

1. Strange but true

This week's lesson is based on descriptions of four cases of unusual animal behaviour, three of which are true and one of which has been invented.

Level

Pre-intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level A2-B1 and above)

How to use the lesson

1. If any of your students have pets at home, ask them if their pet has ever behaved in a surprising or impressive way. If so, ask them to describe what happened to the rest of the class. Are your students aware of any other instances of surprising animal behaviour?

2. Divide your students into pairs, then hand out Worksheet A and give them five to ten minutes to read through it. Encourage them to look up new vocabulary. Can they identify which three cases of unusual behaviour are true and which one has been made up?

3. Check answers in open class, and encourage your students to explain what factors influenced their choices.

Answers: The true cases are 1, 2 and 3; the story of the baseball-loving cat (4) has been invented.

4. Keeping your students in their pairs, hand out Worksheet B and ask them to complete the crossword.

5. Check answers in open class.

6. Ask the students to put away Worksheets A and B or to temporarily hand them back to you. Then, keeping the students in pairs, hand out Worksheet C, which contains most of the text from Worksheet A, and give them another ten minutes for the gap-fill exercise in which they have to complete the missing words. If the students cannot remember what the words are, encourage them to try to work them out from the context of the sentence. You might also want to point out that some of the words feature in the glossary (or, to make it more difficult, you could ask the students not to use their glossaries).

7. Check answers in open class.

Answers:

Exercise 1

1. with 2. litter 3. friendship 4. rescued 5. yellow 6. female 7. confused
8. mother 9. behave 10. turn

If the sentences have been completed correctly, *wise old man* will read from top to bottom.

Exercise 2

1. farmer 2. allowed 3. jumped 4. budge 5. take over 6. agreement
7. hippopotamus 8. tsunami 9. giant 10. ignored 11. different 12. home
13. white 14. zookeepers 15. avoided 16. contained 17. for 18. solve
19. nasty 20. shock

2. Related Websites

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

http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_4810000/newsid_4817600/4817670.stm

An article from BBC Newsround on the friendship between Owen the hippopotamus and Mzee the giant tortoise. Accessible to pre-intermediate level.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/london/8106690.stm>

A short article from BBC News on the two flamingo chicks at London zoo that had a peculiar – and inconvenient – aversion to the colour pink. Challenging for pre-intermediate level.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1255187/Ruling-roost-Hen-thinks-dog-adopts-litter-puppies.html>

The story of Mabel, the hen who adopted a litter of puppies, from the *Daily Mail*, with great photos. Intermediate level and above.

<http://owenandmzee.com/omweb/>

The Owen and Mzee website with information and photos. Challenging for pre-intermediate level and above.