

# Learning with The Irrawaddy, No. 31

To accompany the **October 2008** issue of The Irrawaddy magazine.

Selected article: Selected article: *Time to Embrace the Truth.*

## TEACHER'S NOTES

Here is the 31<sup>st</sup> 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.

**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

- a) Ask the class who writes the editorial of a magazine or newspaper.

**Answer:**

*The editor. The editor is usually the boss of the magazine – the editor can decide what news stories will be in the magazine.*

- b) As a class discuss what an editorial is.

**Answer:**

*An editorial is the editor's opinions and analysis of a current event or situation.*

#### **Activity 2** Brainstorm

Students look up 'embrace' in their dictionaries. Elicit ideas about what the title means, and write them on the board. Don't give them the answer below until after they have read the article.

**Answer:**

*'Embrace the truth' means to see the real situation and deal with it. The title implies that people have been believing, and acting upon, things that are not true, and now they should change.*

## B. Activities during reading

### Activity 3 Match the vocabulary

- Students go through the article and underline words they don't understand.
- Students match the words and definitions.

Answers:

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

### Activity 4 Gap-fill

Students use some of the words from Activity 3 to fill the gaps.

Answers:

1. *headway* 2. *critical* 3. *consequences* 4. *mentor* 5. *incarceration*  
6. *naively* 7. *restricted* 8. *sole*

### Activity 5 Phrases in Context

Students match the underlined phrases with the phrase with the most similar meaning.

Answers:

1. *c* 2. *d* 3. *a* 4. *a* 5. *b* 6. *d*

### Activity 6 True or false?

Students decide whether the statements are true or false - all the statements are the editor's opinions, rather than objectively true or false. If they are false, the students explain what the editor says.

Answers:

- false* – the editor says that Win Tin's freedom is unlikely to give her hope that she will be freed.
- true*
- false* – the editor says that the real purpose of releasing him was to deflect international criticism.
- true*
- true*
- false* – the editor calls them 'so-called' experts.
- false* – the editor says they should make it more inclusive, not quicker.
- false* – the editor says people want the international community and UN to push for dialogue, but probably he means between the generals and democratic activists.

### Activity 7 Fact, opinion or hypothesis?

Students read the information in the box. Clarify anything they don't understand. Students read the statements and decide whether they are facts (objectively true), opinions (the editors own views) or hypotheses (something that might be a fact, but isn't tested yet). For numbers 1 and 4, they should focus on the underlined part of the statement.

Answers:

1. *opinion* 2. *fact* 3. *opinion* 4. *opinion* 5. *hypothesis* 6. *fact*  
7. *opinion* 8. *hypothesis*

## C. Activities after reading

### Activity 8 Word families

Students complete the chart with other parts of these word families.

**Answers:**

noun	verb	adjective	adverb	person
release	release	X	X	X
<i>prison</i>	<i>imprison</i>	<i>imprisoned</i>	X	prisoner
suggestion	<i>suggest</i>	<i>suggestive</i>	<i>suggestively</i>	X
<i>detention</i>	<i>detain</i>	<i>detained</i>	X	detainee
X	<i>internationalise</i>	international	<i>internationally</i>	<i>internationalist</i>
ineffectiveness	X	<i>ineffective</i>	<i>ineffectively</i>	X
<i>naivety</i>	X	<i>naive</i>	naively	X
<i>apology</i>	<i>Apologise</i>	<i>apologetic</i>	<i>apologetically</i>	apologist
organisation	<i>organise</i>	<i>organised</i>	X	<i>organizer</i>
<i>fear</i>	<i>fear</i>	fearful	<i>fearfully</i>	X
<i>inclusiveness</i>	<i>include</i>	inclusive	<i>inclusively</i>	X
<i>belief</i>	believe	<i>believable</i>	<i>believably</i>	<i>believer</i>

### Activity 9 Main message

In groups, students discuss what the main message of this editorial is, and what ‘the truth’ is that people should embrace. Get each group to present their ideas to the class.

**Possible answer:**

*‘The truth’ is that the regime is not making progress towards becoming a democratic society. Although they sometimes act as if they are changing (such as releasing Win Tin), they are still the same, and do not plan to introduce real change. The international community should stop believing them, and pressure them into making real changes.*