

# The Curriculum Project

## Learning with The Irrawaddy, No. 50

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

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Selected article: **Portraits from Exile**

### TEACHER'S NOTES

Here is the **50th** 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-secondary 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. You can teach this to learners with good **pre-intermediate** – **intermediate** level English.

**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, your interests, and the ability of your students.**

#### A. Activities before reading

##### 1. Predict from the title

Write the title on the board, and discuss what students think will be in the article. Encourage them to use their dictionaries, if necessary, to look up *portrait* and *exile*.

Read the introduction, and explain anything students don't understand.

##### 2. Predict from the pictures

Look at the twelve pictures, and have a class brainstorm about each one. Students see if they can identify any of the people, and otherwise guess what these people do. Write their ideas for each picture on the board.

If this takes too long, divide the class into groups and give each group three or four pictures.

Ask how these people are similar.

**Answer:** *They all had to leave Burma and live in exile.*

## B. Activities during reading

### 3. Match the paragraphs

Students read the article – encourage them to skim rather than try to understand every word. Individually or in pairs or groups, they match each picture to a paragraph.

Answers:

- Paragraph 1 – c
- Paragraph 2 – g
- Paragraph 3 – i
- Paragraph 4 – l
- Paragraph 5 – f
- Paragraph 6 – j
- Paragraph 7 – k
- Paragraph 8 – b
- Paragraph 9 – e
- Paragraph 10 – d
- Paragraph 11 – a
- Paragraph 12 – h

### 4. True or false?

Students decide if the sentences are true or false, and correct the false sentences.

Possible answers:

- a. *False. There are more than 2000 political prisoners in Burma.*
- b. *True*
- c. *True*
- d. *True*
- e. *True*
- f. *True*
- g. *False. They also work with women from other ethnic groups.*
- h. *False. Burma is the only country that uses landmines on an ongoing basis.*
- i. *False. Burma didn't sign the global anti-landmine treaty.*
- j. *True*
- k. *True*
- l. *False. There are an estimated 2,000,000 Burmese migrant workers in Thailand.*
- m. *True*
- n. *False. He was in an opposition army.*
- o. *True*
- p. *False. Empower is a Thai organisation.*
- q. *True*
- r. *False. There are three people in Thee Lay Thee.*
- s. *True*
- t. *False. He came to Thailand to become a musician and help his community.*
- u. *True*
- v. *False. They beat and tortured demonstrators including monks.*
- w. *False. They don't produce a newspaper.*
- x. *True.*

## 5. Vocabulary

Students identify words in the text with the same meaning as those in the exercise.

**Answers:**

- a. *unjustly*
- b. *shelter*
- c. *multiple*
- d. *improvised*
- e. *former*
- f. *supply*
- g. *ensuing*
- h. *provide*
- i. *frequently*
- j. *association*
- k. *dispersed*
- l. *professional*

## 6. Summaries

Either give each student three paragraphs or allow them to choose three paragraphs. Students write very brief summaries of each (one or two sentences).

If possible, put 12 large sheets of paper on the wall – one for each paragraph. Get students to stick their summaries on the appropriate poster, and have students read each others' summaries.

## C. Activities after reading

### 7. Group quiz competition

Students get into groups of four-six. In groups, they think of 5 closed answer questions from the text. The groups must know the answers to their own questions.

In turn, groups ask the questions to the other groups, who write their answers down. After all groups have asked and answered the questions, get groups to share the answers – one point for each correct answer. The group with the most points is the winner.

### 8. Write a poem

Students write poems about a person, organisation or issue from the text. They use the name or word as the first letter of each line on the poem. An example – landmines – is provided.

If possible, put the poem on the wall. There are no right and wrong poems – don't mark them for grammar or spelling.