

## Bridges: Teachers' notes and tips – elementary

### 1 Pre-reading tasks

- a Ask each student to think about a bridge they know. Do they like it? How often do they cross it? Does it cross a river, a road or a railway line?

**Tip: link the reading to the student's own lives**

Surely all towns have bridges! Try to get a picture of a bridge near where you teach – it will make students more interested in the reading.

- b Hand out the tasks worksheet and ask students to match the adjectives with the nouns. There are several options which can be discussed but some are quite 'strong': busy road, wobbly tooth for example.

**Tip: raise awareness of collocations**

Collocations are essential to using English well so encourage students to think about them and notice them while reading.

- c Then get students, in pairs, to think about the logical order of the paragraphs. Don't help or give answers, encourage them to compare ideas and then put up the most popular suggestion on the board.

**Tip: help students to understand how a reading is organised**

Students should be encouraged to think about how a text and paragraphs are organised, it helps them with understanding and what they expect to read.

### 2 First reading tasks

- a Give each student a copy of the text and ask them to match the paragraphs with the short descriptions. As soon as they know which paragraph it is they move onto the next one.

**Tip: try and have a realistic task for the first quick reading**

It's almost impossible to get elementary students to read a text quickly, and perhaps it's a little unfair to bully them with a time. This activity can be done quickly; especially to see who can do it the quickest, and also allows students to get an overall gist of the text at the same time.

- b Open class feedback, compare with the boarded suggestion.

### 3 Second reading tasks

- a Look at the numbers and get students to identify the measurements (e.g. 4m is 4 metres) and a year.
- b Ask students to read the text again and decide which number goes in which gap, they then compare answers with their partner.

**Tip: consider different ways of checking comprehension**

Using numbers / figures is a good way of checking that students have understood what they have read. It also encourages students to think about the information in the text and ask questions: how many bridges are there in London – 32, 100, 2,000??!

- c Feedback: a 214, b 34, c 100, d 320m, e 4m, f 2,000, g 11m, h 20.
- d Students read for the third time to answer the true false questions.
- e Feedback: a T, b F, c T, d F, e F, f T. Make sure students understand the answers which are not always obvious in the text e.g. e is false because 'The other people stopped talking and looked at each other' which is what people do when they are afraid. 'The Wobbly Bridge' is a joke name.

**4 Post-reading tasks**

- a Students answer the last question in pairs or small groups. There is construction work going up everywhere it seems – do the students like the new buildings. Are they modern? Seen as progress?

**Tip: link the reading to a speaking activity**

Perhaps they can also imagine an interview for a newspaper. The journalist can write questions: *Why do you like bridges? What was the weather like? Who did you go with?* etc and then to have a role play.

**Tip: link the reading to a writing activity**

Students can also imagine they are the writer (or her friend Janice) crossing the Millennium Bridge and to write a diary entry. *Today was an exciting day. I met Janice and we...*