

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

### Level 2: 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

As an extension, you can focus on collocations with these words. Ask students to find some in the text or add their own. These should be quite useful for the final writing activity. Some examples are:

*enforce rules / laws*  
*species are threatened*  
*critical talks / moment / step*  
*areas for adaptation*  
*secure access*  
*nature / marine / wildlife conservation*  
*confront overfishing / pollution / problems*  
*seek compromises / make a compromise*  
*marine / wildlife sanctuary*  
*whales aggregate*

#### 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 B1–B2 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.

**Key:**

- a.
  1. *enforce*
  2. *threatened, threatens*
  3. *biosphere*
  4. *carbon sink, carbon sinks*
  5. *critical*
  6. *Adaptation, adaptation*
  7. *secure*
  8. *Conservation, conservation*
  9. *Confronting, confront*
  10. *compromise*
  11. *Sanctuaries, sanctuary*
  12. *aggregate*

#### 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.

Answers provided are only suggested answers and can be paraphrased.

**Key:**

1. *True*
2. *False. It provides the oxygen of every second breath.*
3. *False. The pledge promises to protect 30% of land and water.*
4. *False. The aim of MPAs is to protect marine life.*
5. *True*
6. *False. Conservation needs to be the priority.*
7. *False. Illegal fishing and overfishing are the biggest cause.*
8. *False. They urge the global north to compromise.*
9. *True*
10. *True*

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#### 4. Key language

- a. Ask students to complete this activity in pairs or small groups. Encourage them to look at the context in which these words are found to infer their meanings.

**Key:**

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

- b. Ask students to work in small groups and discuss the questions. Add more useful language as it emerges on the board and address any recurring errors.

#### 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.

#### 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 or phrases students might use for each section from the whole class.

Encourage students to plan their letters in pairs and then to complete writing individually. Have students peer-edit before submitting their letters to you.