

Teachers' Notes: Smoke : A crisis in Northern Thailand

Background information

This worksheet is designed to accompany the documentary film *Smoke: A crisis in Northern Thailand* the version on the main site <http://smokethedocumentary.com/> has Thai subtitles if you would prefer a version without Thai subtitles then use this link <https://vimeo.com/152660266> and the password: pollution

These extra teaching ideas are designed for English teachers of high intermediate (B1+) level students and can be used in conjunction with the main worksheet or independently. They are best suited to upper Mathayom / University aged students and will help them understand, and explore further, the issues raised in the documentary. As well as aiding comprehension the activities will encourage critical thinking and discussion of the main issues raised in the documentary.

An idea for using the Thai sections of the video (translation / summary writing)

Get your students to watch the whole video (and do the worksheet focused on the English sections) then put the students in pairs or small groups and ask them to choose one of the Thai sections of the documentary that interests them and write a summary of it. They can then share their summaries with other pairs who can give them feedback on content and language. These questions may help.

- Is the summary clear? Why? Why not??
- Does it include all the key points?
- Could the summary be improved? How?

Another translation activity would be to get students to watch the version without Thai subtitles and choose a section and write subtitles for it and then compare these with the subtitled version.

An idea for economics / business studies students

Get your students to watch the whole video (and do the worksheet focused on the English sections) then ask them to focus on the economic impacts of the smoke / burning season. Get them to individually brainstorm lists of these and then compare them their lists in groups. e.g. Healthcare costs, loss of tourism income, long term effects of soil degradation on farmers and the agricultural sector. Then ask the students to work in pairs or small groups and prepare a mini- presentation to present to members of the Chiang Mai Chamber of Commerce to try and encourage business leaders to help in finding and implementing solutions to the problems. You could do a role-play where some of the students take on the roles of various local business representatives and others the roles of environmental activists / concerned individuals.

An idea for medical / healthcare students

Get your students to watch the whole video (and do the worksheet focused on the English sections) then ask them to focus on the health issues raised in the video. Get them to individually brainstorm lists of these and then compare them their lists in groups. Then in groups ask them to make either a poster to be displayed in local hospitals explaining the health risks, signs or problems and advice for avoiding the harmful effects of the smoke / burning season. Then get students to display their posters around the class and do a "gallery tour". Students then walk round and look at other groups' posters. You can allow

students to give feedback to other groups. One easy way to do this is to say everyone has three "likes" they can indicate these with ticks or hearts. They can draw a heart next a section on another groups poster that they like. Students like this as it's something they do on social media and it's a simple and effective way of giving instant feedback. The students can then see which sections of their work were popular.

An idea for hotel / hospitality / tour guide students

After watching the video tell the students that they are going to do a role-play of a tourism worker e.g. tour guide, tour operator or hotel receptionist explaining the smoke problem to a concerned tourist. Divide the class into two groups: tourists and tourism workers. Within their groups get them to work in groups of 3 and 4 and spend 5 minutes preparing what to say. Tell the tourists to imagine that they have just arrived on holiday and are surprised by the smoke and air pollution, they had no idea about this and had only read in their tour brochures about the beautiful natural environment in Chiang Mai. They should prepare "Wh." questions to ask local tourism workers. The tourism workers should decide on their job e.g. tour guide, tour operator or hotel receptionist etc and should then think about how they can explain the smoke problem to their customers and prepare their introduction to them. e.g. "Hello. I'm your tour guide. My name's " or "Hello. Welcome to are hotel. How are you enjoying your stay here?" When the students are ready get them to stand in two circles facing each other with the tourist standing on the outside. They should have a conversation with the person they are facing. After a couple of minutes ask them to stop and get the tourists to move round clockwise one place so they are facing a different person and have another conversation. You can let them have 3 or 4 conversations. If this is too complicated to set up in your class then just pair the students off tourists with tourism workers and get them to have their conversations. It is a good idea to change partners though and let them have conversations with at least one other person.

An idea for follow up discussions

After watching the documentary an interesting way to get them to have a follow up discussion is to give them some reflection questions to think about individually (see worksheet for questions) then put them in groups of four. For each group place two chairs facing each other and two students sit in the chairs and the other two students stand behind them. Tell them that only the students in the chairs can talk, but if one of the standing students wants to join the conversation then they have to tap one of the seated students on the shoulder, the seated student then gets up and lets the other student sit down and joins the discussion. They can keep doing this changing places until they all run out of things to say. This is a motivating way to do discussions and helps encourage students to take turns.

Video link and more information: <http://smokethedocumentary.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/smokethedocumentary>