Rice: Teacher’s notes
(Any realia you can bring into the class would be great!)

1. Read out the introduction and ask students in pairs to
   a. identify the five grains, and
   b. consider which food or drinks they produce.
   Some suggestions:
   - bread, semolina, pasta, couscous from wheat
   - cornflakes, popcorn from maize
   - porridge from oats
   - whisky from barley
   - spring rolls from rice

2. Then ask students to match rice dishes / drinks with their country of origin
   - paella with Spain
   - risotto with Italy
   - rice pudding with UK
   - biriani with Pakistan
   - sushi with Japan
   - rice crackers with Vietnam
   - sake with Japan
   - nasi goreng with Singapore

3. 2004 is the International Year of Rice. How much do your students know about
    the cereal? In small groups students consider
    - which countries grow rice
    - in which countries it is a staple food
    - which countries export rice
    - what it needs to grow successfully
    - how it is grown and harvested etc

4. Then students read the first reading to see if any of their questions have been
   answered. They read it again in more detail to put in the missing figures. This is
   quite difficult, they won’t know most of the answers (unless the students are
   Asian) but this is an educational exercise too!
   Go through the answers, what were they most surprised about?

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<td>50 million</td>
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Rice: Teachers' notes continued

5 Before the second reading ask students again to consider the content first. Explain there are eight stages from the rice seed to the cooked rice in a bowl; can they work out what these might be?

Students read the headings only first to see if they were correct. They then read the text and, working with a partner, decide the order of the paragraphs. Not so much emphasis on linking words but working out the process involved.

1 Sowing the seeds
2 Transplanting to the fields
3 Harvesting
4 Threshing
5 Drying the rice
6 Processing
7 Distribution and marketing
8 Preparation

Get students to work out meaning of unknown vocabulary through context
  - pounding
  - affluent
  - mechanical reaper
  - sickle
  - paddies etc

There is a picture on the first handout. Ask the students to identify which stage is being illustrated from the second reading. (Transplanting)

6 Homework: go through the recipe to make rice pudding. Students read (does it sound nice?) and then, if they want, make it at home and also write a rice recipe of their own for the other students.
1 Rice

A Chinese proverb says “the precious things are not pearls and jade but the five grains” of which rice is first. What are the five grains and what food or drink can be made from them?

Match the following rice dishes or drinks made from rice with their country of origin. Can you think of any other examples?

- paella        Italy
- risotto       Japan
- rice pudding  Pakistan
- biriani       Vietnam
- sushi         Singapore
- rice crackers Japan
- sake          Spain
- nasi goreng   UK

This year is International Year of Rice. So what do you know about one of the most popular staple foods in the world?

After the second reading identify which stage is shown in the picture below.

Homework: make a rice pudding!
And then bring in a recipe of your own for a rice dish that you can share with your classmates.

*tsp = teaspoon = 5 ml
*tbsp = tablespoon = 15 ml

Tasty rice pudding

Ingredients

290ml / ½ pt milk
1 tsp* ground cinnamon
1 vanilla pod, seeds scraped out
85g / 3oz rice
2 tbsp* soft brown sugar

Method

1. Place the milk, cinnamon, vanilla seeds and pod into a pan and bring to the boil.
2. Add the rice, reduce the heat and simmer for 12-15 minutes.
3. Stir the sugar into the pan and cook for a further two minutes.
4. Transfer the pudding to a serving dish and serve at once.
2 Rice first reading
Read the text below and put in the missing figures from the box.

Ten facts about rice

1 Rice is grown in many countries including Europe, Latin America and Australia. However, Asia is the biggest producer. More than _____1_____ percent of the world’s rice is grown and consumed in Asia, where people typically eat rice _____2_____ times a day.

2 Rice is a staple food for many countries. In parts of Africa and Asia many poorer urban families get all of their daily calories from rice. Asians ate about 300 million tons of rice in 2003. The average person in Myanmar (Burma) eats _____3_____ kg of rice annually. The average European eats _____4_____ kg.

3 _____5_____ of millions of the poor spend half to three fourths of their incomes on rice - and only rice.

4 To plough 1 hectare* of land in the traditional way, a farmer and his water buffalo must walk ______6____ km.

5 Rice needs a good water supply to grow. It takes _____7____ litres of water to produce 1 kg of irrigated rice.

6 More than _____8_____ varieties of cultivated rice (the grass family Oryza sativa) are thought to exist - but the exact number remains a mystery.

7 Three of the world’s four most populous nations are rice-based societies: People's Republic of China, India, and Indonesia. Together, they have nearly _____9_____ people - almost half of the world’s population.

8 Every year, _____10_____ people are added to Asia's soaring population of 3.5 billion.

9 Most rice is consumed in the country where it is produced. Only _____11_____ percent of the world’s total is exported. Thailand ships the most (about 5 million tons), the United States is second (nearly three million tons), and Vietnam third (with 2 million).

10 Asia is home to _____12_____ rice farms. Most are less than 1 hectare*.

* 100 hectares = 1 square kilometre

140,000
195
2.5 billion
250 million
3
5
5,000
50 million
80
90
hundreds
two or three
3 Rice second reading

Put the following paragraphs into their correct order. The first one has been done for you.

From field to feast: the journey of the grain

For some, rice is simply bought at the market, ready to take home and steam or boil. But have you ever wondered about the journey the grains of rice take before they reach your plate or bowl, or fork or chopsticks?

1. Distribution and marketing
   Grains for the local or international markets are placed in bags for shipping via water buffalo, cart, wagon, truck, boat, train, or any other form of transportation imaginable.

2. Drying the rice
   Drying is very important because if the moisture content is too high, the freshly harvested grains will spoil easily. In many countries, the grains are laid out to dry wherever space is available, from basketball courts to sections of major highways. Affluent farmers may put large quantities of grains into heated air dryers.

3. Harvesting
   When the mature plants are a golden yellow colour, the new grains are ready to harvest. Sometimes farmers use a mechanical reaper, but often they use only a sharp knife or sickle.

4. Preparation
   Rice grains are commonly boiled or steamed and eaten alone. But, because rice can be part of so many dishes, we will leave the rest of the story to your imagination!

5. Processing
   For eating at home, farmers separate the hulls from the grains through pounding. Commonly, this is done by placing the grains in a mortar in which they are pounded with a pestle. The hull debris (or chaff) is separated from the grains by winnowing (or tossing) the pounded mixture into the wind from a shallow basket. Rice grains in commercial mills are polished using a mechanical mill.

6. Sowing the seeds
   First, the seeds are sown. Sometimes, they are planted directly in the paddies, but often they are sown in nurseries where they spend their first 30 days sprouting into seedlings.

7. Threshing
   Threshing separates the grains from the stalks. This can be done with mechanical threshers or combines, but often the stalks are simply pounded against a hard surface. When threshing is done without machinery, the rice is tied into bundles and dried in the sun first.

8. Transplanting to the fields
   After about 30 days, the seedlings (young rice plants) are transplanted to the fields. Transplanting is exhausting, tiring work that requires standing in water and repeatedly bending over.