

TEACHERS CORNER – MARCH 2016

INTEGRATING GLOBAL AFFAIRS INTO YOUR ENGLISH LESSONS

In the real world and the digital world, English is the *lingua franca* or common language for nearly a billion people (Crystal, 2006). As the most widespread language in the world, English is the medium of global communication. Therefore, learning English is critical to becoming a member of the larger global community.

As English teachers, we have unique professional opportunities to teach our students a skill and serve as a gateway to this global community of English speakers. When students study English, they become connected to millions of others around the world. This connection to the global village through English encourages us to incorporate the news and current world events into our classrooms.

Teaching English provides opportunities for us to raise our students' awareness of global affairs. By bringing world affairs into the classroom, we can provide students a rich array of topics that increase their knowledge and engagement with countries, cultures, and issues of global importance.

In this month's Teacher's Corner, we will showcase four activities that can be used to incorporate world affairs into the English classroom:

Week 1 – Fantasy Politics

Week 2 – World Wide Wiki

Week 3 – Profits or Preservation

Week 4 – Calamity

The goal of these activities is to inspire students to learn more about the larger world and consider how events affect us all. Weeks one and two facilitate student understanding of news and current events. Weeks three and four incorporate issues of global importance: deforestation and natural disasters. Each week's materials can be used as a stand-alone activity or can be combined into a thematic unit on world affairs.

Reference

Crystal, D. (2006). Chapter 9: English worldwide. In D. Denison; R. Hogg, (Eds.). *A History of the English language* (420–439). Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.