

Learning with The Irrawaddy, No. 39

To accompany the **October 2009** issue of The Irrawaddy magazine.

Selected article extract: *'Free from fear but still struggling' from
A fresh Start*

TEACHER'S NOTES

Here is the 39th issue of 'Learning with The Irrawaddy', a monthly educational supplement to The Irrawaddy magazine. It is designed for reading/writing, English or social studies classes in Post-10 schools and adult education classes on the Burma border. With each issue of The Irrawaddy, we select one article and design some learning activities for it. The language level in this month's article is pre-intermediate to intermediate.

NOTE: YOU DO NOT HAVE TO DO ALL OF THE ACTIVITIES LISTED IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE. YOU CAN CHOOSE WHICH ACTIVITIES ARE MOST APPROPRIATE DEPENDING ON HOW MUCH TIME YOU HAVE, AND THE LEVEL OF ABILITY OF YOUR LEARNERS.

THIS MONTH THERE ARE ADDITIONAL BONUS QUESTIONS FOR THE QUICKER STUDENTS. THESE ARE ACTIVITY 5, Q.6; AND WIDER READING ACTIVITIES 11-12.

In this issue we have included:

- ★ this teacher's guide
- ★ a copy of the student worksheet
- ★ a copy of The Irrawaddy magazine
- ★ a copy of the article extract from The Irrawaddy magazine
- ★ a copy of the full article for wider reading and comprehension

A. **Activities before reading**

Activity 1 Discussion (prompted by photograph)

These discussion questions are designed to get your class warmed up, speaking English and thinking about the pros and cons of resettlement. The picture should prompt thoughts about new opportunities, but also loss – leaving behind friends and maybe family members too. You could suggest students discuss this in pairs or small groups, and then report the thoughts from their group to the whole class. This will help to get all students involved in the discussion. The teacher could write this feedback as a list of 'pros' and 'cons' on the board.

Activity 2 Vocabulary: multiple choice quiz

Answers:

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

Activity 3 Vocabulary Practice:

Answers:(note: Student worksheet asks for any 3 of the following answers)

1. 'Immigrants' means people who move to live in another country.
2. 'A mixed blessing' means something part good part bad.
3. 'Employment' means paid work

4. 'Consumes' means eats up
5. 'Assistance' means help
6. 'Support themselves' means work and earn money
7. 'Loss of identity' means to lose your culture
8. 'Tight-knit' means close to each other

Activity 4 Grammar-check: subject-verb agreement

Teaching-point for English language teachers: there is an opportunity here to review subject-verb agreement eg The main problem...is...; Two reasonsare.. etc

This exercise is in preparation for the comprehension question Activity 6, where students are asked to write in complete sentences. Students can miss the subject of the sentence when it is qualified by a phrase or clause, and therefore get the form of the verb wrong.

Answers: 1. (Resettlement) .. provides 2. (Education and healthcare)..are
3. (Loss of identity)..is 4. (One challenge) ..is 5.(Many Karen people) ..do..

B. Activities during reading

Activity 5 Vocabulary: words meaning 'difficult' (*adj*) or 'difficulty' (*n*)

Answers: problem obstacle challenge struggle (*n*) complex (*adj*)

The teacher can also accept the following answers as correct in that they express emotional difficulty: Fear, anxieties (*n*); restrictive (*adj*)

Activity 6 Comprehension

- A1: The main problem facing refugees in a new country is employment
- A2: Two reasons why refugees have difficulty getting jobs are they lack the needed language skills and find the application process complex.
- A3: Two benefits of resettlement are education and healthcare
- A4: Nai Taing Htaw is worried that his children will not preserve his values, culture and language
- A5: The strength of Karen refugee communities is that they are a tight-knit group who rely on each other

Bonus Question!

Note: This question is for the stronger students who finish the work ahead of others. It requires students to use their own words, so several ways of expressing the answer might be right. The answer should say something like:

A6: *The strength of the Karen communities is also a weakness because they rely on each other and therefore do not ask for help when they should, and accept conditions that they shouldn't.*

Activity 7 Summarising: making notes

Student answers should list the benefits and problems mentioned in the article in two columns, something like this:

Resettlement	
Benefits	Problems
<i>Not living in fear Not living in camps Help to settle into new country Education Healthcare</i>	<i>Refugees are expected to get work quickly Getting work is difficult Refugees lack language skills Application process complex Work is very hard No time to study May lose culture / identity Difficult to settle</i>

C. Activities after reading

Activity 8 Summarising: writing a paragraph

This is free writing, using the notes made at activity 6. Therefore, there isn't a single correct answer, but you would expect the students to mention education and healthcare from their 'benefits' column, and finding work, language, no time to study, and difficulties settling, from their 'problems' column.

Activity 9 Discussion: Which is which?

Answers:

There is no single correct answer. However the most likely opinions, based on family circumstances and length of time in Thailand are:

i: c Saw Eh Kaw Thaw wants to move to a new country

ii: a Naw Paw Eh wants to return to Karen State when it is safe

ii: b Saw Doh Soe wants to settle in Thailand

Activity 10 Discussion: Resettlement – yes or no?

The activities have helped the students think about benefits and problems, and about some of the emotional implications of moving to a new country. Now they should have some opinions about these things. However if the group tends not to participate in whole class discussion, it can be done in small groups. The teacher goes round the class listening to the discussions in the groups and checking on progress.

D. Wider reading

Note: this activity is for the quicker students who finish ahead of others. It gives them the opportunity to read a bit further, and check their understanding as they go along. They do not necessarily have to finish the whole article. When the class is ready to move on, you can draw the quicker students back into the group. Part of this can also be given as homework.

Activity 11 Vocabulary Review

Match type of word: *i b; ii c; iii a*

Match word and meaning: *1e; 2h; 3g; 4b; 5a; 6c; 7d 8f*

Meaning of phrases: *A: approval, or go-ahead B: loss of skilled or talented people*

C: developing skills of others D: pick out the best

E: using someone else's personal information as if it were your own (eg identity papers)

Activity 12 Comprehension Answers:

FS 1-4: *1. 11 (Eleven); 2. 2010*

FS 5-8: *1. The selection procedure is thorough ✓*

FS 9-19: *1. Loss of qualified people such as teachers, medics and admin staff who are difficult to replace*

2. Both were teachers in the camp, so the camp has lost two teachers

FS20-24: *1. Two abuses are identity fraud and bribery*

2. Offenders will be permanently barred from applying for resettlement.