

I left my job in London to grow food. This deep connection with nature gives my life meaning

Level 3: Advanced – Teacher's notes

Article summary: The article describes how a woman working in the media became an organic food grower and found a new purpose in her connection with nature.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Vocabulary, Pronunciation

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- a. The purpose of this activity is to introduce the topic of growing food and connecting with nature to get students thinking about their own relationship to plants and nature. At this stage, you could check understanding of *earth*, *the land*, and *soil* as all being synonyms.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. The verbs *be* or *get* can also be used with *accustomed to*. Note that in most contexts, *hustle* is usually some kind of dishonest work but that in this case it is just used to refer to a part-time informal job. As an extension, you can ask students what other parts of speech they know for these words (e.g., *colonize*, *colony*, *pursue*, *abundant*, *pollinate*, *pollen*, *cultivation*, *cultivated*) and which words stay the same as both nouns and verbs (*harvest*, *hustle*).

Key:

a.

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. <i>hustle</i> | 7. <i>pollinator</i> |
| 2. <i>grow accustomed to</i> | 8. <i>Colonialism</i> |
| 3. <i>sow</i> | 9. <i>Horticulture</i> |
| 4. <i>abundance</i> | 10. <i>backbreaking</i> |
| 5. <i>harvest</i> | 11. <i>cultivate</i> |
| 6. <i>Nectar</i> | 12. <i>pursuit</i> |

b.

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. <i>cultivate</i> | 6. <i>colonialism</i> |
| 2. <i>horticulture</i> | 7. <i>abundance</i> |
| 3. <i>sow; harvest</i> | 8. <i>pursuit</i> |
| 4. <i>grow accustomed to</i> | 9. <i>backbreaking</i> |
| 5. <i>pollinators</i> | 10. <i>nectar</i> |

3. Comprehension check

- a. Ask students to complete the task individually and then compare their answers in small groups before checking with the whole class. Answers may vary in wording, but general meaning should be kept.

Key:

1. *arrived when she retired from her job in the media.*
2. *helped her transition into retirement.*
3. *sowed the seed for her change of profession.*
4. *that allowed her to learn more about growing and producing food.*
5. *grow flowers for them to visit.*
6. *the inherently political nature of working the land and issues around land justice, the dynamics of race and belonging, especially in rural spaces, and how the effects of colonialism manifest themselves throughout agriculture and horticulture.*
7. *cultivate a sense of deep connection with the natural world.*

4. Key language

- a. Ask students to complete this activity in pairs or small groups. Encourage them to use a dictionary to find words they are not familiar with.

Key:

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. <i>abundance</i> | 6. <i>organic</i> |
| 2. <i>backbreaking</i> | 7. <i>pollinator</i> |
| 3. <i>colonialism</i> | 8. <i>political</i> |
| 4. <i>cultivate</i> | 9. <i>temporary</i> |
| 5. <i>horticulture</i> | |

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As an extension, you could ask students to explore other forms of each word and to investigate if the stress patterns change. E.g., many stay the same, but these don't:

colony, colonial, colonialism

cultivation, cultivate

politics, political

5. Discussion

- a. Allow students time to note down their ideas about each statement and encourage them to say why they agree or disagree with each one.

6. In your own words

- a. The task could also be done as homework, and students could then present their reports to the class.