

'The most important talks no one has heard of': why the high seas treaty matters

Level 1: Elementary / Pre-Intermediate – Teacher's notes

Article summary: The article describes how almost 200 countries are trying to agree on a treaty to protect the high seas, which is threatened by overfishing and lies outside national boundaries.

Time: 90 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Vocabulary (affixes)

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- a. The purpose of this activity is to introduce the topic of marine life and conservation and to get students engaged in the topic. You can note down A1–A2 examples of emergent language related to the theme on the board.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. You can also divide the class into two groups and get each of them to complete half of the items (1–5 and 6–10). Then group students into pairs of students who completed different items and ask them to share their answers. Check answers with the whole class.

Key:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. <i>border</i> | 6. <i>survive</i> |
| 2. <i>Law, law</i> | 7. <i>Conservation, conservation</i> |
| 3. <i>Resources, resources</i> | 8. <i>illegal</i> |
| 4. <i>protect</i> | 9. <i>benefit</i> |
| 5. <i>Oxygen, oxygen</i> | 10. <i>attract</i> |

3. Comprehension check

- a. Ask students to complete the task in pairs, and then compare their answers in small groups before checking with the whole class. Encourage students to first read the sentences, circling key words, and then to find the missing information in the text.

Key:

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1. <i>a</i> | 5. <i>b</i> |
| 2. <i>b</i> | 6. <i>a</i> |
| 3. <i>b</i> | 7. <i>a</i> |
| 4. <i>b</i> | |

4. Key language

- a. Ask students to complete this activity in pairs or small groups. Encourage them to scan the text to find the context in which these words are used.

Key:

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1. <i>f</i> | 5. <i>a</i> |
| 2. <i>e</i> | 6. <i>b</i> |
| 3. <i>d</i> | 7. <i>c</i> |
| 4. <i>g</i> | |

- b. Ask students to work in pairs and complete the questions. Then have them guess the answers.

Key:

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| 1. <i>oxygen</i> | 5. <i>get / have</i> |
| 2. <i>make</i> | 6. <i>use</i> |
| 3. <i>do</i> | 7. <i>protect</i> |
| 4. <i>taking</i> | |

- c. Have students match the answers and compare them with what they had guessed. You can also ask students to reflect on these facts.

Key:

- | | |
|------|------|
| a. 7 | e. 6 |
| b. 1 | f. 2 |
| c. 4 | g. 3 |
| d. 5 | |

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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. Then put them into small groups and ask them to share their ideas. You can provide language support on the board like:

I (don't) think ... because ...

6. In your own words

- a. Ask students to research the animal that they have chosen. Students can do this individually or in pairs. If students do not have internet access in class, resources about marine animals will need to be provided. Some good points to cover would be:
- animal population
 - the animal's habitat and food
 - animal lifestyle (Do they live in families?)
 - the biggest threat to the animal's survival
- b. Elicit ideas on what the animal would like to say to humans. Then examine how to best structure a persuasive letter. Draw students' attention to the sections in the table. You can elicit examples from the whole class.
- c. Encourage students to plan their letters in pairs, and then to complete writing individually. Have students peer-edit before submitting their letters to you or sharing them with the whole class.