

Flags: Teachers' notes and tips - elementary

1 Pre-reading tasks

- a Before giving each student a copy of the task sheet read out the questions open class and check understanding of the vocabulary. Write some of the words on the board as you explain them for future reference (e.g. tricolour - *a flag which has three bands of different colours*, emblem - *a design or picture that represents a country or an organization*, coat of arms - *a design that is a special symbol of a family, country, city etc.*) Also highlight the difference between to *fly* a flag and to *wave* a flag.
- b Then give each student a task sheet and get them to answer the questions. This is a speaking activity so make sure nobody is writing!
- c Open class: feedback (*The flag shown is the Vietnamese flag*. All other questions - students' own answers.)

Tip: give elementary students time to start speaking

Once students have understood the questions they still need a little time to get going so don't rush them. Don't be tempted to dive in. Sit back and wait for them to start. Some examples of tricolour flags, emblems or coats of arms would be a great help.

2 First reading tasks

- a This is a reading for gist task (number two of the task sheet). As always, encourage students to read the text as quickly as possible and remind them they will read it all again.
- b When all the students have finished, they can compare their answer with another student.
- c Ask a student for the answer. (*b*)

Tip: monitor well

Listen out for students deciding which is correct. Perhaps choose a weaker student, whom you know has got it right, to give the answer – this will boost their confidence.

3 Second reading tasks

- a Put students into pairs. Helping each other, they read the text again and answer the questions a – k. They should do this as quickly as possible, the first pair which has all the answers put their hands up.
- b Wait for most teams to finish and then get the answers from the students, awarding points for correct answers.
- c If students disagree with an answer, get them to decide among themselves, referring to the text, before saying whether they are right or not.

Tip: try to keep the activity student centred and encourage peer correction

The answers are in the text so students should be looking at that again rather than turning to you. If students disagree, get them to read out the part of the text where they think the answer is or get another student to explain what the answer is. The overall aim of these lessons is to encourage students to read more outside the class so the less help from you the better.

- d Open class: Feedback **a red & white b England & Scotland c Sweden d Saudi Arabia & Brazil e Portuguese f two g white h 15 i red, white & blue j Mozambique & Nepal**

k three (Mozambique, Saudi Arabia, Nepal)

4 Post-reading tasks – vocabulary

- a If you have a stronger class, you can ask students to do this first as a speaking activity. In pairs, can the students remember what the adjectives referred to? Otherwise they can find the adjectives in the text and fill in the chart.
- b Feedback: answers from the students where possible

adjective	what?	where?
terrible	<i>flags everywhere</i>	<i>in England</i>
dangerous	<i>flags</i>	<i>flying from car windows in England</i>
familiar	<i>the sight of Swedish flags</i>	<i>in Sweden</i>
religious	<i>writing</i>	<i>on Saudi Arabia's flag</i>
modern	<i>weapon</i>	<i>on Mozambique's flag</i>
Islamic	<i>crescent</i>	<i>on Tunisia's flag</i>
horizontal	<i>bands of colour</i>	<i>on various flags</i>
common	<i>colours</i>	<i>on Paraguay's flag</i>
reverse*	<i>side of flag</i>	<i>on Paraguay's flag</i>

* Note *reversal* appears as a noun in the text.

Tip: highlight how adjectives are used

Focussing on the context will help students both understand and remember the adjectives.

5 Post-reading tasks – design a flag

- a Tell the students that their language school wants a flag. They have to decide what design would be best. They need to think about the colours and emblems etc that would be most appropriate. They can design the flag, and draw it for homework, and then bring it to the next lesson. Students then show and explain their design to the others who then vote for the one they like best.

Tip: provide appropriate vocabulary for this

Highlight the vocabulary in the text of course (*horizontal bands, tricolour* etc), but for the presentation they'll need phrases like *I chose this colour because ... This colour / emblem represents ...*

For information: An AK-47 is a Russian assault rifle, also called a kalashnikov. The ICRC is the Internal Committee of the Red Cross which is partnered with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.