

Learning with The Irrawaddy, No. 43

To accompany the **February 2010** issue of The Irrawaddy magazine.

Selected article: *Photo Essay: A Fragile Peace*

Teacher's Notes

Here is the 43rd issue of 'Learning with The Irrawaddy', a monthly educational supplement to The Irrawaddy magazine. It is designed for English or social studies classes in Post-10 schools and adult education classes on the Thai-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 suitable for pre-intermediate to intermediate English speakers.

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 THE LEVEL OF ABILITY OF YOUR STUDENTS.

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 from The Irrawaddy magazine

NOTE: If you are going to do Activity 7 – *Match text and pictures, and gap-fill*, remember to put up the pictures before the lesson, so you can start the activity without any confusion.

A. Activities before reading

Activity 1 What do you know?

Write 'a fragile peace' on the board. Ask students to work in pairs or small groups to come up with a definition of the phrase.

fragile (pronounced fra-jile)
adj.
1. Easily broken, damaged, or destroyed; frail.

Possible definition

A peace or ceasefire between armies or enemies that is not very secure and could easily break down.

Activity 2 Discussion

Give students five minutes to think of answers to the questions. Brainstorm on the board. List Burma's ceasefire and non-ceasefire groups. Elicit students' own opinions on ceasefire groups, and any experience they have of living in areas controlled by ceasefire groups. Elicit their opinions about whether life is better or worse living in a ceasefire area, and ask students to give reasons for what they think.

Activity 3 Whose struggle?

Give students a short time to look at the pictures and decide which Burmese ethnic group the photo essay is about. (Answer: Kachin.) Students then work with a partner, state which ethnic groups they think it is, and tell their partner their reasons why.

Examples:

“He looks Kachin/Shan/Mon.” “She’s wearing traditional Kachin clothes.” “I think his uniform is Shan.”

B. Activities during reading

Activity 4 Match the vocabulary

Students read the article, and match the underlined words with the definitions above. Students should write the number of the definition next to the underlined word.

Answers:

A. *simultaneously* B. *negotiate* C. *festivities* D. *distrust* E. *additionally*
F. *umbrella organisation* G. *resigned* H. *annually* I. *snap up* J. *suspicion* K. *autonomous*
L. *hostilities* M. *retains* N. *notorious* O. *rights*

Activity 5 Comprehension Questions

Answers:

- KIA soldiers were not allowed to dance in their uniforms at this year’s Manau dance.
- The KIA sent 1800 fewer soldiers to this year’s festival than to last year’s.
- The KIA has allied itself with the United Wa State Army (UWSA) and the National Democratic Alliance Army-Eastern Shan State (NDAA-ESS).
- There are about 27,000 to 28,000 soldiers in the new alliance.
- Kachin leaders believe that the Kachin must have a political party because if they don’t, they will lose their identity.
- The military government is making the most money from Kachin State’s natural resources. They are making it from selling natural resources and the rights to mining, logging, farming and hydro-dam projects.
- The KIO are involved in building hospitals, teacher training colleges and churches.

C. Activities after reading

Activity 6 Grammar Review: Practice with *there+be*

- Review the structure of *there+be*, giving examples of positive, negative and question forms.

Positive			
there	is / are	a / some	<i>noun</i>
Negative			
there	isn't / aren't	a / any	<i>noun</i>
Questions			
is / are	there	a / any	<i>noun</i>
how many	<i>noun</i>	is / are	there

- ii. Students complete the gap-fill

Answers

- a. There's a classroom. In the classroom, there are lots of desks and books. There are two schoolchildren at the front of the class. One of them is smiling.
- b. There's a father with his daughter. They're both wearing modern clothes. They're standing together. He's touching her head. It's a sunny day; there aren't any clouds in the sky.
- iii. Give students a short time to think of 5 questions they would ask someone about their home town. Students should use some *there+be* questions.
- iv. Students then move around the class, interviewing other students about their home town, and answering questions, using the correct forms.

Activity 7 Match text and pictures, and gap-fill

Put the pictures that accompany these teacher's notes (on pages 4-8) on the walls around the classroom. Students work in pairs, and move around the room, matching the 10 descriptions with the pictures. Each description has one word missing. Students must choose the most appropriate word from the box.

Answers

1. *F, above* 2. *C, logs* 3. *G, female* 4. *H, hymn books* 5. *J, baptism* 6. *B, staring*
7. *D, coffin* 8. *E, uniforms* 9. *I, tiny* 10. *A, traditional*

Activity 8 Comparing pictures

Students work in pairs. Student A looks at his/her sheet, and Student B students look at his/hers. They must describe their pictures to each other, make notes, and find out what differences there are. They should not show each other until the end of the activity.

Activity 9 One-minute pictures

Make enough copies of the pictures on pages 4-8 that each student has one picture. (If you have 20 students, you should have 2 of each picture.) Students find a partner and have one minute to describe the scene and talk about the people in the picture. Students should describe age, dress and physical characteristics, and explain why they are doing what they are doing. Time the students and after one minute, they swap roles, and the second student describes his/her picture. Time them again. After one minute they must swap pictures and find new partners, and so on until each student has spoken to three or more other students.



A.



B.



C.



D.



E.



F.



G.



H.



I.



J.