


4 easy-to-use lesson plans to develop the skills of reading, speaking and writing:

1 – 1.5 hour, for intermediate learners (individual lessons or for small or larger groups). All photos and texts from: eewiki.newint.org

1. Forests

Topic	Forests
1/ Vocabulary	<p>Show pictures or mime, or get learners to match definitions to these words: <i>to worship, physical health/illness, mental health/illness, to connect, therapy, bark (of a tree), dam</i> Get learners to repeat and practise the words.</p>
2/ Pre-reading	<p>Give the title and picture to see what learners think the text will be about.</p> <p>‘Forest bathing’</p>  <p>Get learners to decide on, or write questions they’d like to find out about the topic.</p>
3/ Reading	<p>First, learners look through the text for 1 minute only to decide if it is a happy text or a sad text. Discuss.</p> <p>Second, learners read the text in detail to try to answer their own questions. They discuss afterwards if the text answers them.</p>
4/ Speaking and writing	<p>Speaking: learners plan a talk to their friends about how important forests are (they can look back at the text); they then give their talks in small groups; the teacher can listen and note down some errors to focus on and get learners to correct afterwards.</p> <p>Writing: learners, in pairs, write a letter to the national or local government saying how important forests are. Learners can read and suggest improvements to each others’ letters afterwards.</p>

Forest bathing

Tina Burrett and Christopher Simons write about forest therapy in Japan.



The busy centre of Tokyo is one side of modern Japan. But there is another side - quieter, not busy, away from the cities. More than 70 per cent of Japan is mountains, and two-thirds of the land is forest. So the rivers, mountains and forests in Japan are very important in its spiritual and cultural life.

Shinto is the very old ethnic religion of Japan. In Shinto, people worship nature. They think waterfalls, mountains and rivers – and earthquakes and storms – are spirits (or *kami*). There are also tree spirits, the *kodama*.

Many people still like walking in the forests and mountains today. Every year, thousands of people from cities in Japan connect with nature by walking to the 88 temples in Shikoku, the smallest of Japan's main islands; or along the ancient forest routes of Kumano, across the Kii Peninsula south of Osaka. But the Japanese 'forest bathing' (*shinrin yoku*) brings a new level to a walk in the woods. For forest bathing, you don't need a swim suit. You enter into the sights, sounds and smells of the woods.

A 2004 study from the Nippon Medical School showed that if we spend time in a forest, we have less stress and better physical and mental health. So some local governments in Japan have chosen some areas as places for forest therapy.

'We know that the smells of trees, the sounds of small rivers and the feel of sunshine through forest leaves can make people calm,' says Yoshifumi Miyazaki, director of the Centre for Environment Health and Field Sciences at Chiba University. People should listen to the sound of wind, feel the heat of the sun, look at the colour of the leaves, touch the bark and smell the trees.

It is stressful to work in Tokyo. Most people work six days a week. Companies pay people to take holiday, but there is so much pressure that some people are afraid to take time off. Schoolchildren study a lot too - many go to *juku* (cram schools) after normal school hours.


The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) says that 22 per cent of Japanese employees work 50 or more hours a week. Only 11 per cent of people work this long in the US and 8 per cent in France.

So many people work extra hours for no more money and they have many different physical and mental illnesses. The Japanese language has a word *karoshi*, which means 'death by working too much'. In 2013, 133 people died from something related to work eg. strokes, heart attacks and suicide.


For many people, forest bathing helps them feel better after working so much. But this forest bathing might end soon. The government in Japan has spent a lot of money to bring jobs to the countryside. They have cut a lot of forest to make roads and dams etc. In 2014, the government decided to spend \$52 billion on public works. Japan's economy collapsed in the early 1990s, and since then the government have spent trillions of dollars on building and development. Many people say it would be better to spend money to encourage tourism in the countryside. This could help the economy and improve the health of the workers. Maybe time in the forests is good for everyone.

https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Forest_bathing

2. Sharing

Topic	Sharing
1/ Words	<p>Get learners to match definitions to these words in the task below. KEY: 1/f 2/i 3/l 4/a 5/m 6/d 7/h 8/j 9/b 10/g 11/e 12/k 13/c</p> <p>Get learners to repeat and practise the words.</p>
2/ Pre-reading	<p>Give the title and picture to see what learners think the text will be about.</p> <p>Indigenous culture can save the planet</p>  <p>Get them to say or write sentences, using the new words, that they think might be in the text.</p>
3/ Reading	<p>First, learners look through the text for 1 minute only to decide if it is positive or negative about the people in the photo. Discuss.</p> <p>Second, learners read the text in detail to check if there are any sentences like the ones they said or wrote. They discuss what the text says that is different from what they predicted.</p>
4/ Speaking	<p>Speaking: learners role-play a journalist and a person from the indigenous group in the text. They can plan their questions and answers beforehand. The teacher can listen and note errors for them to see if they can correct afterwards. Finally, they swap partners and repeat the role-play.</p>

Match the words and definitions:

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1/ indigenous | a) very very old |
| 2/ adivasi | b) wanting more and more (eg. food) |
| 3/ consumer society | c) no organisation at all |
| 4/ ancient | d) no-one else is the same |
| 5/ slavery | e) important things you believe in |
| 6/ unique | f) native |
| 7/ to hunt | g) the amount of carbon (CO2) you use |
| 8/ sustainably | h) to run after and kill animals for food |
| 9/ greedy | i) native tribal groups in India and Nepal |
| 10/ carbon footprint | j) protecting the |
| 11/ values | k)  |
| 12/ wild boar | l) where buying and selling |
| 13/ chaos | m) where people force others to work hard with no pay |

Indigenous culture can save the planet

by Mari Marcel Thekaekara



It's difficult to explain why we think indigenous, tribal or adivasi culture in India is so special. And it's more difficult to get the young adivasis to feel proud of their culture. The world really needs this type of culture, but television, films and consumer society are quickly taking over.

Schools teach children that we must respect the ancient cultures - Greek, Egyptian and Roman – but all these were based on slavery. Slaves built all the

ancient monuments eg. the Taj Mahal and the Pyramids of Giza. But indigenous people were unique – they treated everyone as equal.

Groups who hunt and collect food never take too much. They get just enough for the day. They get what they need, and are not greedy. Now, rich people hate them and say they are lazy and have no ambition. But they are the only people who live sustainably. Their carbon footprint is mostly zero. If we follow their lifestyle, this could save the planet.

Vinoth and Bhuvana have recently arrived in Gudalur, India. They gave up good jobs in IT in Bangalore to come here for a simple life. They want their children to grow up with values like the adivasi people.

We told them some of the old stories. Long ago, someone saw a Paniya man who had discovered some wonderful wild honey. He didn't put it in bottles for his children. He called everyone around, people he didn't know, to come and eat it. He was so happy to find it. But he didn't think of keeping it for his family and friends. His instant reaction was to share it with everyone around.

There is an old Moolukurumba hunting tradition. If they caught a wild boar, they brought it back for everyone in the village, not just for the people who went out to shoot it. If one house had visitors, they got extra meat. An equal share for every person, no more for important people. Many people don't understand this. But the adivasis say it's normal for them. They have always done this. They didn't understand that this is different to what other people do.

When I first arrived in the Nilgiris, in India, I was amazed to watch a little five-year-old. I gave her a biscuit. She took it and shared it, breaking it into very small bits so every other child got a little. I gave them a plate of biscuits and the children divided them carefully and equally. I had never seen anything like this with city children.

They sing about sharing too. In their wedding ceremony, the new married couple promise to follow the traditions of the community – they will never say no to a guest or any person who needs food.


People have studied indigenous people for many hundreds of years. Others often say they make their life sound romantic. For example, Ramachandra Guha described how the outside world has brought chaos to the indigenous areas in 'Savaging the Civilized'.

The first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, said developers must be very careful in tribal lands when they introduce 'our type of development'. They must see and respect the indigenous people and their culture. Not try to make them like us.

Many young people are now leaving the stress of the cities and trying to learn from these sustainable societies. So perhaps there's still hope. I really hope so.

[https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Indigenous culture can save the planet](https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Indigenous_culture_can_save_the_planet)

3. Technology

Topic	Technology
1/ Words	<p>Show pictures or mime, or get learners to match definitions to these words: <i>cash crops, organic manure, pest management, gravity, trolley, drought, solar power, hydro-electric, generator, vaccine, to irrigate</i></p> <p>Get learners to repeat and practise the words.</p>
2/ Pre-reading	<p>Give the title and picture to see what learners think the text will be about.</p> <p>Technology success stories</p>  <p>Then, get learners to write questions about the pictures and the new words.</p>
3/ Reading	<p>First, learners look through the text for 3 minutes only to see which of the 6 mini-texts they think is the most interesting. Discuss.</p> <p>Second, learners read the text in detail to try to answer their own questions. Then they discuss to decide on how to put the texts in order of importance for the world.</p>
4/ Writing	<p>Writing: put learners in pairs and give each pair 3 of the mini-texts. They then take it in turns to dictate a mini-text to their partner. After each mini-text, they can both compare the dictated version to the actual text and see if they have made errors.</p>

Fruits of the forest

Peruvian farmers grow cash crops eg. bananas, coffee and yucca, together with local trees. This helps protect the plants and stops soil erosion. This is very different from the 'slash-and-burn' farming they used before for coffee – this destroyed some of the mountainsides. They use organic manure and pest management. And the farmers increased production by 33 per cent in one year.

Hole in the wall

In India, they put computer terminals with internet access in a hole in a specially constructed wall in areas of poorer children. The children have not been to school much. They discover how to use the computer, and help each other. And they are very proud of teaching themselves and their new skills.

To market – using gravity

The monsoon season used to be very difficult for hill farmers in Nepal. The hills get very dangerous and slippery. People have to choose: they can take goods to market and they could die as it is so dangerous, or they could watch the food as it rots and goes to waste. Then they started using a very clever trolley on steel wires, which has made a big difference. The full trolley goes down - the weight of what is in it pulls it down. At the same time, the empty one is pulled up ready to put more goods in. It's simply mechanical, and does not need any electricity.

Citizen monitors

South Africa is suffering the worst drought in 23 years. They have started a citizen science project to check the quality of its water resources. The miniSASS (South African Scoring System) relies on citizens, young and old, to measure everything that shows the health of the rivers eg. sediments and pollutants. The citizens do not need to know anything about science.


Solar for water

In northern Kenya, they now have clean water because of pumps that run on solar power. Before, families had to get dirty water from deep holes dug into dry river beds; now they can get water from the very big underground reservoirs. Clean water cuts child sickness and death, and saves time for women. It also means they can use old farm land again and animals can get water easily.

Growing power

In a village in the Zimbabwe, an 80-kilowatt micro-hydro-electric generator provides electricity for 100 homes and two energy centres. At the centres, people can charge lanterns and mobile phones. Also, the plant produces power for the local health clinic so it can store vaccines and always have light at night, water-pumps to irrigate farmland, cold storage for crops, a saw mill and a grinding mill.

4. Oil

Topic	Oil
1/ Words	<p>Show pictures or mime, or get learners to match definitions to these words: <i>to drill, extinction, conservation, missionary, to contaminate, to protest, to defend their rights, activist</i> Get learners to repeat and practise the words.</p>
2/ Pre-reading	<p>Give the title and picture to see what learners think the text will be about.</p> <p>One woman against the big oil companies</p>  <p>Learners, in pairs, predict the content of the text from the words, title and picture, and write a 2-sentence summary.</p>
3/ Reading	<p>First, learners look through the text for 1 minute only to decide if it is a happy text or a sad text. Discuss.</p> <p>Second, learners read the text in detail to decide which summary is most similar. Then they discuss what surprised them in the text.</p>
4/ Speaking and writing	<p>Speaking: in pairs, one learner is a journalist and interviews the other, who is Alicia. Learners can prepare before the interview by looking at the text and preparing questions and information.</p> <p>Writing: in pairs, learners write to the oil companies to tell them why it's not a good idea to drill for oil in this area in Ecuador.</p>

One woman against the Big Oil Companies

Alicia Cawiya is an activist from Ecuador. She protested against the big oil companies to save Ecuador's Yasuní people. She talks to Linda Etchart.



On 3 August 2013, Alicia Cawiya, Vice-President of the Huaorani Nation of Ecuador, stood up to talk to the country's Constituent Assembly in Quito. It was live on national television.

Her President, Chief Moi Enomenga, told her what to say - to agree to oil drilling in her homeland in the Amazon River.

Moi signed agreements with Chinese oil companies and gave them the right to drill for oil on the land of the Huaorani, Taromenane, and Tagaeri peoples, in the Yasuní national park.

But Alicia decided not to say what her President wanted her to say. She spoke against the oil companies and for her people and their culture. She told the Ecuadorian government and the oil companies to stay away. 'There are seven companies on Huaorani lands but now we are poorer...' she said and the Assembly applauded. 'The animals are now in danger of extinction. Who is to blame? Not us... We want conservation. We want respect for our lands. We want to live the way we want to live.'

The National Assembly voted for the oil drilling by 133 votes to 108 but Alicia won the hearts of the Assembly and the country. She was on the front page of the news-papers. Now women listened to her and the country respected her in politics as she spoke for the rights of her

people. But now she also had big enemies including President Moi. Alicia says Moi wanted to kill her.

Where did Alicia get her courage from?

She was born in the Ñoneno community in the Yasuní lands. She is the granddaughter of a Huaorani warrior, called Iteca. The Huaorani were the fiercest of all the peoples in the country. Missionaries raised Alicia as a child before her grandmother brought her back to the forest.

Missionaries had the job of making the people 'civilized' so the oil companies could move in without any protests. Alicia says that she was politically active at the age of 13, and a leader at the age of 18. This was unusual in traditional communities in the Amazon where men were always the leaders.

'I followed my grandmother. Women at the time could not make decisions. But my grandmother said that because both men and women wanted to stop the oil companies, why not do it together?'

Amazonian women began to act by themselves when their men said yes to the oil companies.

'The women seem stronger', says Alicia. 'We trained ourselves. We saw how other organizations worked, how other women were learning, going to classes, organizing themselves. We agreed that we must protect the rainforest, or the oil companies would win. So we walked to Quito so that the people in the capital would realize that the Amazon women would defend their rights. We do not want our rivers contaminated, the big companies should not kill us for oil... We now have new illnesses because of the oil. Our children are worried that we will go to prison. But we shall protest even as we grow old.'

Alicia started the Women's Association, because she wanted women to have more money. It is very difficult for her and other women to be active politically. They have to find food, look after the children, and travel around the country and the world. Most of them live many days' journey into the rainforest by river. 'It is not easy for us... Sometimes the women decide not to travel because of their husbands, who are not happy about their political activities because they think they are maybe not telling the truth about where they are going. It is difficult but we have succeeded. Before, the women said nothing and the men made the decisions. It is different now. Women work the same as men to protest.'

https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/One_woman_against_the_Big_Oil_Companies