

Learning with The Irrawaddy, No. 28

To accompany the July 2008 issue of The Irrawaddy magazine.

Selected article: *Women in the Movement*.

TEACHER'S NOTES

Here is the 28th 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 intermediate/upper intermediate.

As this is a very long article, we have divided it into five sections. The first section is for all the class. The next four sections are to be done in groups – one group per section.

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.

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

A. Activities before reading

Activity 1 Discussion

Give the students the first page (paragraphs 1-7) of the article. Students look quickly at the picture, and then turn the paper over. Tell them not to read the text. As a class, discuss the questions.

- *The picture was taken at a demonstration in New Delhi.*
- *'Unity in diversity' means that different (diverse) groups of people should join together. Different ethnic groups and political organizations need to cooperate.*

Activity 2 Brainstorm

As a class, make a list on the board of women leaders from Burma.

B. Activities during reading

Activity 3 Match the vocabulary

- a) Give learners 5 minutes to read through the article and underline the words that they don't understand.
- b) Give learners 10 minutes to complete the matching exercise, using the context in the article to help them. Then elicit one answer from a different learner in turn and check agreement with the rest of the class.

Answers:

1. b 2. a 3. d 4. f 5. i 6. k 7. m 8. c 9. n 10. e 11. h
12. j 13. o 14. l

Activity 5 Gap-fill

Give learners 10-15 minutes to complete the exercise on their own. They put them into pairs and ask them to compare answers. Do they agree? Finally, elicit one answer from a different learner in turn and check agreement with the rest of the class.

Answers:

1. *prominent* or *significant* or *well-known*
2. *token*
3. *imposed*
4. *strives, advocate*
5. *lack*
6. *erase*
7. *victims, desperately*

Activity 5 Match the summary

Students read the article, and match these summaries with the paragraphs.

Answers:

- a. 4 b. 1 c. 7 d. 5 e. 2 f. 6 g. 3

Activity 6 Comprehension Questions

Students answer the questions. Most of the answers and explanations are in the text, but it is useful if they also use their own ideas.

Answers:

1. *Because she took part in the August 2007 demonstrations against the government.*
2. *Yes. The writer says she 'is able to compete with male counterparts'.*
3. *Some Burmese women were representatives at the League of Nations (forerunner to the United Nations), senators and government ministers.*
4. *It 'paved the way' – created a pathway into political participation.*
5. *Ne Win imposed military rule. As there were no women in the upper levels of the military, they could not participate in politics, unless they joined the dissident groups (mostly on the border and in exile).*

Activity 7 Prediction

Students think about what the rest of the article will be about. Write students' ideas on the board.

NOW SPLIT THE STUDENTS INTO FOUR GROUPS (OR EIGHT GROUPS IF YOU HAVE A LARGE CLASS). GIVE EACH GROUP MEMBER COPIES OF THEIR GROUP'S WORKSHEETS.

Activity 8 Match the Summary

Students read the article in groups. Encourage them to help each other, and use their dictionaries. Groups match these summaries with the paragraphs.

GROUP 1

Answers:

a. 13 b. 11 c. 15 d. 9 e. 8 f. 12 g. 10 h. 14

GROUP 2

Answers:

a. 18 b. 21 c. 23 d. 16 e. 25 f. 22 g. 20 h. 20 i. 19 j. 17

GROUP 3

Answers:

a. 30 b. 33 c. 26 d. 29 e. 32 f. 31 g. 34 h. 27 i. 28

GROUP 4

Answers:

a. 39 b. 35 c. 38 d. 43 e. 36 f. 42 g. 40 h. 37 i. 41

Activity 9 Discussion

In their groups, students discuss the questions.

Activity 10 Teach the Class

In their groups, students prepare presentations about their page to teach the class. This might be easier in student's own language. Make sure they know not to just read the text aloud, or translate word for word – instead they use their own words.

They also think of a short discussion topic to discuss as a class, and do this after they have explained the content of the text. They can use one of the discussion topics from 9, or think of a different one.

Make sure that all group members are participating in the presentation. They can divide the presenting between themselves, e.g. three people explain the text, then three others lead the discussion. If you have eight groups, divide the class into two for the presentations (one set of groups 1-4 work in one place, and the other set in another place) or it will take too long.