

## Pearls: Teacher's notes and tips – elementary

### 1 Pre-reading tasks

- a Give each student a copy of the worksheet and ask them to label the pictures in question 1. Students should compare their answers with each other.
- b Feedback: **a** pearl **b** shellfish **c** mother-of-pearl **d** mussels **e** beads **f** oysters
- c Do the students like eating shellfish? Have they eaten oysters?

**Tip: use realia**

If you have any shells or objects that are made with mother-of-pearl (or even some pearls – real or fake!) that will help to make the students more interested in the reading.

### 2 First reading tasks

- a Give each student a copy of the reading and ask them to read the whole text quite quickly and decide which ending in question 2 of the worksheet is correct.
- b Feedback: **b** Make sure students understand that *c* is not correct because this is not the reason why her father buys the earrings.

**Tip: provide first reading tasks that start with overall meaning**

Choosing the ending of a sentence about the text is a great reading for gist exercise and easy for teachers to prepare. Just make sure students have to read the whole text to do the task, and that each of the endings is logical.

### 3 Second reading tasks

- a Remind students that a synonym is a word with (almost) the same meaning e.g. That exam was very *hard / tough*. An antonym has the opposite meaning e.g. Well, I thought it was very *easy*.
- b Students read the text again to find the words described in question 3. (The paragraph number is given in brackets). Encourage them to help each other.
- c Feedback: **a** exhibition **b** nacre **c** no wonder **d** cultured **e** deliberately **f** freshwater **g** similar to **h** rough and smooth

**Tip: consider not pre-teaching vocabulary**

These words could have been given before the reading but finding the words in context is not only easier for the students it's more logical for them too. It also gives elementary students more confidence to read authentic texts where vocabulary is not explained beforehand of course.

### 4 Third reading tasks

- a Students then read the text again to make sentences. Do an example first. *Tina is with her father in a jeweller's shop can be linked to both it's quite easy to tell the difference between them and he's going to buy her some pearl earrings. These can be linked with so, and, but and because. Ask students to read the first paragraph only and tell you the correct answer.*

Tina is with her father in a jeweller's shop	<i>because</i>	he's going to buy her a pair of pearl earrings.
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- b Let students then work individually, they can compare answers and help each other once they've had a go on their own.

Tina doesn't know very much about pearls. [full stop]	<i>However,</i>	there is an exhibition with lots of information about them.
Natural pearls are very rare	<i>so</i>	they are very expensive.
Most pearls are cultured nowadays	<i>and</i>	most cultured pearls come from Japan.
Fake pearls and real pearls look very similar [no full stop]	<i>but</i>	it's quite easy to tell the difference between them.

**Tip: have a task ready for early finishers**

Suggest they make some more true sentences about the text using the same linking words.

**5 Post-reading tasks – research using the Internet**

- a Ask students when Tina's birthday is – presumably sometime in June.
- b Dictate the following questions:
1. Which month is your birthday?
  2. What is your birthstone?
  3. What colour is it?
  4. Where can it be found?
  5. What interesting facts can you tell me about it?
- c Then direct students to the website  
<http://www.jewelrycentral.com/BirthstonesChartInfo.html>  
This has both modern and ancient traditional birthstones, plus lots of other information about different gems. Students answer the questions about their birthstone. (There are other options for those born in June other than pearl)

**6 Post-reading tasks – speaking**

- a Put students in small groups to compare their information. Do they like their birthstone? Did they find the information interesting or dull? Did they want to buy any of the jewellery on the website?

**Tip: link the topic to the students' own lives**

Finding information and talking about something that is relevant to the students in some way will make the topic more interesting. Of course if you teach in a country where pearls are produced then use that as a follow on activity.