

Moonwalk: Teachers' notes and tips – elementary

1 Pre-reading tasks

- a Write on the board *We only go to the theatre once in a blue moon*. Ask students if they know, or can work out, what 'once in a blue moon' means?
- b Feedback: It means very rarely.
- c Tell the students (unless one of them knows!) that the expression comes from the idea that when there are two full moons in a month the second one is said to look slightly blue. They can check this out: there are two full moons in July 2007.

Tip: consider using a song linked to the reading theme

There are a number of moon songs, including *Walking on the Moon* by The Police, which you can play with a listening task as an additional lead in to the theme.

- d Tell the students the theme of the reading is the moon. Give each pair a copy of the *folded* worksheet and ask them to complete the sentence in part 1 and then tell their partner what they think of the moon. Make sure students don't open the sheet, they only look at the top part now.
- e Feedback: see what the general view is from the class. *Do they know when the next full or new moon is? Do they know which one has more days – a solar or a lunar calendar?* Don't worry about the answers – just see how much they know already (and this is a way to introduce the vocabulary through context).
- f Now get students to read the paragraph in part 2 of the worksheet. Get them brainstorming ideas but as soon as they run out of steam stop the activity.

Tip: give an example

You can either use the movement of the tides as an example of an event, and introduce the vocabulary of high and low tide, or elicit a different example from the students.

2 First reading tasks

- a For the reading you need to have one copy for each pair (but don't give this to them yet), plus another copy cut up as shown. The cut up copy should be stuck up around the classroom walls - this can be done before the lesson starts or while the students are thinking about question 2.
- b Make sure the students are in pairs: A and B. Ask students to open up their worksheets and read the questions in part 3. Then explain that the answers to all the questions are on the wall. They take it in turns, starting with all the A students, to run up, find an answer and tell student B who writes it down. Once half the questions are answered student B then goes up and finds the remaining answers.
- c The important point here is that the students only need to scan the cut up texts very quickly to find the answers, there is no need to read all the text – most of the answers are dates.
- d Feedback: answers from the students of course.

Tip: provide real scanning tasks

Using a reading race like this is one of the best ways to really get students to read quickly and only look for the relevant information. A further incentive to complete the task quickly is to say that the first pair to finish and get all the answers correct gets a piece of 'moon rock' that you have brought to the lesson with you (so remember to pick up a small stone on the way to work!)

3 Second reading tasks

- a Students now get a copy of the reading and, still working together, they answer the other questions in part four. These are not standard comprehension questions, they require the students to read a little more into the text and to use logic. The last three questions want the students' own opinions – there's no need to write any answers here, the students should just be speaking.
- b When students have finished get them to compare their answers, and again encourage more speaking for the last questions.

Tip: provide questions that go beyond the text

Comprehension questions can be demotivating and don't reflect real life. These questions help students to understand the text and encourage them to think for themselves. The answers to the last questions therefore will differ.

- c Feedback: **a** 4 (*Christmas, Songkran, Ramadan and Easter*) **b** No (*Songkran is now a fixed date on the solar calendar*) **c** *The Moon Festival and Easter* **d** *It's 11 days too short* **e** *1st or 2nd September* **f – h** *Students' own answers (the low tide may mean that, with the sea so far out, there are more things to see on the beach like crabs and rock pools, and more space to have a party?)*

4 Post-reading tasks – speaking and writing

- a The 1967 United Nations Outer Space Treaty says no government can own extraterrestrial property. However, Dennis M Hope decided that individuals therefore can. His company is called Lunar Embassy and he sells land on the moon and the other planets in the solar system for \$20 – this is true! Tell the students that their language school has bought a large piece of land and they want students to come up with ideas on what to do with it.
- b Put the students into small groups to brainstorm ideas – *do they want to build something (perhaps something that can be seen from Earth?), do they want to try and grow something in a special greenhouse, or perhaps use the moon's hydrogen as a source of fuel...* ideas don't have to be too realistic!
- c You can either continue this as a class activity – students prepare a short presentation on their idea to the rest of the class, or as an individual writing task. If so make sure that all the students have made notes.
- d As a follow up lesson students can read each other's ideas and decide which one is the best, funniest, craziest, most imaginative...

Tip: link the reading to other skills

Reading is not an isolated skill. Information in a reading can usually lead to interesting speaking and writing activities.

Tip: adapt the class to your students

Younger students may want to draw their ideas, or make a poster.