

e-lesson

Week starting: October 12, 2009

1. Deforestation

The subject of this week's lesson is one of the world's most serious environmental problems: deforestation.

Level

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

How to use the lesson

1. Ask your students to come up with a list of environmental problems – the chances are that deforestation will be mentioned. Where is deforestation happening, in what ways is it bad for the environment, and what do the students think are its causes?
2. Divide the students into pairs and give them five to ten minutes to read the text on Worksheet A, encouraging them to look up new vocabulary. Tell them that in the next exercise they are going to fill in the blanks with appropriate words. You could suggest that they guess what the words might be.
3. When the time is up, hand out Worksheet B and give the students another five to ten minutes to fill in the blanks using the correct words from the box in Exercise 1. Make it clear that there is only one possible word to fill each blank, and that there are four extra words which should not be used.
4. Check answers in open class.
5. Keeping the students in their pairs, ask them to turn over their copies of Worksheet A, or to hand them back to you temporarily. Then ask them to attempt Exercise 2 on Worksheet C, which contains the text from Worksheet A but with twenty mistakes: their task is to identify and correct these mistakes. Point out that no line of text contains more than one mistake, that the mistakes are all grammatical or lexical, and that no correction requires them to write more than one additional word.
6. Check answers in open class. You could also hand out copies of Worksheet D, which contains the full text with the twenty corrections in bold.

Answers:

Exercise 1

1. attention
2. disagreement
3. species
4. consequence
5. fewer
6. deforestation
7. America
8. decreasing
9. protect
10. ago
11. food
12. deforested
13. away
14. place
15. slow

Words that should not be used: increasing, less, cut, part, facts

Exercise 2

See Worksheet D.

2. Related Websites

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

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/eye/deforestation>

The *National Geographic* website's four-part section on deforestation, including videos and worldwide "fast facts." Accessible to intermediate level.

<http://www.time.com/time/health/article/0,8599,1876647,00.html>

An article from *Time* (2009) discussing the upcoming Copenhagen climate change conference, and whether the USA will be prepared for it in time. Accessible to intermediate level.

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/22/science/earth/22degrees.html?_r=1

A *New York Times* article (2009) about environmentalists offering Brazilian farmers cash incentives to slow down deforestation. Includes a slide show and a video. Challenging for intermediate level.