

1. To the bottom of the ocean

This week's lesson is about the journey film director James Cameron made in a one-man submarine to the Mariana Trench, the deepest point under any of the world's oceans, on 25th March.

Level

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

How to use the lesson

1. Ask your students if they have seen the films *Titanic* or *Avatar*, and if so, what they thought of them. Ask them if they know the name of the director of those films (James Cameron), and what very unusual journey he made in March. (Give clues if they don't know: he travelled downwards, by submarine, etc.) What would your students expect to find if they were able to explore the deepest parts of the world's oceans?
2. Give your students five to ten minutes to read through Worksheet A, encouraging them to look up new vocabulary. Tell them they are going to answer a series of questions on the text, but that they shouldn't write anything down at this stage.
3. Divide the students into pairs and hand out Worksheet B. Ask them to work together to complete the comprehension questions in Exercise 1 and the true / false / doesn't say questions in Exercise 2.
4. Check answers in open class.
5. Tell the students they will now need to remember as much as possible about the text on Worksheet A. Ask the students to put away Worksheet A, then, keeping them in pairs, hand out Worksheet C and ask them to do Exercise 3, a gap-fill in which they have complete the missing words from the text. If the students cannot remember what the words are, encourage them to try to work them out from the context of the sentence. To make it easier you could point out that some of the words feature in the glossary; to make it more difficult you could ask the students to put away their glossaries.
6. Check answers in open class.

Answers:

Exercise 1

1. (film) director
2. a submarine
3. the deepest place in any of the world's oceans
4. steel
5. so Cameron could film the ocean floor and any animals he saw
6. in the Pacific Ocean / close to the Mariana Islands
7. two
8. It sank.

Exercise 2

1. T 2. D 3. F 4. D 5. F 6. T 7. T 8. F 9. D 10. T

Exercise 3

1. being 2. journey 3. deepest 4. surface 5. made 6. blackness
7. documentary 8. highest 9. wreck 10. Atlantic 11. distance 12. depth

2. Related websites

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

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2012/03/120325-james-cameron-mariana-trench-challenger-deepest-returns-science-sub/>

From *National Geographic*, which awarded Cameron the title of 'explorer-in-residence', an article about Cameron's descent. Challenging for Pre-intermediate level.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/gallery/2012/mar/26/james-cameron-mariana-trench-solo>

A series of photos of Cameron's dive from *The Guardian*. Accessible to Pre-intermediate level.

<http://www.ceoe.udel.edu/extreme2004/geology/trieste.html>

An article with photos about the first journey to the Mariana Trench in 1960, from the University of Delaware (USA) website. Challenging for Pre-intermediate level.