

1. Countries challenge!

This week's lesson again comprises exercises based on information about various different countries.

Level

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

How to use the lesson

1. Ask your students to describe any foreign countries they have visited, and/or to say what countries they would like to visit in future. If they were able to have, say, a six-month, all-expenses-paid trip around the world, where would they go, what would they like to do, and why?
2. Divide the students into pairs and hand out Worksheet A. Give the students at least five minutes to read the information and, through discussion with their partners, try to match countries in the box to the twelve descriptions. Make sure the students understand that four of the sixteen countries in the box are not described. (As a preliminary exercise you could perhaps fold the worksheets so that the box at the bottom is hidden, and see if the students know any of the countries that are being described before unfolding the paper and seeing the names of the possible countries.)
3. Check answers in open class. (When going through the answers you could also provide a little extra information so as to aid the students' understanding of how the countries match the descriptions – see below.)
4. Keeping the students in their pairs, hand out Worksheet B and ask the students to complete the crossword, which is based on the correct answers to Exercise 1.
5. Check answers in open class.
6. Ask the students to turn over their copies of Worksheet A or to hand them back to you temporarily. Keeping them in their pairs, hand out Worksheet C and give them at least another five minutes to find and correct the mistakes. Each description contains two mistakes. Point out that the mistakes are all grammatical or lexical, that most corrections only require the students to change a word, and that no correction requires them to write more than one additional word.
7. Check answers in open class.

Answers:

Exercise 1

1. Ireland (The island the text refers to is divided between Ireland, which is an independent country, and Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom.)
2. Chile
3. Bhutan (It is situated in the Himalayas, between the two huge countries of India and China.)
4. Japan (The capital is Tokyo.)
5. Uruguay (Its national football team won the first ever World Cup competition, in 1930, and won it again in 1950. Its Portuguese-speaking neighbour is Brazil.)
6. Austria (Mozart was born in the city of Salzburg.)
7. Mexico (The country's Pacific coast is on its west side, the Caribbean coast on its east side.)
8. Uganda
9. Jordan (The remains of the Nabataean civilization at Petra are an example of a famous archaeological site in Jordan.)
10. Russia
11. Vietnam (Its official name is the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.)
12. Slovakia (The country came into being in January 1993 when Czechoslovakia split peacefully into two parts: the Czech Republic and Slovakia.)

Countries not described: Thailand, Iran, Poland, Nigeria

Exercise 2

1. Caribbean
 2. border
 3. huge
 4. west
 5. narrow
 6. split
 7. neighbour
 8. ninth
 9. Austrian
 10. skier
 11. unusual
 12. Middle
 13. remains
 14. green
- If the sentences have been completed correctly, *Argentina* and *Sudan* will read from top to bottom.

Exercise 3

1. Ireland **covers** most of an island that is close to the larger island of Great Britain. The **national** sports teams from this country usually wear green shirts.
2. This country has an unusual shape – more than 4,000 **kilometres long** but in most parts less than 200 kilometres **wide**. The colours on its flag are red, white and blue, and the language here is Spanish.
3. This is a small country **situated** between two huge ones. It is very **mountainous**, its religion is Buddhism, and its national sport is archery.
4. This Asian country consists **of** hundreds of islands, although most of the population live on only four of them. Its capital, whose name begins with 'T', is part of the world's most **populous** urban area.
5. Although it has a population of less than 4 million, this country has won the football World Cup twice. One of its neighbours has **Portuguese** as its national language.
6. The great **composer** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) **was born** in a city that is now part of this country. Some of the world's best skiers have also come from here.

7. From some of **its** many beaches you can swim in the Caribbean, from others you can swim in the Pacific. The Aztec people lived in a **region** that is now part of this country.
8. This country is **in** east Africa and its **official** language is English.
9. In this country in the **Middle** East you can find the remains of many ancient **civilizations**. Israel and Saudi Arabia are two of the countries it has borders with.
10. This is the world's biggest country, with a population of **around** 140 **million**.
11. This country in south-east Asia has **borders** with China, Cambodia and Laos. Its official name **includes** the words 'Socialist Republic'.
12. This country in central Europe used to **be** part of a larger country that peacefully **split** into two in 1993.

2. Related Websites

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

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/country_profiles/default.stm

The 'Country Profiles' section of the BBC website. Intermediate level and above.

<http://www.worldatlas.com/aatlas/world.htm>

One of numerous online world atlases. Generally intermediate level and above, but with some sections accessible to pre-intermediate level.

<http://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/>

The website of *National Geographic* magazine. Intermediate level and above.