

## Hybrids: Teachers' notes and tips – elementary

### 1 Pre-reading tasks

- a Write on the board the following sentence: A *lume* is the cross between a *shero* and a *yendok*.
- b Ask students, working in pairs, to solve the three anagrams and make sense of the sentence!
- c Feedback: A *mule* is the cross between a (female) *horse* and a (male) *donkey*.
- d Explain that a mule is an example of a hybrid – a creature that has parents of different species. Many plants are also hybrids of course.

**Tip: use the lead-in to deal with difficult concepts that may hinder the reading**

It will be easier for the students to understand the texts if they have grasped the general theme of the reading. If students are interested see if they can explain why hybrids exist.

**Tip: use realia**

If you can get any pictures of mules that would be great (you could show them if the students are struggling with the anagrams!), but don't show pictures of the animals that are in the text.

### 2 First reading tasks

- a Tell students they are going to read about four different creatures. Give each student a copy of the text and explain that although the title is *Hybrids* one creature is not actually a hybrid. They need to read it all quite quickly to find out which one is not a real hybrid.
- b Students compare their answers.

**Tip: always remind students that they can read the text again more slowly**

Students only need to read to do this one task so they should not be worrying about unknown vocabulary or any details at this stage.

- c Feedback: the octosquid.

### 3 Second reading tasks

- a Give each student a copy of the worksheet.
- b Tell students they're now going to read the text in more detail to fill in the chart on the worksheet. They need to make notes about what species the parents are and which characteristics (appearance and/or personality) they have from them. Note that the octosquid doesn't have parents!
- c Students then read again more slowly and make notes. Make sure that it's just notes they're writing and not whole sentences.

**Tip: encourage students to work out the meaning of unknown words from context**

If you want you can wait for the first student to ask you, or reach for a dictionary, before demonstrating that the students can understand many unknown words without being told what they are. Or you can do an example straight away; perhaps choose the word *tame* from the first text. Students should notice that the definition is already in the sentence: *friendly like a horse, and you can ride her*. Students can also be shown that the antonym *wild* is in the next sentence, and we know it's an antonym because it's after the word *however*. Students who can infer meaning from context will read more quickly and efficiently.

- d As always when students have finished get them to compare their answers before asking them for suggestions.
- e Feedback:

	The parents	The characteristics
1 Eclyse is a zorse	mother: horse	friendly, tame, and you can ride her
	father: zebra	stripes on face and back, wild – leaps about
2 Rama is a cama	mother: llama	fleece, calm
	father: camel	short ears, long tail (but no hump), big
3 Lawrence is a lignon	mother: tiger	(light) stripes, purrs, likes swimming
	father: lion	mane, roars, friendly with other big cats
4 Octosquid	octopus	8 tentacles and head
	squid	body

#### 4 Third reading tasks

- a Students are now put into pairs to answer the questions in part 2 together. They don't need to write anything down, this is a speaking activity. They probably need to read some of the text again though.
- b Get pairs to compare their answers before feedback: **a 1 and 3; b 2; c 1; d 1 and 3; e 4; f 1; g 4; h 2 and 3** (both sets of animals live in different parts of the world: the llama from South America and the camel from desert countries; the tiger comes from Asia and the lion from Africa.)

#### Tip: make comprehension questions interesting

Encourage students to read more into a text to find the answers – and to use their intelligence too. Remember that questions should be helping comprehension and not testing.

#### 5 Post-reading tasks – speaking and writing

- a Put students into groups of three and tell them that they now have to come up with their own hybrid. They need to choose a mother and father, and a suitable name for the hybrid and the animal (e.g. zorse and Eclyse). They also have to decide which characteristics of the parents the hybrid may have.
- b Encourage students to use their imagination! They can make up any amusing combination!
- c Students then fill in this information on their worksheets in the blank spaces at the bottom of the chart.
- d Using their notes students then write about a hybrid, they can use the example texts to help them. Suggest they write at least 150 words.

#### Tip: appeal to the more creative students

Students may like to draw their hybrid as well, especially younger students.

#### Tip: link the reading to other skills

For follow up in another lesson students can read about each other's creatures and decide which one they think is the best.