and wind power.
6. He means the price in terms of natural resources and the pollution of the atmosphere.
7. Industry, planes, cars and deforestation.
8. She thinks they will change when they really begin to understand the effect their lifestyle has on the environment.
9. Because both countries have huge populations.
10. He means recycling, driving cars that pollute a bit less, or using fewer plastic bags.

On this topic there is a lot of potential for a class discussion, which perhaps you could begin by asking students to what extent they agree with the views expressed by the three characters.

2. Related websites

Send your students to these websites, or just take a look yourself.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/specials/climate_change/default.stm

A section of the BBC *Newsround* site devoted to climate change. Lots of material, accessible to intermediate level.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_6940000/newsid_6945300/6945361.stm

A *Newsround* article (2007) on the environmental protests against the planned expansion of London Heathrow airport. Intermediate level and above.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/7268960.stm>

A recent BBC article (February 2008) on an environmental issue that has been receiving a lot of media coverage: the overuse of plastic bags. The article looks at how different countries around the world are tackling the issue, and on the right-hand side of the page there are links to other pieces on the same subject. Intermediate level and above.