

PRACTICAL LESSON IDEAS – ACTIVATING



1 KEY WORDS

Guess the topic of the lesson and explain useful words.

Write ten random key words about a topic on the board. Ask learners to answer these questions:

- What will the lesson be about?
- Which words can you add to these?
- Which words are unfamiliar?

Provide definitions of the least familiar words.

Biology: Classification

Write the words *kingdom*, *class*, *family*, *species*, *genus* and *phylum* on the board:

Ask learners to guess what the lesson will be about, and whether they can add any more words related to this classification. Then ask them to look up and note down a definition for one word. In turns, learners read aloud their definition and everyone writes down which word is being described.

2 COMPETITION: QUICKEST OR MOST

Quickly list a fixed number of words or produce as many as you can, related to the topic of the lesson.

Write the topic of the lesson on the board. Learners work in pairs to either

- 1 be the first pair to write down ten verbs related to the topic; or
- 2 be the first pair to write down the most verbs (or nouns) related to the topic.

Geography: Global warming

Quickest

Ask learners to work in pairs and write down ten verbs used to talk about global warming. Which pair is the first to get ten?

Most

Give learners one minute to write down as many verbs used to talk about global warming as they can think of. Which learner produced the most in the time available?

3 QUESTIONS

Write down ten questions about the lesson topic.

Write the topic of the lesson on the board. Learners work in pairs and write down ten questions about the topic - at least four should begin with who, what, how and why.

History: The slave trade

Ask learners to write down ten questions they would like to have answered about the slave trade.

They might produce questions like:

- Who owned slaves?
- What happened to children born into slavery?
- How were slaves treated?
- Why was slavery acceptable to people at the time?
- Where did the slaves come from?

4 SCRAMBLED SENTENCE

Mix up the words of a sentence about the topic and ask learners to re-create the original sentence.

Choose one sentence or question which is relevant (humorous, interesting, controversial) to your topic and mix it up. Write the scrambled words on the board, or create small cards – one word per card. Ask the learners to create one sentence from your mixed up words. If it is a question, you can ask for their answers and discuss these.

Science: Nuclear power

Scramble the sentence: Nuclear power is the most environmentally friendly means of generating energy.

Nuclear
the
energy.
means

environmentally
power
friendly

is
most
of
generating

Ask learners to recreate the sentence. Once they have completed that task, they discuss how science might prove or disprove this claim.

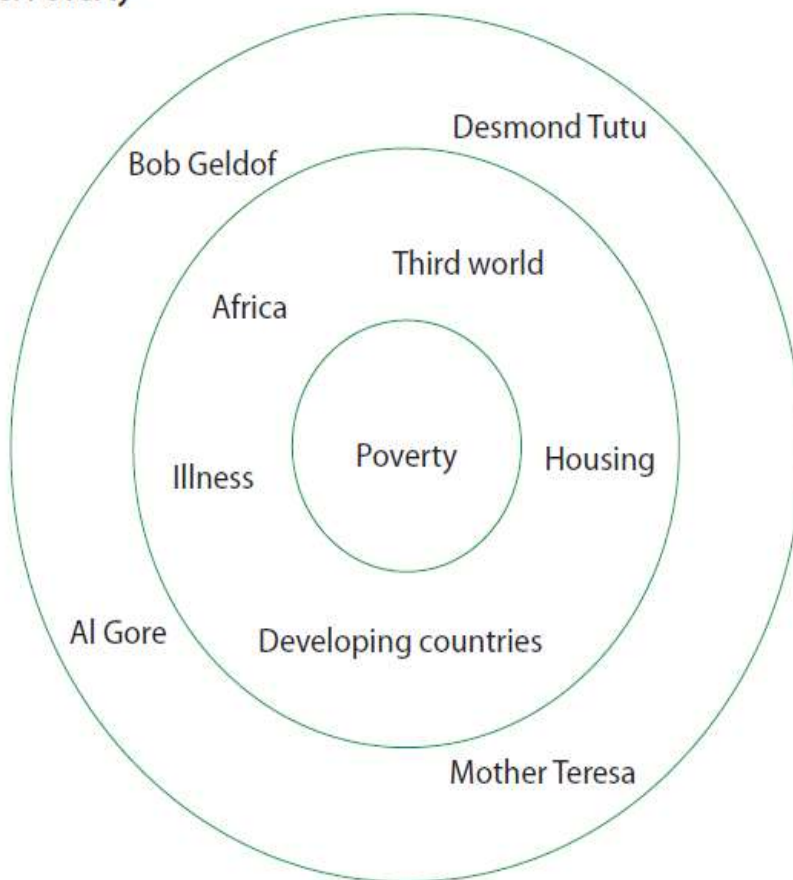
You can scramble a paragraph or complete text, too. Make cards or a handout of the mixed-up sentences or paragraphs and ask the learners to reconstruct the text or paragraph.

16 TARGET PRACTICE

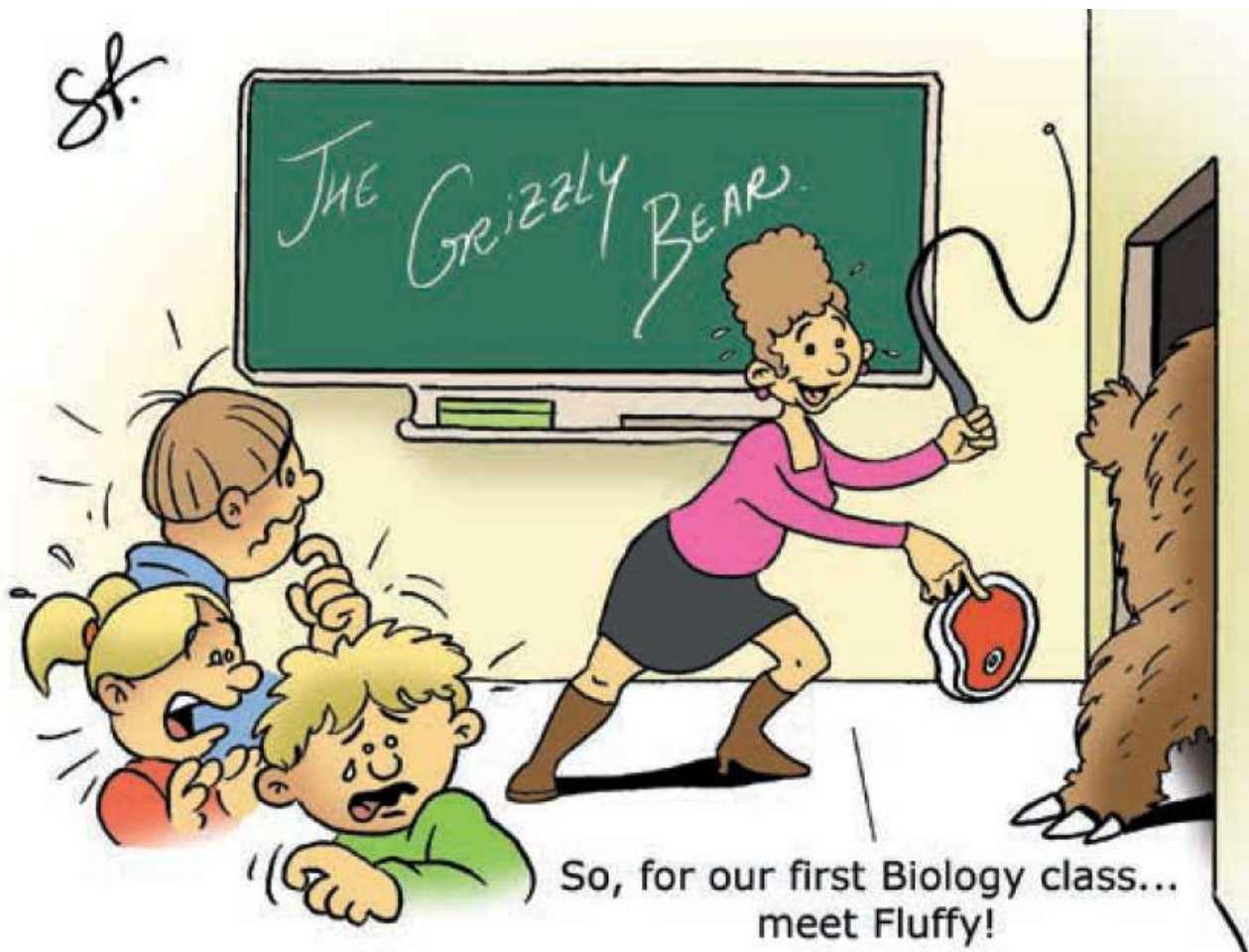
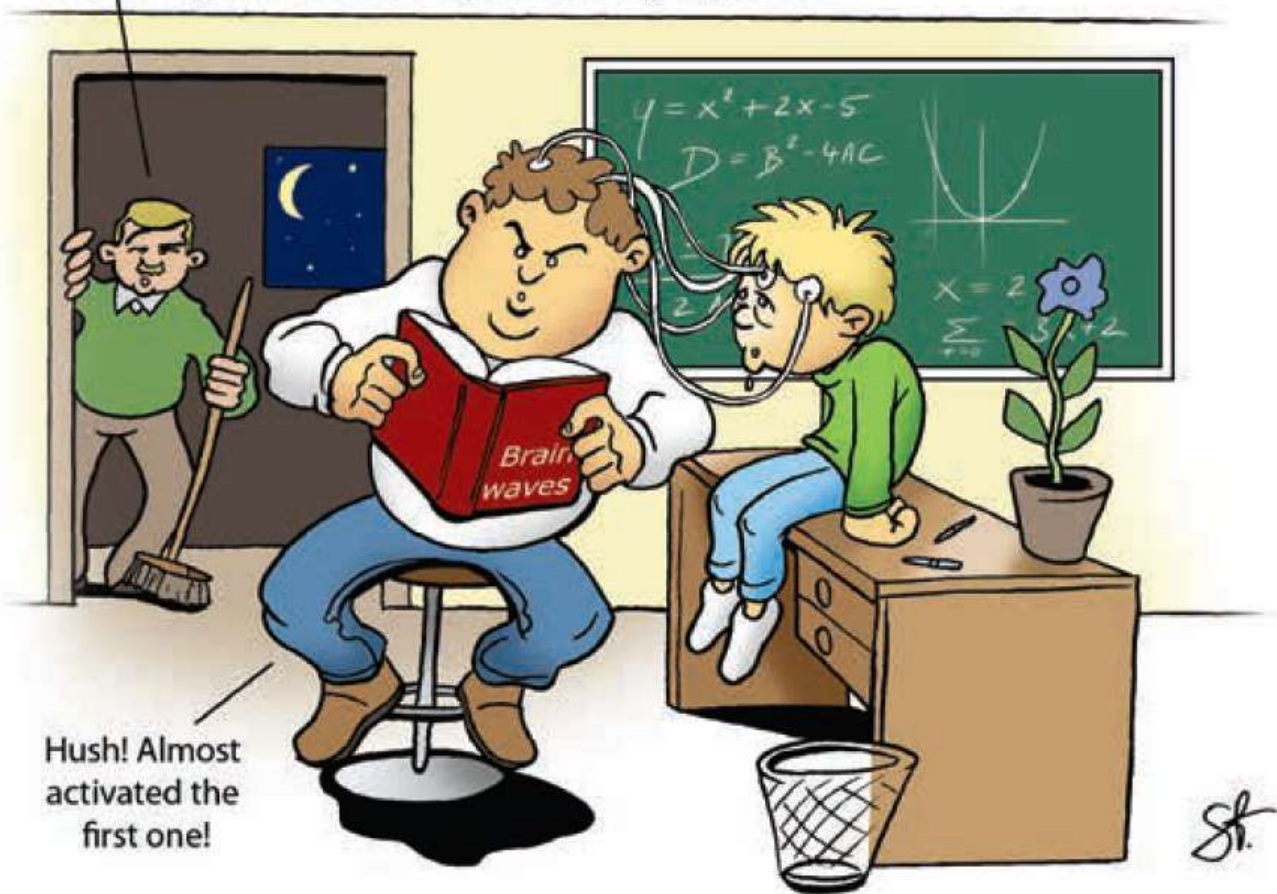
Learners complete a target image with ideas and people related to a topic.

Provide a handout of a target for each learner, with the lesson topic in the centre of the target. In the second, slightly larger circle, learners brainstorm about the topic. In the outer circle, they write down the names of people who might have influenced thinking related to the topic (either their ideas or the topic in general).

Social studies: Poverty



How many kids are there in your class anyway, John...?



19 USING PICTURES AND ASKING QUESTIONS

Support texts with visuals or hands-on activities.

Select a visual - a photograph, cartoon or other image - which is strongly related to your topic. Then create a task around the visual to introduce your learners to the lesson topic and get them talking. Make sure that all the learners can see the visual. You might use a list of questions, a pile of cards with questions, or a mind map to complete. First ask the learners to think about it in pairs, and then discuss some ideas together in plenary.

Physics: radiation

When showing an image of people wearing a hazmat suit (garment worn for protection against hazardous substances), you could ask the following questions:

What, where and when?

What is the photo of?

Where was the photo taken?

When (time of day, or year) was the photo taken?

Write down two questions you would like to ask about the photo.

Think of a catchy title for the photo.

Who?

Who is in the photo?

What are the people doing in the photo?

What are they wearing/What do they look like?

What is the relationship between the people in the photo?

Who is the photographer?

Why?

Why do you think the photograph was taken?

Who or what event was the photograph taken for?

What is the photographer trying to convey to the viewer?

In-depth

If this photo was the cover for a book, what would the title of the book be?

If it were a CD cover, what kind of music would it be?

What might the title of the CD be?

If the photo was illustrating an article, what would the title be?

What do you think the message of the photo is?

25 SPOT THE WORDS

Help learners to notice language.

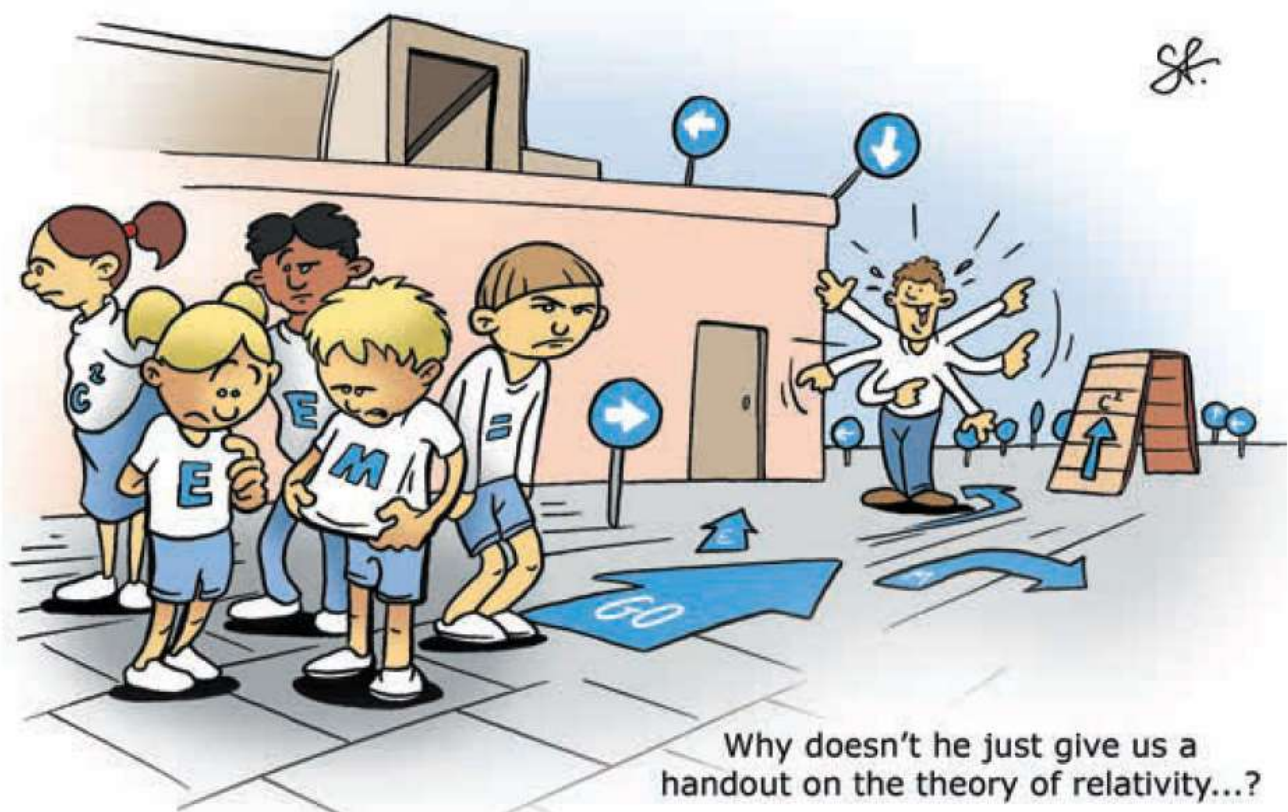
Make a list of verbs, nouns or adjectives. Add six words which are not in the same category. Ask learners to find the words which do not belong to the category.

Biology: endangered animals

An adjective is a word that describes a person, animal, place, thing or idea. Adjectives modify or 'give more information' about nouns, e.g. a *beautiful* dog. Which of the following words are *not* adjectives?

Cross out these non-adjectives and add more adjectives of your own.

spotted	lovable	quick	moist	territorial	ears
furry	vicious	warm-blooded	cute	dry	shiny
long	wild	cold-blooded	adorable	shy	small
striped	tame	heavy	rough	dominant	large
deadly	diurnal	aggressive	scaly	submissive	nocturnal
soft	hairy	wings	patterned	maternal	cat



Economics: banking

We have come across the words below during our lessons over the past few weeks. This task will help you to remember them better.

Account, bank, statement, borrow, budget, cash, cashier, cheque, credit card, currency, deposit, savings, withdraw, instalments, receipt, refund, income, pay into, save up, take out, broke, hard-up

- 1 Write each word under the colour you associate it with. For example:

Yellow

cash

Blue

savings

Red

withdraw

Green

pay into

- 2 Explain to your partner or group why you have chosen a particular colour for a word.

Learners might say things such as "I put *savings* under BLUE because it's the colour of my bank's website", or "I put *withdraw* under red because if you have a negative bank balance you are in the red".

History: the Industrial Revolution

We have come across the words below during our lessons over the past few weeks. This task will help you to remember them better.

capital, capitalism, collective bargaining, communism, conservative, enclosure, entrepreneur, union, exploitation, industrialisation, monopoly, obsolete, oligopoly, oppression, proletariat, radical, strike.

- 1 Write each word under the shape you associate it with. For example:



industrialisation



entrepreneur



oppression



oligopoly

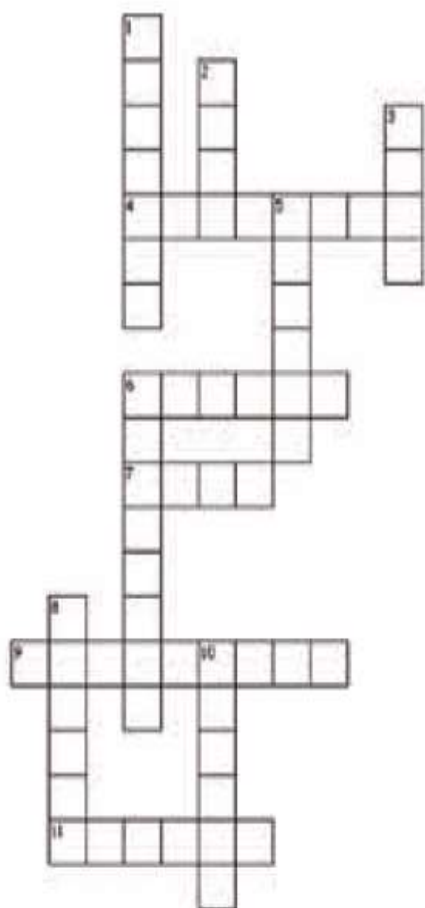
- 2 Explain to your partner or group why you have chosen a particular shape for a word.

Learners might say things such as "I put *industrialisation* under the square because it sounds organised".

Complete a crossword puzzle.

After a number of lessons around a topic, choose the words which are important for learners to retain and create a crossword with those words. This is easily done online.

Chemistry: the Periodic Table



Across

- 4 H
- 6 Cu
- 7 Pb
- 9 Mg
- 11 Ni

Down

- 1 S
- 2 Au
- 3 Zn
- 5 O
- 6 Cl
- 8 C
- 10 Ag

This crossword, which revises elements in the periodic table, was made with Puzzlemaker <http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/CrissCrossSetupForm.asp>

You can also create crosswords where the clues are word definitions, gapped sentences, or pictures.

23 Production scaffolds for geography

In geography, learners are expected to use subject-specific terminology and factual and formal explanations when talking about topics such as global warming, rainforests and climate change. Below is a worksheet one geography teacher uses to help learners understand the causes and effects of an earthquake.

Instructions

A **cause** is something that makes something else happen. Of two related events, it is the event that happens first. To determine the cause, ask yourself the question *Why did it happen?*

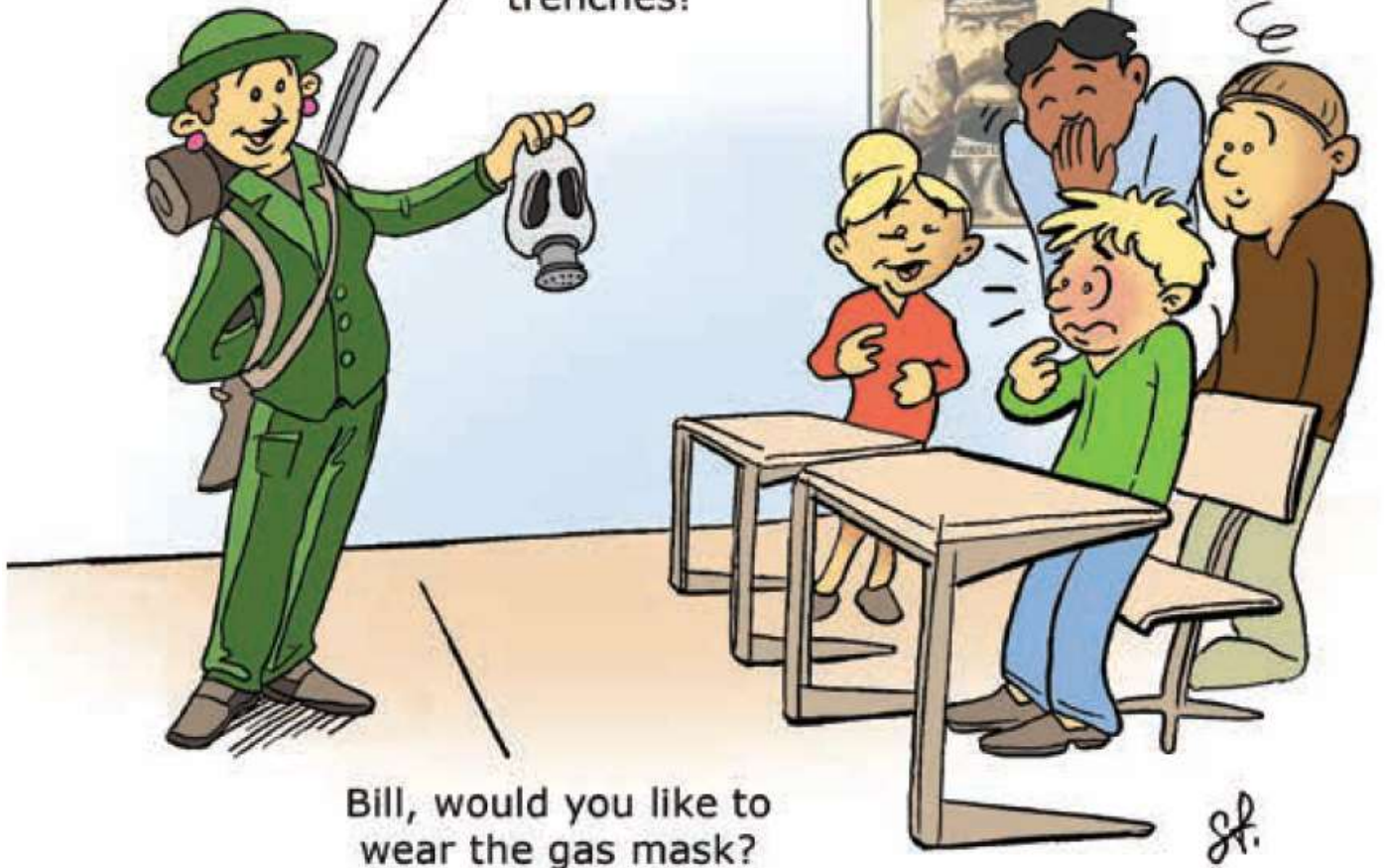
An **effect** is what happens as a result of the cause. Of two related events, it is the one that happens second or last. To determine the effect, ask the question *What happened?*

Exercise 1: Phrases

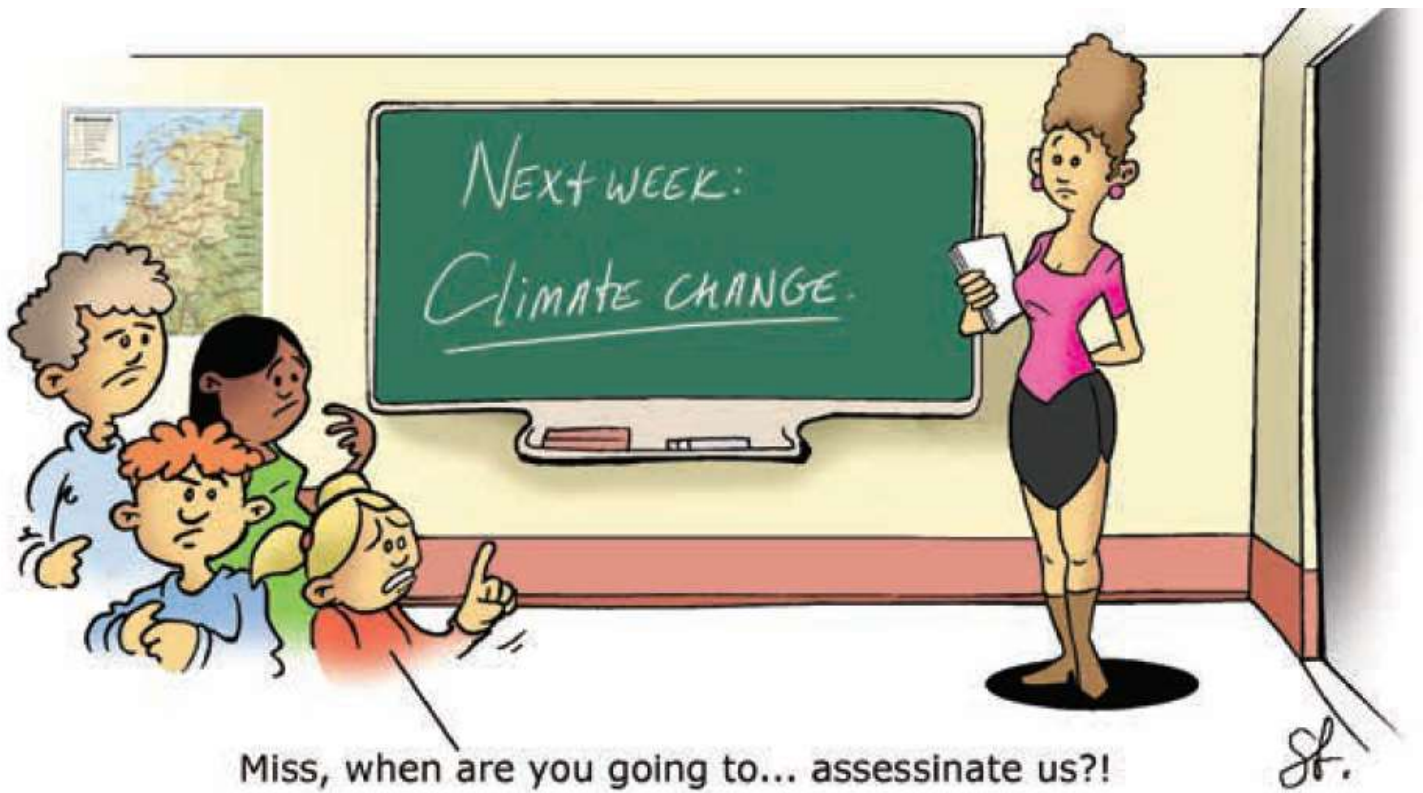
- Match the sentences and phrases in column A with the right endings in column B.
- Mark the cause (red) and the effect (blue) using two different coloured pens.
- Draw a circle around the different words used to express a cause and effect relationship.

Column A	Column B
1 The new trains have more powerful engines.	is due to acid rain.
2 The air rises and cools.	so there isn't enough food for the people.
3 The traffic was very heavy and	This is caused by too many greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.
4 Many species of wildlife are becoming extinct	because the rainforests are being destroyed.
5 This year's crop was destroyed by the bad weather,	They are, therefore, faster.
6 The temperature is rising steadily.	as a consequence the rock erodes at the bottom.
7 The waves bash against the rock and	This causes the water vapour to condense into water droplets.
8 Since the volcano emits so much ash and poisonous gas,	because of the melting ice caps.

So, for today's history class, you will explore the trenches!



Bill, would you like to wear the gas mask?



Miss, when are you going to... assassinate us?!

Practical lesson ideas to encourage writing

46 I AM A ...

Write about a process in the first person.

Ask learners to write a story in the first person about a process in your subject. They explain what happens in the various stages of this particular system. The learners imagine they are part of an enormous system and that they are going on a journey through that system. Whether they survive or not, a report must be written in which learners describe what happens at every stage of their journey: which of their friends they encounter or lose at each stage. Create a handout for them like the one below. Make sure your learners know what to include in the story and how to structure it: where does it take place, what challenges must the character face and overcome, how does the character reach their final destination (or not!). They should tell their journey as a narrative, starting at the beginning of the process and finishing at the end.

Biology: Digestive system

Imagine you are part of an enormous cheeseburger. Perhaps you are the bread roll, or the melted cheese, the pickles, the onions, the secret sauce, the lettuce or possibly even the beef. Whatever part you choose to be, you are the leader. It is your mission to lead the burger on a dangerous journey. A journey to the bottom of the world. A journey through the digestive system.

It is a journey involving many risks and not all of you will survive. All of you will come under attack and most of you will be destroyed along the way. Many of you will suffer a painful death and be broken down into many thousands of pieces, to be absorbed into the blood of a voracious monster otherwise known as *Homo sapiens!*

Whether you survive or not, a report must be written for base headquarters. In the report you must describe what happens at every stage of your journey. Say which of your friends (food types/nutrients) is destroyed at each stage and who is responsible (yes, watch out for the vicious enzymes and evil acid!). Tell it as a story, starting in the mouth and ending in the anus. At the end, only one of your friends is left over... let this 'person' take over the story after you have been destroyed.

Variations

Geography: The journey of lava in an exploding volcano.

Biology: The journey of a migratory bird or animal.

Physics: The journey of a carbon atom.

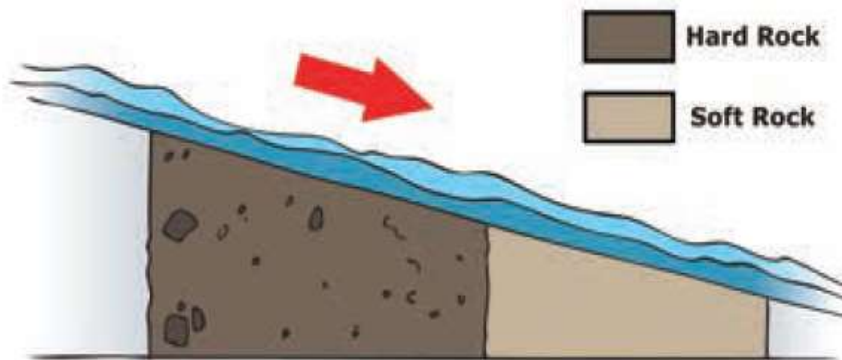
History: The journey of a soldier's tiffin tin (lunch box) in the trenches.

Question 3

Look at Figure 3: Stage 1 in the development of a waterfall. Draw Stage 2 of this development on your answer sheet. Don't forget to label your diagram:

Figure 3

Stage 1:



Stage 2:

Question 4

Parts of rivers have special names. There are four names for parts of a river in this word search. When you have found them, write the correct word next to each meaning. Use the word search only if you need help.

T	R	I	B	U	T	A	R	Y	F	L	B
A	Q	Q	U	V	K	C	I	L	R	E	Q
C	H	B	B	K	B	A	O	P	X	N	J
U	N	Q	V	T	V	O	O	A	N	N	P
Z	Q	K	D	A	D	W	Y	V	H	A	H
X	M	D	R	P	I	Z	R	E	Y	H	D
J	V	X	L	Q	X	I	N	O	Z	C	W
P	R	A	X	J	O	P	U	Y	J	R	M
R	I	E	C	N	E	U	L	F	N	O	C
N	F	G	M	K	I	M	K	D	N	Y	G