

1 Water, water

Reading Texts

Opening quotation – excerpt from ‘The Rime of the Ancient Mariner’ by Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Literature – excerpt from *Daughter of the Wind* by Suzanne Fisher Staples, set in the Cholistan Desert, Pakistan

Leaflet – about Carisbrooke Castle, the Isle of Wight, UK

Information text – about water wheels in Hama, Syria

Literature – excerpt from *Going to Extremes* by Nick Middleton

Poetry – ‘Bedeh’ by Shafi Ahmed, set in Bangladesh

Visuals – *Beach Scene* by Edgar Degas

Extension reading – excerpt from *Little House on the Prairie* by Laura Ingalls Wilder

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

Discuss in pairs and small groups and report back to the class

Write a composition

Create a leaflet

Write an account

Write journal entries

Before beginning the unit

Ask the students to brainstorm their ideas about the word ‘water’.

Write the word on the board and give the students two minutes of thinking time. They should write down as many ideas related to water as they can. Later, as they work through the unit, they can check whether their words or ideas are used.

Stop the activity after an appropriate time and allow the students to share their work with a partner to see whether they have the same ideas. Ask whether anyone has good ideas to share.

Turn to the text. Give the students time to look at the first page and read the quotation from Coleridge. Explain that Samuel Taylor Coleridge was a very famous English poet who lived from 1772 to 1834. He lived at the same time as Beethoven and Wordsworth, who were both born in 1770.

Coleridge was one of the Lake Poets, a group of poets who lived and worked in the Lake District of England. The Lake District is an area of natural beauty in the

northwest of England, where there are a number of lakes, hills and beautiful countryside, especially popular with walkers. The Lake Poets – William Wordsworth, Robert Southey and Samuel Coleridge – found a new way of looking at nature and wrote in more everyday English than earlier poets. They were part of the English Romantic movement in poetry.

After discussing the quotation, ask the students about the ways they use water. Write a few examples on the board and then allow students time in groups or pairs to think of more ways.

When they are ready, collect students’ ideas on the board. Ask the students to think about the importance of water in their lives and ask them with a partner to write one sentence describing the importance of water to them.

Collect these key sentences on the board. These could be copied on coloured paper and displayed around the room as a focus point for the following lessons in this unit.

How do we use water?

Reading text: *Morning in the Desert*

Before reading, ask the students to locate Pakistan on a map. Find the Cholistan Desert and discuss life in the desert.

As a class, read the explanations of the special vocabulary in the boxes. Write the girls' names 'Shabanu' and 'Phulan' on the board for easy reference. Discuss the ideas as a class. Read the introduction together, and discuss new vocabulary and the use of names with special meanings.

Toolkit

The focus is on the present and past tense of regular and irregular forms, practised in both the Student book and Workbook around the text *Morning in the Desert*. Students can rewrite a section of the story in the past tense.

Writing a composition

A Venn diagram is a graphic method of organizing thoughts and ideas that allows second-language students to demonstrate their understanding without extensive writing, and also to prepare for writing.

Each circle represents one category of items, in this case the student's routine and Shabanu's routine. The overlapping section is for items that apply to both. The students should refer back to the text and make notes about Shabanu's routine in the appropriate circle. If there are features that also apply to their lives, they should enter them in the overlapping circle. Students complete the Venn diagram by entering aspects of their own daily routine into the other circle. Allow the students time to discuss and compare their completed Venn diagrams.

Using the Venn diagram, students should complete a piece of writing comparing their daily routine with Shabanu's.

The Venn diagram has already broken the information into three sections: what they do, what Shabanu does and what they both do. This information should be organized into three paragraphs. Each paragraph should have a topic sentence, which can be modelled by the teacher if this is unfamiliar to the students. The topic sentence is followed by the body of the paragraph and a

final, concluding sentence. The students may be familiar with these terms; if not, explanations must be given of:

- **topic** sentence
- **body** of paragraph
- **conclusion**.

Additional activity

A further writing activity could be set by asking students to write an informal letter to Shabanu, where they describe their own use of water and their feelings about this after they have read about Shabanu.

As a follow-up activity, students can exchange their letters and each write a letter back to the writer as if they are Shabanu. The students need to be familiar with informal letter-writing conventions (see pages 35–36).

How did people get water in the past?

Introduce the idea of underground water supplies and the need people have always had to get water from under the ground. How can they do this?

Give students the challenge of imagining that under the ground, outside the school, there is a source of clear, pure water. In groups, they should talk about ways that the water could be brought to the surface. They could draw diagrams to illustrate their ideas. Share these ideas with the class and explain that this will be the new topic in the water unit.

Reading text: Leaflet on Carisbrooke Castle

In pairs, students should brainstorm words to describe the picture of the entrance to Carisbrooke Castle. As a class, share the words they have found and add to them. Read and discuss the information in the leaflet.

The leaflet uses the passive voice in the simple past tense, both singular and plural forms. These are some examples from the text of passive constructions:

- *the well was dug*
- *a wooden bucket was used*
- *a well-house and treadwheel were built*
- *donkey power was introduced*
- *the treadwheel was rebuilt.*

In the present continuous:

- *Water [is] being drawn from the well.*

Reading text: The water wheels (*norias*) of Hama, Syria

Read and discuss the information, addressing any vocabulary problems.

Discuss writing a leaflet. What should a leaflet look like? What kind of layout should it have? Key features of leaflets include a catchy title; short, sharp, persuasive sentences; attractive illustrations; plenty of colour. Use the points raised in the discussion of the Carisbrooke Castle leaflet to guide the conversation, either as whole class or in pairs/groups who then report back to the class.

The rubric on page 43 could be used for assessment (or student self-assessment) of the finished leaflets.

Who lives on water?

Find Bangladesh on a map. Find out what previous knowledge the students have about Bangladesh to share.

Listening exercise

To introduce the text through listening, you could follow these steps.

- **After** locating Bangladesh on a map and discussing it, read the introduction to *The River Gypsies* on page 14 with the students. Ask whether they have ever heard of river gypsies or any other kind of gypsy. Ask them to look closely at and discuss the picture on page 15 with a partner.
- **Tell** them to close their books and just listen to the story. Play the story on the CD once.
- **Ask** the students what happens in the story, and try to reconstruct the events as a class.
- Play the story again and ask the students to draw what is happening as they listen. They may need extra time between paragraphs, so pause the CD to enable them to keep up with the text.

Reading text: *The River Gypsies*

After the reading and re-reading activities have been completed, ask the students to choose one phase of

the story and draw their own picture of the scene. This could be outside the old man's house or inside the main room. Give the students time to share and talk about their pictures.

Give students time to add to their word pools.

Toolkit

The focus is on the punctuation of direct speech. Students should look closely at the use of direct speech in the story and note particularly the punctuation: quotation marks are placed around what is said, and also the full stops, exclamation marks or question marks. Focus on changing direct speech to indirect speech and the tense change from present to past, for example:

- 'I'm hungry,' she said. *She said she **was** hungry.*

Writing an account

This exercise will allow the students to engage with the text again in depth.

Explain that an account of an incident is a personal piece giving the writer's point of view. It describes what the writer thought, saw and felt. It is written in the first person, so it uses 'I' throughout. As it recounts something that has already happened, it usually uses the simple past tense.

Students should re-read the text and put the events on a time line, so that they are in the correct sequence. Remind them that it will be helpful if they structure their writing by using phrases such as *first of all...*, *and then...*, *after that*, and so on.

It may also help to give students a sample opening sentence for their account, such as: 'While you were away, I've had the most exciting time...'

Reading text: 'Bedeh'

Explain to the students that not all poems have to rhyme or have a set rhythm; some can be written in free verse, like this one.

Additional activities

After the class has read and discussed the poem, the students could practise reading it aloud in groups. The poem would also lend itself to creating a collage

wall picture, if time and space allow. The conversation between the poet and the captain of the English ship could be the basis of a role-play. Invite the pairs to extend the conversation beyond the ideas in the poem.

Thinking about water

Students look at and discuss a painting by Edgar Degas called *Beach Scene*. The French artist (1834–1917) was especially noted for his paintings of people in motion, ballerinas and racehorses.

Journal entry

Ask the students to look closely at the people in the painting, and think about who these people are, who they are with (such as family or friends), what they are doing, how they came to be on the beach on that day, what will they do later, and so on.

The students should then focus on one person in the picture and imagine that they are that person. They should write about their day, using the prompts you have given them and any other ideas they may have. They should of course write in the first person, using 'I' or 'we', and the story should move from the past tense describing previous events, to the present tense describing what they are doing and thinking now, to the future tense describing what they will do later.

Extension reading

This extract offers the opportunity for stronger English learners to extend their reading with an extract from *Little House on the Prairie* by Laura Ingalls Wilder. Students of all abilities may enjoy listening to the story and completing the activities.