

# Water – the key to life

## Language

Question formation; sound / spelling connections for /z:/ and /ɔ:/

## Level

Pre-intermediate (equivalent to CEF level A2)

## Comment

This eLesson looks at the importance of water and how people in dry areas find the water they need. The springboard for the text is the recent flooding worldwide. The exercise on pronunciation can be omitted if not appropriate for your students.

## How to use the lesson

- 1 Before handing out the text, ask students to imagine that when they go home there is no water. Get them to think of what they would do differently without water. Then write up the headings from exercise 1 on the board. Divide students into small groups to discuss possible ideas. If students enjoy this stage, exploit it for oral fluency practice. Take some feedback on ideas, writing these on the board if appropriate.
- 2 Introduce the text and pre-teach any vocabulary from the questions that students might not know, eg *sand dunes*. They should then read the text quickly and match the paragraphs to the topics of the paragraphs (exercise 2). Give a brief time limit, eg 1–2 minutes depending on students' level to encourage fast reading. Take feedback if necessary.
- 3 Before doing exercise 3, you could check students know how to say these numbers. Students decide which numbers fit each sentence and then read the text again quickly to check their answers. If you feel this is too difficult for your students, let them go straight to the text to find the answers. If students have problems with any of the words, you can refer them to the Glossary if appropriate. Take feedback.
- 4 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.
- 5 Sound / spelling connections are particularly difficult for some students. The two connections selected are generally problematic for all students, whatever their first language. With stronger students you could let them try and guess the odd one out without support. With weaker students, model the task with a different set of words first, eg *this, since, kilo, without* (*kilo* is the odd one out as it has the long /i:/ sound, whereas the other words have the short /ɪ/ sound). In feedback it would be useful to drill the words to help students with pronunciation and you could elicit a few more with the same sound / spelling relationship. Another idea is to have a poster for each sound and when you find new words pronounced this way you can add them to the poster.
- 6 These discussion questions could be adapted if all your students are from the same country. They could think of other countries they know as well.

Answer key

1 Students' own answers.

2

1 para 5	3 para 6	5 para 2
2 para 4	4 para 1	6 para 3

3

1 1950	5 45
2 6	6 1
3 1 billion	7 400
4 30	8 2015

4 Students' own answers.

5

1 year is the odd one out as the pronunciation of *ear* in this word is /ɪə/. The other underlined vowels are all pronounced /ɜː/. There is a very good sound / spelling connection here – most words spelt with *ur*, *ir*, *wor* or stressed *er* are pronounced /ɜː/.

2 old is the odd one out as the pronunciation of *o* in this word is /əʊ/. The other underlined vowels are all pronounced /ɔː/. There is a very good sound / spelling connection here – most words spelt with *ore*, *or*, *ou*, *al* or *wa* are pronounced /ɔː/. In addition words with *au* (eg autumn) and *aw* (eg saw) are typically pronounced /ɔː/.

6 Students' own ideas. If appropriate for your students, as a homework idea they could work out their own water consumption for a typical day from the following website [http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/water\\_for\\_all/water/photoactiv/print\\_factbox.htm](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/water_for_all/water/photoactiv/print_factbox.htm) and compare with other students in the next class. They could also plan how they will reduce their water consumption and later report on how well they're doing.

Related websites

The following websites might be useful, for either yourself or your students.  
[http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/humanplanetexplorer/survival\\_skills/finding\\_water](http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/humanplanetexplorer/survival_skills/finding_water) (information about sourcing water and clips from related previous programmes)  
[http://www.wateraid.org/splash\\_out/facts/4872.asp](http://www.wateraid.org/splash_out/facts/4872.asp) (Wateraid charity site, with facts about water and their charity work)  
[http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/water\\_for\\_all](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/water_for_all) (Oxfam's education website with resources mainly aimed at children, including quizzes)  
<http://www.extremescience.com/zoom/index.php/driest-desert> (more detailed information about the Atacama desert, only suitable for stronger students)  
[http://www.unicef.org/wash/index\\_statistics.html](http://www.unicef.org/wash/index_statistics.html) (the website for UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, formerly the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund)