

Task 1 – Long Reading: Places, Times and Dates

At a glance

Level: ISE Foundation

Focus: Task 1 – Long reading

Aims: Students practise reading a text and identifying if statements about the text are true or false

Objectives: Students can understand specific information at sentence level

Skill: Understanding specific information.

Topic: Places in the local area and times and dates

Language functions: Describing objects and places, describing present events, describing past events and describing manner and frequency.

Lexis: Vocabulary used to describe places and related to telling the time and time zones.

Materials needed: Whiteboard, paper and pens, dictionaries, a list of world cities and the time difference with your city, a time zone map for every 3 students and one student worksheet per student.

Timing: 45 minutes

Procedure

Preparation

1. Write down a list of world cities and the time difference with your city. You can see the time in different time zones at <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/>
2. If you do not have access to a projector, print out one 'Time Zone map' for every three students (preferably in colour). A map can be found at <http://www.worldtimezone.com/>
3. Photocopy one student worksheet per student.

In class

1. Tell the students that in class today they are going to practise reading a text and identifying if statements about the text are true or false, like in Task 1 – Long reading in the ISE Foundation Reading & Writing exam. Tell them the text is about time zones.
2. To introduce the topic of time zones, put students into groups of three and ask them to write the current time in various world cities from the list you prepared before class.
3. Project or give out the time zone map and allow them to check their own answers.
4. Write '*Prime Meridian Line*' on the board, and point it out on the map. Ask students to explain in their own words what they think it is.
5. Check comprehension of '*eastern and western hemispheres*' by asking students to identify them on the map.
6. Give out the student worksheet and ask the students to guess whether each statement in 1 is True or False. Ask the students if there are any words they do not understand and explain accordingly.
7. Tell the students that five of the statements are true. Ask the students to now read the text to find out which statements are true and which are false.
8. Ask the students to check their answers with their partner and then open-class feedback. Write the correct answers on the board.
9. Now dictate the following questions or write them on the board:
 - a) *Would you like to visit the Greenwich observatory? Why/ Why not?*
 - b) *What problems do you think people had before there was an international time standard?*
 - c) *What problems do time zones cause today?*
 - d) *Do you think the Time Ball is a good way of telling the time? Why/ Why not?*Ask students to discuss the questions in pairs.
10. While students are speaking, write up any common errors on the board. Once the students have completed the task, briefly elicit some answers, comment on their progress and then address the errors.

Extension activity

Students who finish more quickly can be asked to underline five new words in the text and look up the definitions in a dictionary.

Further support activity

Weaker students can be asked to highlight the parts of the text which correspond to the true statements.

After class

Ask the students to write an appropriate heading for each paragraph of the text.

Student Worksheet

**Task 1 – Long Reading:
Places, Times and Dates**

1. Are the statements True or False according to the text below?

- A. There are 24 places in the world where the current time is different.
- B. An international time standard was introduced in 1884.
- C. Before 1884, nobody used clocks.
- D. After 1884, every town in the world kept its own local time.
- E. The Prime Meridian Line runs through Greenwich, London.
- F. It is not possible to stand on the Prime Meridian Line.
- G. The Time Ball tells people when it is 13.00.
- H. It is 1pm when the Time Ball falls to the bottom of the pole.

Reading Text

Time Zones

1. Time zones give areas on the Earth a time of day that is earlier or later than the nearby time zones. This is because when it is day-time on one side of the Earth, it is night-time on the other side. There are 24 standard time zones.
2. Greenwich Mean Time is the time in London. Greenwich is the Prime Meridian of the world. Every place on Earth is measured by its position east or west from this line.
3. The Greenwich Meridian became the Prime Meridian of the World in 1884. Before this, almost every town in the world had its own local time. There were no international agreements about measuring time. However, an international time standard became necessary for the growth of world travel and communication.
4. The Royal Observatory in Greenwich is the home of Greenwich Mean Time. At the Royal Observatory, you can have your photo taken standing on the Prime Meridian Line. When you stand over the line you are in the eastern and western hemispheres at the same time.
5. You can also watch the red Time Ball on top of Flamsteed House drop at 1pm every day. The Time Ball was one of the world's earliest public time signals. Before there was a Time Ball, only the richest people could buy clocks and watches of their own. The Time Ball was first used in 1833 and still operates today. At 12.55pm, the time ball rises half way up the pole. At 12.58pm it reaches the top, and at 1pm exactly, it falls.

Answer Key

- A. There are 24 places in the world where the current time is different. (T)
- B. An international time standard was introduced in 1884. (T)
- C. Before 1884, nobody used clocks. (F)
- D. After 1884, every town in the world kept its own local time. (F)
- E. The Prime Meridian Line runs through Greenwich, London. (T)
- F. It is not possible to stand on the Prime Meridian Line. (F)
- G. The Time Ball tells people when it is 13.00. (T)
- H. It is 1pm when the Time Ball falls to the bottom of the pole. (T)

Original sources:

<http://golondon.about.com/od/londonforfree/p/primemeridian.htm>

<http://www.rmg.co.uk/explore/astronomy-and-time/astronomy-facts/history/the-prime-meridian-at-greenwich>

http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Time_zone

<http://www.rmg.co.uk/royal-observatory/flamsteed-house-and-meridian/time-ball?show=nav.3613>