

Pearls: Teacher's notes and tips – upper intermediate

1 Pre-reading tasks

- a Give each student a copy of the worksheet and ask them to solve the anagrams.
- b Feedback: **a** pearl **b** amber **c** coral **d** ivory. They are all used for making jewellery (and are all of organic origin).
- c Ask if students have any of these items, where they bought them etc. If appropriate for your class you can also consider how politically correct it is to buy coral or ivory these days.

Tip: use realia

If you can get examples of any of these that would help to create interest in the subject, mother-of-pearl buttons or shells would be nice too.

2 First reading tasks

- a Divide the students into pairs. Two students make pair A and then next two students make pair B. Give each pair a copy of the reading and they read the first paragraph *only*. (Perhaps get students to fold over the reading along the dotted line to resist temptation!) Then pair A try and answer Tina's first four questions in the paragraph, and pair B try and answer Tina's last four.
- b When they've thought about the answers put pair A with pair B and get them to share their answers – do they agree? Can they help with unanswered questions?
- c There's no need for feedback or open class discussion if the students have been chatting in groups of four.

Tip: encourage prediction

Allowing students to consider the content of the reading will help them to understand the text. Also students at this level who may be taking the IELTS exam really benefit from practising guessing the answers to questions.

3 Second reading tasks

- a Students now read the rest of the text quickly to answer question 2 on the worksheet (*not* the questions in the first paragraph). Get them to compare their answers with each other.
- b Feedback: **b**

Tip: give appropriate reading for gist tasks

Asking students to identify the most appropriate sentence is a good way to get students to read for gist rather than worry about individual words.

4 Third reading tasks

- a Now students read the text more slowly and answer the questions from the first paragraph. They can continue to work in pairs or individually. Students only need to make notes or write short answers. As always get students to compare their answers.
- b Feedback: **a** something else – organic **b** it's from the iridescence of the nacre (mother-of-pearl) **c** it takes three years for a pearl to grow, natural

pearls are very rare, cultured pearls are individually produced **d** pearls are the result of a defence mechanism, mussels also have pearls **e** yes **f** pearls deliberately made (by inserting an irritant) **g** pearls are grown in Japan, China, South Pacific (and other places not mentioned in the text, for example Australia) **h** natural ones are very rare

Tip: provide sufficient time for this

Students need to read more slowly now; they won't enjoy the task if they feel rushed.

5 Post-reading tasks – vocabulary

- a The important thing about this vocabulary exercise is that students need to understand that all the definitions given are correct. What they have to do is decide which definition is being used *in this particular text*.
- b Do an example first with *cultured*. Students find the word, read it again in context and see that the meaning is 3.
- c Remind students that guessing the meaning of a word is an excellent reading skill, but if a dictionary is used they should look at all the definitions (as they are doing here) and not just choose the first one.

Tip: use opportunities to improve students' vocabulary

Give examples of how cultured etc. can be used in other contexts: *My sister is very cultured, she's always going to exhibitions and the opera; Scientists use cultured bacteria for their experiments.*

- d Feedback: **a 3 b 2 c 1** (careful with pronunciation: /ma'nju:t/ not /mɪnɪt/)
d 3 e 1 f 1 g 3 h 2 i 1
- e Students can complete the chart for homework, perhaps writing some sentences using these words. Or it can be used at the start of another lesson for consolidation.

	noun	verb	adjective	adverb
cultured	<i>culture</i>	<i>to culture</i>	✓	<i>culturally</i>
organic	<i>organism</i>	/	✓	<i>organically</i>
minute	<i>miniature</i>	/	✓(<i>miniature</i>)	/
penetrate	<i>penetration</i>	✓	<i>penetrating</i>	/
isolate	<i>isolation</i>	✓	<i>isolated</i>	/
irritant	✓(<i>irritation</i>)	<i>irritate</i>	<i>irritating</i>	<i>irritatingly</i>
cultivate	<i>cultivation</i>	✓	<i>cultivated</i>	/
imitation	<i>imitation</i>	<i>imitate</i>	✓	/

6 Post-reading tasks – research using the Internet

- a Get students to choose one of the other three organic gems and to find out more about it. They are going to present this information to the other students. A younger class may enjoy making a poster and collecting pictures of the gem.
- b Perhaps give some questions as guidance – can it be easily faked? Is it expensive / rare? What is it used for? Where can it be found?

7 Post-reading tasks – speaking

- a You can either put students into groups of three so that each group has a coral, ivory and amber in it. They then take it in turns to tell each other about their gems.
- b Or you can put all the corals, ivories and ambers together to share their information and then give them time to present this to the rest of the class who listen and ask any questions. The posters can be displayed while they do this.