

Reading e-lesson

Week starting: 1 February 2010

The Rosetta Stone

This week's lesson looks at the world-famous Rosetta Stone and the controversy that surrounds it.

Level

Pre-intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level A2-B1 and above)

Comment

For those students unfamiliar with the stone, it is important to show a visual at the start.

How to use the lesson

- 1 Show a picture of the Rosetta Stone. You can do this by doing an image search, using the key words: Rosetta stone. Ask students if they know anything about it: its age, where it is from, etc.
- 2 Students read the text and complete Exercise 1. Take feedback and focus in on the word *controversy*. Show students the Glossary on page 3
- 3 Ask students to read the rest of the text to find out more about the stone. They should complete the multiple choice task in Exercise 2. Remind them of the Glossary. Let students compare their answers before taking whole class feedback.
- 4 Elicit what the main argument or controversy is about the stone. Arrange students into groups of three and ask them to think of possible arguments. Write these sentence starters up on the board: *The British think it should stay because ... The Egyptians think it should come back because ...* Hear some suggestions.
- 5 Let students read the arguments in Exercise 3.. They decide whether each sentence is the argument of the British or the Egyptians.
- 6 Write or project the questions in Exercise 4 on the board. Students discuss the points in groups of three.
- 7 If students are interested in the topic and seem motivated, let them role play an interview with a British journalist and Dr Hawass. Brainstorm some possible questions first, e.g. *Can you tell us why this stone is so important?*

Answers:

Exercise 1

- 1 should the stone stay in UK or go back to Egypt
- 2 Dr Hawass is an Egyptian scholar who is fighting to have the stone returned to Egypt

Exercise 2

- 1 a
- 2 c
- 3 a
- 4 c
- 5 b
- 6 c
- 7 b
- 8 b

Exercise 3

Suggested answers:

We have the facilities here.... British

The stone is part..... Egyptians

The stone belongs here... British

The stone is necessary... both

Our country.... Egyptians

Without the Rosetta stone... Egyptians

Exercise 4

- 2 Students may refer to different artefacts, e.g. the Egyptian head of Nefertiti (in Berlin), the Greek Elgin Marbles (in London)

Related websites

The following websites might be useful, for either yourself or your students.

http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/aes/t/the_rosetta_stone.aspx (see the homepage and go to Audio, for an audio description of the stone)

<http://www.ancientegypt.co.uk/writing/rosetta.html>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/this-britain/the-big-question-what-is-the-rosetta-stone-and-should-britain-return-it-to-egypt-1836610.html>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/dec/09/rosetta-stone>