

A look back at 2010

Language

Past simple, verb synonyms

Level

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

Comment

This eLesson considers the events of 2010, both positive and negative. Students' familiarity with many of the events will greatly facilitate the reading and the tasks. The challenge of some of the tasks can also be altered by allowing less confident students to refer to the text where necessary, eg exercises 4, 5 and 6.

How to use the lesson

- 1 Before handing out the text, elicit one or two important events from 2010 as a class, then write up the headings from exercise 1 on the board. Divide students into small groups to discuss possible suggestions. If students enjoy this stage, exploit it for oral fluency practice. Take some feedback on ideas, writing these on the board if appropriate – it may be useful for students to refer to later.
- 2 Introduce the text, saying it is one person's view of the main events. They should read it quickly and match the paragraph headings (exercise 2). Give a very brief time limit, eg 1–2 minutes depending on students' level. Take feedback if necessary.
- 3 Students read the text more carefully and see how the ideas compare with their own (exercise 3), referring them to the Glossary if appropriate. Take feedback.
- 4 Let students work in pairs on the comprehension task in exercise 4. You may want to encourage students to write down full sentences, depending on their needs. Stronger students may be able to tackle at least some of these references without referring to the text. It also depends on students' prior knowledge of the events.
- 5 Let students work in pairs again to complete exercise 5, but pair them up carefully. You could give some pairs the first half of the text, and others the second, to avoid repetition of questions. Provide a time limit to add an element of competition. Monitor and assist with questions. Allow more time if students are really engaged. Students regroup with another pair to ask their questions, which they should try and answer without reading the text. Monitor again and be prepared to give some post-task feedback on their question forms, particularly at higher levels.
- 6 Exercise 6 is a lexis task, focusing on verbs. Put up the following sentence on the board at the start, to clarify the task. Elicit the missing word: *2010 started **very sadly** (_____) with a huge earthquake ... (tragically)*. Let students work alone initially on the exercise. For stronger students, challenge them to complete it without looking. Take feedback.
- 7 Let students choose the topic which interests them, and ask them to prepare to talk to their partner(s), allowing a short time for preparation. Monitor and help individuals as appropriate. Extend the length of time and the size of the audience for stronger students – the actual talk is likely to be between 2–6 minutes. Put students in pairs and encourage the listening students to ask at least two questions when the speaker has finished.

Answer key

1 Students' own answers.

2

Para 1	natural disasters	Para 5	positive events
Para 2	technology	Para 6	science
Para 3	the economy	Para 7	sport
Para 4	the environment	Para 8	entertainment

3 Students' own answers.

4

Chile: 33 miners freed after 69 days trapped underground.

China: a good year economically.

France: where one million people protested against government cuts in one day.

Germany: it was overtaken by China as the world's leading exporter.

Greece / Ireland: two countries which were saved by the EU because of their failing economies.

Haiti: an earthquake in January 2010.

Iceland: the site of the volcano which covered some countries in Europe with ash.

Mexico: the oil spill just off the coast.

Pakistan: flooding affected millions in the summer.

Russia: dangerously high summer temperatures causing forest fires; former president Putin joined Twitter.

South Africa: the first time that the football World Cup (won by Spain) had been held in Africa; a couple escaped unhurt after their yacht was capsized by a whale.

Switzerland: the Large Hadron Collider achieved a temperature of 10 million degrees C.

UK: preparations were on time for the 2012 Olympics in London.

US: the first Harry Potter theme park opened (Florida).

5 Students' own answers.

6

- 1 lost their lives
- 2 experienced
- 3 overtook
- 4 rescued; collapse
- 5 introduced
- 6 took place
- 7 released

7 Students' own ideas

Related websites

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

<http://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/recenteqsww/Quakes/us2010rja6.php#details> (Haiti earthquake)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-10973725> (floods in Pakistan)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE64P5PE20100527> (Apple)

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/8450434.stm> (world's leading exporter_

<http://www.tahinaexpedition.com/2010/08/sailing-news-whale-lands-on-boat-and-capsized-catamaran.html>

http://www.eoearth.org/article/Deepwater_Horizon_oil_spill?topic=50364 (oil spill)

<http://www.mugglenet.com/> (Harry Potter)

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/8222843/2010-the-year-in-science.html> (science in 2010)