

## Nature photography

### Topic

Exploring nature with a camera

### Learning outcomes

- Raise awareness of the nature around us, encouraging students to explore and appreciate outdoor life
- Extend students' vocabulary to talk about nature
- Develop students' note-taking skills
- Develop students' oral fluency through a discussion of photos

### Age and level

13-17 (B1)

### Time

40-60 minutes

### Materials

- Presentation or student worksheet
- Four images of photos of nature. Free images with a Creative Commons license can be found on: <https://unsplash.com/s/photos/nature>
- Camera/mobile phone, a pen and a notebook

### Introduction

Focusing on speaking, vocabulary and writing, this lesson aims to enable students to describe what they see, hear, feel and smell in a natural setting. The lesson begins by showing students some photos of nature and asking them to brainstorm words they associate with each photo. They then learn some

vocabulary to describe nature in more detail (using the five senses). Students then go out and explore a natural place, making notes and taking photos of any nature that interests them. (This can be done for homework). Finally, they share their photos with their classmates, describing their experiences and using the vocabulary as appropriate.

You can use a student worksheet for this lesson, or a presentation for a no-printing option.

## Procedure

<b>Before the lesson</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before the lesson, find four images of photos of nature. Free images with a Creative Commons license can be found on: <a href="https://unsplash.com/s/photos/nature">https://unsplash.com/s/photos/nature</a>.</li> <li>• Choose photos that reflect the students' reality. If your students live in an urban area, choose photos of nature in city locations, such as a park, a garden, a pond, or even a weed appearing from the pavement.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> This lesson involves students leaving the classroom, and potentially leaving the school grounds. Check school / institutional policies and follow guidelines.</p>
<b>Lead-in (10 mins)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write the well-known expression on the board: 'A picture is worth a thousand words.' Elicit or explain the meaning: an image can give a meaning more effectively than many words.</li> <li>• Show four photos of nature (chosen before the lesson) and ask students to work in pairs, brainstorming six to ten words they associate with each photo. Help with words they want to express in English but have difficulty with.</li> </ul>
<b>Task 1: Vocabulary (15 mins)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show <b>slide 2</b> of the presentation or refer students to <b>Task 1</b> in the student worksheet.</li> <li>• Explain that students need to categorise the words in the box according to how they look (A), sound (B), feel (C) or smell (D). If necessary, do one or two examples with the whole class, writing the relevant letter(s) next to each word. Emphasise that some words may go under more than one heading.</li> <li>• Students work in pairs or small groups to categorise the words. They might need to use dictionaries.</li> </ul>

**Suggested answers:** Suggested answers are provided below but remember that this is a relatively subjective task.

- A: LOOKS – dull, bright, misty, vivid, faint, shallow
  - B: SOUNDS – gentle, humming, raucous, monotonous, lively, dripping
  - C: FEELS – rough, smooth, sharp, crisp, calm, gentle
  - D: SMELLS – sweet, earthy, fresh, faint, fragrant, salty
- As you carry out feedback, ask students to explain why they chose to put the words under each heading. Encourage them to add other words they know, such as words from the previous Lead-in activity.
- Optional:** For additional vocabulary practice, show the four photos you presented at the start of the lesson and have students write a short caption for each one (for example: misty morning, dead leaf floating on a shallow pond, soft red rose petals).

**Task 2:**  
**Photography**  
**outing – during**  
**class or for**  
**homework**  
**(20 mins)**

- Explain the nature photography project. Students will go outside the classroom and explore and enjoy nature around them. Depending on your school or institutional policies, they could go into the school grounds, or outside the school to a local park, or even the surrounding streets.
- Show **slide 3** or refer students to **Task 2** in the student worksheet. Read through the instructions with the class.
- Put students into small groups and check that each group has a camera / phone / notebook / pen. Check that everyone knows what time they must return to the classroom.
- Explain that they should look at / listen to / touch / smell some natural things. Elicit examples of natural things that they might find in the school grounds or area e.g. things in the sky, clouds, birds; things in a garden / park, flowers, plants, leaves, soil, insects, trees.
- Remind students that nature is everywhere! It is even in a leaf coming out of the pavement. Also remind them to be respectful of nature and not to damage anything as they smell / touch / take photos.
- Explain that students **MUST** take notes of things they see/hear/feel/smell in a notebook and take at least six photos of nature on their outing.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Finally, remind students to stay safe. If helpful, elicit ways to stay safe, e.g. go in groups, choose a place you know, don't touch poisonous objects, avoid deep ponds and lakes. Again, refer to any school or institutional policies.</li></ul>
<b>Task 3: Group discussion (15 mins)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students return to class with their photos and their notebooks.</li><li>• In small groups they show each other their photos and describe the setting, using their notes to help them remember.</li><li>• Encourage students to ask follow-up questions, e.g. Where was it? What did it smell/sound/feel like? What could you hear? You could show <b>slide 4</b> of the presentation to support students as they talk about their photos.</li><li>• To finish, let students make captions for their favourite photos. They can share them with classmates or post them online.</li></ul>

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