

e-lesson

Week starting: September 6, 2010

1. Space stories

This week's lesson is based on four recent stories related to space, or space exploration. Three of the stories are true, and one has been invented.

Level

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

How to use the lesson

1. Ask your students what they know about the history of space exploration. Do they know when, for example, an astronaut first walked on the Moon? Do they know anything about any country's plans for future space exploration? Do your students think space exploration is worth the money that is spent on it? Ask them to justify their answers.
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 stories 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 stories are numbers 1, 2, and 4. The story of the missing flag (number 3) has been invented: the US astronauts who made landings on the Moon between 1969 and 1972 did indeed leave flags planted in the lunar surface, but none of them has ever disappeared. Nor could they ever blow away, as there is no wind on the Moon.)
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 turn over their copies of Worksheets A and B, and their glossaries. Keeping the students in their pairs, hand out Worksheet C, which contains most of the text from Worksheet A with ten incorrect words that the students have to identify and correct. The words containing the mistakes are all in bold, as are five other words that are correct. Point out that the mistakes are all grammatical or lexical, and that no correction requires them to write any additional words.
7. Check answers in open class.

Answers:

Exercise 1

1. shrinking 2. speed 3. priorities 4. collected 5. man 6. Mars 7. smaller 8. nuts 9. tested 10. surface 11. orbit 12. contracting 13. landing

If the sentences have been completed correctly, *Neil Armstrong* will read from top to bottom.

Exercise 2

2. priorities 4. orbit 5. announcement 6. shrinking 8. core 9. astronomy
10. blackness 12. off 14. per 15. nets

Words in bold that are correct: 1. provide 3. rockets 7. contraction 11. disused 13. missions

2. Related Websites

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

http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/LRO/news/shrinking-moon.html

An article on the NASA website about the moon's formation and shrinking, with accompanying pictures, illustrations, and video. Challenging for intermediate level.

<http://edition.cnn.com/2010/POLITICS/04/15/obama.space/index.html>

A CNN news article (April 2010) about President Obama's plans for the US space program, including a video clip of his speech on the subject. Challenging for intermediate level.

<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/big-idea/12/space-trash-quiz>

A fun and interesting *National Geographic* quiz on the trash orbiting the Earth and how likely it is to hit people, plus a related article on possible clean-up methods ("Big Idea: Clearing Space" at the top of the quiz). Accessible to intermediate level.