

Here's why we should stop weeding. Learn to love our dandelions and brambles

Level 3: Advanced – Teacher's notes

Article summary: The article discusses how weeds have found a place in the Chelsea Flower Show and how they benefit the soil, invertebrates and pollinators. It argues that we should learn to love weeds and allow them to grow in gardens.

Time: 60–90 minutes (depending on availability of 'garden time')

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Vocabulary (phrases with of)

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- a. This activity aims to introduce the weeds mentioned in the article and engage students in the topic. Encourage them to use a physical or online dictionary in English before using a translator or a bilingual dictionary.

Key:

v	d	c	i	c	d	k	c	h	o
x	f	a	z	w	o	c	a	b	x
t	b	o	n	j	c	z	z	n	n
h	c	i	u	d	k	p	z	x	z
i	p	e	n	n	e	d	t	z	n
s	c	x	f	d	l	l	r	e	d
t	a	k	o	m	w	h	i	f	l
l	l	g	z	y	s	e	n	o	q
e	y	t	d	t	v	f	e	b	n
b	r	a	m	b	l	e	u	d	g

1. thistle
2. dock
3. dandelion
4. bindweed
5. bramble

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and compare their answers in pairs or small groups. As an extension, you can focus on formal and informal language. The words in this activity are all neutral or formal. You could ask students to think about their less formal/informal equivalents. Some are provided in parentheses below.

Key:

a.

1. resilient (tough, strong)
2. subversive (radical)
3. Pollen
4. Nectar
5. invertebrate
6. perennial (long-living)
7. deposit
8. erode (damage, wash away)
9. malign (badmouth, criticise, blame)
10. niche (spot)
11. majestic (fab, grand)
12. tend (take care of, look after)
13. prune (cut, trim)

b.

- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1. invertebrates | 8. deposits |
| 2. perennial | 9. subversive |
| 3. maligned | 10. pollen |
| 4. resilient | 11. prune |
| 5. eroding | 12. majestic |
| 6. niches | 13. nectar |
| 7. tending | |

3. Comprehension check

- a. Ask students to complete the task individually and compare their answers in small groups before checking with the whole class. Encourage students to read each statement first and scan the text to find relevant information.

Here's why we should stop weeding. Learn to love our dandelions and brambles

Level 3: Advanced – Teacher's notes

Key:

1. True
2. False. She won a gold medal for that garden.
3. True
4. Not Given. We only know that they were called "heroes".
5. True
6. False. Their roots help prevent erosion.
7. False. They have been appreciated for their role in the food web, but appreciation for their beauty is a recent phenomenon.
8. True
9. True
10. Not Given

4. Key language

- a. Ask students to complete this activity in pairs or small groups.

Key:

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| 1. use | 5. source |
| 2. face | 6. myriad |
| 3. detriment | 7. backdrop |
| 4. chorus | 8. worthy |

- b. Ask students to work in pairs to develop their own examples and regroup them to share their sentences with another pair of students.

Key: Answers will vary. Here are some examples.

1. The use of mobile phones is strictly prohibited.
2. More water fountains have been installed in the face of rising temperatures.
3. She was very sociable at university and attended many parties, to the detriment of her studies.
4. A chorus of crickets and other insects provided calming sounds.
5. Rainwater is a good source of nitrogen.
6. There is a myriad of different colours and types of daisies.
7. The city skyline looks impressive against a backdrop of majestic mountains.
8. It's a good cause, worthy of our time.

5. Discussion

- a. Allow students time to note their ideas about each statement and encourage them to say why they agree or disagree with each. Then put them into small groups and ask them to share their ideas.

6. In your own words

- a. If students cannot wander outside, set this for homework. Alternatively, ask them to complete this weed-identification activity and the field log in pairs.
- b. Regroup students so that pairs are split into new couples or groups of four. Ask students to share their findings using their field guides as a visual aid.