

Audio 1.5

The outside environment can be seen as a place to collect resources; but it can also be an extension of your inside classroom. Here are some ideas about how to use the local environment to support, resource and extend your classroom teaching.

Wherever your school is, there will be many living things that you can collect and bring into the classroom for short periods for your learners to investigate and observe. Either you could do the collecting, or you could take your class out to help you. Bringing in leaves, for example, will enable learners to study these more closely. Some insects can be kept in suitable containers or conditions for a short period of time. But do ensure that learners stay away from dangerous insects or animals such as snakes or wasps.

Be clear what your learners are going to learn and give them time to observe the creatures safely, so the students are not frightened, and also that they do not frighten the animals. Make sure that they respect the animals and plants; and understand how important these are to the community.

Remember, they can also use their own bodies to do things like investigating the effect of exercise on heart rate; or understanding how muscles work together.

There are many things that you might be able to collect from the local environment – whether you are in a rural or urban setting. These can help you in the classroom. These include:

- rocks and stones to study or use as counters;
- recyclable materials, such as card, paper, wire, wood, plastic bottle tops and containers.

All of these and many other materials can be gathered over time, so that when you want to do modelling with your class you have a stock of resources. Or when you want to do posters you have some card for each group to write on. Always ask if you can have the materials you see. And get your students to help you gather the materials in advance of your lessons. For example, on one of the TESSA activities, children make models of animals out of 'rubbish'. This can help younger children learn the words for different parts of an animal, or for older children to learn about specific adaptations.

Audio 2.6

Rose collected a range of empty grocery packets, boxes and tins. She divided the class into groups of four or five and gave each group one or two items. She wrote the questions on the chalkboard but also read them out for the children who could not read very well. As she read them, each child wrote their own answers. Then she asked them to discuss them in their group and decide on a group answer for each question.

Questions about grocery items

1. What is in this tin/packet/box?
2. How do you know this?
3. Which word or words are in the biggest letters?

4. Why do you think this word or these words are the biggest letters?
5. How many words begin with capital letters?
6. Which words are written more than once in the package?
7. Which word is used the most?
8. What is the weight of this product (in grammes/kilogrammes)?
9. What do all the words and pictures tell you about this product?

While the learners were working in their groups, Rose walked around and helped the children who struggled with reading. After 10-15 minutes, she went around the groups and asked each group for one answer until she covered all the questions.

Then she asked them to discuss two more questions:

- Do you agree or disagree with what these words and pictures tell you?
- If you had the money, would you like to buy this product? Why, or why not?

In the next lesson, they worked in the same groups to design the print and visual information for the packaging of a real or imaginary grocery item.

Audio 3.1

Elisa is a teacher in grade 5 and she is exploring the local community and environment around their school in a village in Zambia. As part of the social studies syllabus, grade 5 learners need to study aspects relating to transport and communication in the district. Elisa hopes to develop her pupils' abilities in observing and respecting the environment surrounding their village. She hopes this will help them to understand their roles and responsibilities with respect to local resources and their community.

At the end of one day, Elisa explains to the learners what they will be doing the next day and what she hopes they will learn. As homework she asks them to note down all the modes of transport they see on their way home that day, and to bring their list to school the following day.

The next day, she writes on the centre of a large piece of paper:

What modes of transport do we have in our own environment?

Elisa asks for volunteers to come and add the names of the modes of transport learners have noted in their homework, for example: bicycle, car, minibuss. As they add the modes of transport, Elisa asks them what is good and not so good about different modes of transport for the local environment, and for those living in it.

Elisa then draws a circle around all these modes of transport and asks learners to add any other modes of transport they know about but are not present in their own community. She also asks them about the benefits and issues of each transport. During this activity Elisa has to explain a number of modes of transport that some learners are not familiar with. To do this, she first asks her learners if any of them knows what it is, and then she adds some information herself.

For the next activity, Elisa draws a table on the chalkboard with 3 columns: mode of transport, benefits and issues. She puts learners into groups of 6 and gives each group a mode of transport from their community, and one that is not present within their community. She asks them to copy the table on the paper she has given them and write what is good and not so good about both modes of transport.

As she walks around the different groups, Elisa finds that all learners are very engaged with this activity and are contributing very good suggestions.

For her next lesson, Elisa plans to ask each group to explain the benefits and the issues of each mode of transport, asking learners to make notes of all these in their notebooks. Elisa has also thought about how she can assess each learner's understanding and knowledge in a few weeks' time.

Audio 3.2

Over the past 2 weeks, I have been collecting pictures and objects that illustrate different types of force action, drawing resources from around my home and school environment. For example, I have a screwdriver to demonstrate how to 'screw', and a sheet of ripped paper to visually show the meaning of 'tear' and 'rip'. I begin the class by demonstrating and eliciting the three key verbs (pull, push, twist).

Most of the learners are familiar with these words although a few are not sure of 'twist'. Once I've demonstrated and asked them to show me physically what it means, I write the three words on the board.

We then do a brainstorm activity where I ask my learners to call out all the action words they can think of. I make 3 'word spiders' on the board - one for each of the three verbs (push, pull and twist). We begin by using words in their home language and then move onto English.

I find using mime to demonstrate meaning is really helpful, and I check with them whether each suggestion they offer is a push, pull or twist verb to check their understanding.

Finally, I put all the pictures and objects I have collected on a table and ask the learners to label them with an appropriate verb and put them into 3 groups – one for push, one for pull and one for twist types of force.

Audio 5.3

Teacher Samuel was teaching his Grade 3 class about animals and where they live. He teaches them in Chitonga. Only about 25 are confident readers out of the class of 76. He found pictures of six animals and stuck them on the classroom wall. He then drew pictures of where they live and stuck those up on the other side of the room. He made some cards out of old food packets and wrote the name of an animal on half of them and the name of where they live on the other half (all in Chitonga). He gave half the class the name of an animal, and the other half the places where they live. To begin with each learner had to stand next to the picture corresponding to their animal or place. This was to check that all the children could understand the words they were given. They then had to walk around the room to find a partner who had the name of where their animal lived. For example, 'gorilla' was matched with 'rainforest'; 'worm' with 'mud' and so on. When everyone was paired up, Samuel collected in the cards and gave them out again so everyone had a different word.

He did this a few times until he was confident that all the children could recognise the words, and they knew where each animal might live.

At the next TGM, he explained his idea to the other teachers.

Teacher Paxina was doing science with Grade 6. She adapted the activity but wrote the words in English. Also, when the pairs had found each other, they had to discuss how their animal was adapted to where it lived. At the end, they had to write a sentence about each animal and why it lived in a certain place.