

# SAVE THE EARTH!

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La unidad didáctica ha sido diseñada para hacer que nuestros adolescentes de 4º ESO se den cuenta de la importancia de llevar a cabo buenos hábitos de vida, no sólo para mantenerse saludables, sino también para evitar la destrucción de nuestro planeta.

Toda la unidad trata sobre el medio ambiente, que a su vez forma parte de los llamados Temas Transversales recogidos en el Art. 5.4 de Decreto 231/2007: Educación Medioambiental, Educación para la Salud y Educación Cívico-moral.

Se introducen nuevas palabras, a la vez que se repasan algunas funciones comunicativas básicas y de contenidos gramaticales ya vistos en clase anteriormente. Además, con las diferentes actividades planteadas, los alumnos/as podrán trabajar las Competencias Básicas, conforme a la LOE 2/2006.

## 1.-PEDAGOGICAL JUSTIFICATION

This didactic unit has been designed to make our students realize about the importance of taking good habits to avoid the destruction of our planet. The Earth is in danger and human beings should start changing the way of life. The whole unit deals with this topic which, by the way, forms part of the **Cross-Curricular topics (Art. 5.4 of D. 231/2007):** Environmental Education, Health Education and Civic and Moral Education.

The didactic unit will be carried out in eight sessions, and it reviews, as well as introduces, a number of basic communicative functions and grammar contents related to linguistic domains which are very close to the students' lives.

Our students are supposed to know the basic structure of a simple sentence in the Present Simple and Future Simple tenses (these tenses has been seen in the 1<sup>st</sup> term) in order to make coherent sentences with the new grammatical sequence. Likewise, this unit interacts with other **areas,**

such as Natural, Social and Cultural environment, and Information Technology .

## **2.- CONTEXT OF THE UNIT**

This unit is addressed to students in the fourth year of Secondary Education (4<sup>th</sup> ESO). The reason why I have chosen it is because I was in charge of students at this age and level and they were very receptive and very motivated to learn English. This year is very important for these students because it is their last year in Secondary Education.

### ***THE SCHOOL***

The school is located in the Axarquía area, about 30 kms from Malaga. It is a village on the coast, so it is visited by tourists all over the world.

In the past few years there has been an influx of people from other countries mainly from South America and Eastern Europe. These people have integrated successfully into the community and the Spanish language does not seem to be a particular problem for them. The objectives of this Secondary school are: the general improvement of English language, mathematical competences and carrying out various activities aimed at catering for diversity.

### ***THE STUDENTS***

This is their fourth year at Secondary school. The students are generally 15-16 years of age with the occasional 17-18 year old (in those cases, the student had to repeat the same level because he or she did not achieve the minimum standard in more than 2 subjects). Generally, they are in the final stages of developing their deductive reasoning skills; they have fully developed the ability to work in groups and cooperate with others, but they need further encouragement to develop autonomous learning to give them a sense of achievement. Therefore, they are aware of the importance of learning English, but have to be encouraged to put more effort into their work.

## **3.- OBJECTIVES**

The following **didactic objectives** are in connection with the **Stage Objectives (LOE 2/2006 and D.231/2007)** and the **EFL Subject objectives (R.D.1631/2006)**.

| <b>DIDACTIC OBJECTIVES</b>   | <b>EFL SUBJECT OBJECTIVES</b>  | <b>STAGE OBJECTIVES</b>      |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| 1) To make students understand the oral instructions given by the teacher.   | 1) To listen and understand general and specific information from oral texts in different communicative situations, adopting a respectful attitude of cooperation.   | B):Decreto 231/2007<br>H / I |
| 2) To learn how to use conditional sentences in texts.   | 4) To write simple texts with different purposes on diverse topics using suitable resources of cohesion and coherence  | H, I, L                      |
| 3) To encourage our students to be aware of the problems that our planet is suffering due to pollution and other causes. | 3) To read and understand different texts in a suitable level for the abilities and interests of the pupil, with the end of extracting general and specific information, and to use the reading as a source of pleasure and personal enrichment. | K<br>D):Decreto 231/2007     |
| 4) To be able to agree and disagree about a topic: interaction.  | 2) To express and interact orally in normal communicative situations; in a comprehensible, proper way and with certain level of autonomy.  | A/ D                         |
| 5) To value ICT resources as excellent ways to get information.  | 7) To use learning strategies and didactic resources, such as Information Technology in order to obtain, select and present oral and written information.  | E                            |
| 6) To extract information from written and oral texts, showing comprehension.  | 8) To value foreign language as an instrument to make access to information and as a learning tool of different themes.  | A , C, D , J ,<br>K          |
| 7) To make students learn the right pronunciation of new words.  | 5) To use the phonetic components (lexicons, structural and functional basic of the foreign language in real communication contexts) accurately.   | H , I , J                    |

|   |  |       |
|---|--|-------|
| 8) To show students how to learn, review, revise and develop strategies to use linguistic functions accurately. | 6) To develop learning autonomy, think about the learning process and transfer knowledge and strategies of communication, acquired from other languages to the foreign language. | F , G |
|---|--|-------|

#### 4.- KEY COMPETENCES

This unit includes specific work on the following competences, according to LOE 2/2006:

- **Competence in Linguistic Communication**, in the sense that achieving effective oral and written communicative competence in English is the main focus of this subject.
- **Digital Competence and Information Management**, since the unit integrates the use of ICT resources (Communication, Information and Communication Technologies) in order to create interest for the use of the audiovisual techniques.
- **Competence on learning to learn and competence on autonomy and entrepreneurship**, since the use of strategies, resources and techniques of intellectual work are encouraged and required so that students are aware of their own abilities and knowledge. Study techniques, organization and planning strategies will be encouraged in the subject, in order to promote responsibility, self-esteem, creativity and the acceptance of errors as a source of learning.
- **Competence about the physical world and environment**, which is nowadays a very important issue. It is essential for our students to make them know about the causes and consequences of bad habits regarding our environment. Students must try to give different solutions to solve these problems.

#### 5.- CONTENTS

The contents take into account **Real Decreto 1631/2006**, on December 29<sup>th</sup>, by means of which the minimum teaching frame for Compulsory Secondary Education is set.

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <p><b>COMMUNICATION SKILLS, divided into two sections:</b><br/> <b>1:listening and speaking; 2: reading and writing.</b><br/> -Listen and understand texts to extract specific information.<br/> -Produce oral and written texts using a real condition.<br/> -Read and interpret texts.<br/> -Appreciate formal accuracy in the production or oral and written messages.<br/> -Student interaction to talk about ecology.</p> | <p><b>KNOWLEDGE AND REFLECTION ON THE LANGUAGE</b><br/> <b>A) Language functions and grammar, following sections 1, 2 and 3:</b><br/> - First conditional sentences to express a real condition in English.<br/> -Time expressions and time clauses used in first conditional sentences.<br/> -Agreement or disagreement.<br/> -Revision of the Present Simple and Future Simple tenses.<br/> <b>B) Vocabulary: section 3</b><br/> Words and expressions related to ecology and environment.<br/> <b>C) Phonetics: section 3</b><br/> -Pronunciation of 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular of the Present Simple (review)<br/> -Pronunciation of difficult and new words on ecology</p> | <p><b>SOCIO-CULTURAL ASPECTS, following section 4.</b><br/> -Favourable disposition to understand and make oneself understood in English.<br/> -Identify the socio-cultural aspects implicit in the texts.<br/> -Interest and knowledge for the ideas which have appeared in English texts.<br/> -Knowledge of how the English language and its culture work.<br/> -Show respect for our environment.<br/> -Interest for the use of the audiovisual communication, information and communication technologies (ICT).</p> |
|--|---|--|

## 6.- METHODOLOGY

This methodology is based on a communicative approach which will allow for the development of students' abilities to communicate in English and express themselves. It is also a study and review of language structure and grammar whilst always trying to achieve a suitable balance.

The development of the four skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) in English in real communicative situations is the constant aim of this educational activity. That is the reason why there are different types of exercises and activities practiced inside and outside the classroom where students are active participants by working in pairs or in small groups. The

practice of working with partners encourages them to consider new ideas and strategies for learning which can be useful for other subjects in Compulsory Education.

The purpose of all these principles is to make our students want to learn English. The English language is the main vehicle of communication between student-teacher and student-student as a daily practice. Students have an important position in the teaching-learning process and this leads us to pay more attention to learning strategies so that the students will become more independent.

Throughout the eight sessions, we will be using some of the latest approaches in teaching a foreign language (visual aid, emphasis on oral production, realia..).

## **7.-SPECIAL NEEDS**

Attention to diversity will be carried out by means of the reinforcement and extension activities and extra material addressed at those students whose abilities and interests require a step further into the contents of the unit. Obviously, for those called slow-learners, we can adapt the same activities according to their abilities (non-significant curricular adaptations) without changing significantly, as long as possible, the fundamental aspects of the course curriculum.

Open-ended tasks, also called heterogeneous activities that I have chosen, make it possible to help different kind of students in their learning process. In this way, slower learners can succeed at the same time as the brighter ones can stretch themselves to the limits of their abilities.

The practice of working with partners or small groups make it possible the integration of students who need support because fast-learners can help slower ones in the learning process; rotation of students' seats would also be convenient for that reason.

## **8.- EVALUATION**

**Orden 2007**, on August 10<sup>th</sup>, which establishes the curriculum for Compulsory Secondary Education in Andalusia, is taken into account.

The assessment procedure is divided into three parts:

1.-Initial assessment to determine the starting point of both the student and the group.

2.-Formative assessment (classroom activities and course plan evaluation, to check whether they meet the students' needs)

3.- Summative assessment to determine final achievements and the students' general progress.

### **Evaluation criteria**

- To understand the general information and all relevant data from a written text, showing comprehension.
- To understand general and specific information from oral texts in which personal information is provided.
- To engage in interaction and brief simulations with their classmates, producing personal information, agreement or disagreement, etc.
- To reflect about the topic we are dealing with, our environment: *what can we do to help our planet?*
- To use the knowledge acquired on the use of conditional sentences, showing awareness, using it as a tool for self-correction and self-assessment.
- To use ICT resources, in a guided way, in order to search for information, showing interest on its use.
- To identify, use and explain different strategies for advancing learning, such as reflection on self-learning, acceptance of error, and use of techniques to learn and memorize vocabulary and pronunciation of new words, as well as the use of grammar aids.

### **Assessment tools**

- Direct observation of the student's class work, their notebooks, their attitude and participation in the teaching-learning process.
- Oral and written texts
- Written compositions and projects.
- Remedial work based on reinforcement and consolidation activities.

### **In this unit, the following progress tests will be done:**

-A written test, consisting of a text, to assess global and specific written comprehension, and of structural grammar activities and of vocabulary in context.

-A listening test, to be done individually, and speaking test, in pairs, where the communicative functions of the unit must be used.

And, of course, my own performance as a teacher:

- What activities have been more useful for them?
- What activities have been more difficult?
- Which words and expressions have been the most difficult ones?, etc.

## 9.- DESCRIPTION OF THE UNIT

This unit is called SAVE THE EARTH!, an attractive name for students. The aim of this session is to teach the new vocabulary related to the environment and new grammatical structures (first conditional sentences).

### UNIT DEVELOPMENT:

#### First session

A.-**Warm-up.** I ask my students: "What does "Save the Earth" suggest?", so that any student raises his/her hand to answer it. I also ask them to look at the pictures of the worksheet I give them so that they can say what they see.

Our students learn new words and expressions by repeating words based on ecology:

|                      |                    |                  |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| <i>Car fumes</i>     | <i>pollute (s)</i> | <i>the air</i>   |
| <i>Factory fumes</i> | <i>destroy (s)</i> | <i>the water</i> |
| <i>Acid rain</i>     |                    | <i>the soil</i>  |
| <i>Rubbish</i>       |                    | <i>trees.</i>    |

Students must write sentences with a word or expression from each column. Example: *Car fumes pollute the air* Time: 15 minutes

B. **Reading.** First of all, I play the CD to listen to the text. Then I ask a student to read it aloud in the classroom.

#### The environment

*When our parents were our age, people didn't worry about saving the environment because they didn't know it was in danger. A lot of people had very bad habits. It's often more difficult to change the way you do things when you are an adult and so young people are very important. If we have good habits, older people will learn to be more ecological because they will have good examples to follow. Here are some ideas:*

- . Always put plastic, glass and metal in special containers for recycling.*
- .Buy and use recycled paper.*
- .Always turn off lights if you aren't using them.*
- .Have quick showers instead of baths.*



.Use public transport, walk or ride a bicycle. Time: 20 minutes.

### C. Grammar

By making use of the text, students can see sentences referring to a real condition (first conditional sentences).

Students have to do several grammatical activities. Time : 15 minutes

#### Second session

A. We correct **homework** based on grammar. Time: 15-20 minutes

#### B. Chain drill.

Give students an "if clause" in the first person and write it on the board. Call on a student to complete the sentence by giving a possible result. The next student takes the result and restates it as a condition. He/she suggests a possible result of the new condition. Example:

**Teacher: If I eat too much,...**

**Student 1: If I eat too much, I will feel sick.**

**Student 2: If I feel sick, I will stay home from school.**

**Student 3: If I stay home from school, I will miss an English test.**

Time: 20 minutes. Skills: listening and speaking.

#### C. Writing for grammar. Reinforcement.

Tell students to work in pairs. Ask each student to write three negative sentences, for example:

***I won't pass the test.***

***She won't tell me what happened.***

Pass these on to your partner, who must complete each sentence with a clause beginning with *if* or *unless*. Return the page to your partner. Call on several students to read what their partners wrote.

Whole class. Time: 15-20 minutes. Skills: writing for grammar

#### Third session

A. **Flash cards**. Students must write 1<sup>st</sup> conditional sentences on a piece of paper about the topic we are dealing with, for example:

*If we recycle plastic and glass you'll produce less rubbish.*

After that, students have to cut the two sentences out, that is to say, they must separate the if-clause and its result clause. I have to collect all sentences and mix them up and distribute them out again in a different order. Students can get funny sentences. Each student will have to read

his/her sentence out. Whole class. Time: 20 minutes. Skills: speaking and writing.

B. **Additional vocabulary** about ecology. Students have to repeat after me the new words:

***Acid rain, biodegradable, environment, erosion, litter, greenhouse effect, landfill, oil spills, ozone layer, pollution, rain forest, recycling, recycle, reuse, resources, solar energy, toxic waste.***

We must emphasize the pronunciation of difficult words such as, biodegradable, pollution, species, ozone, etc.

- Students must work in pairs asking each other these words until they know them. Then they have to use at least half of them in sentences describing the ecological situation in the world today. Pupils have to read their sentences out to be corrected in class. Time: 20 minutes.

-The list is not complete. Pupils can include more words by using dictionaries. Time: 10-15 minutes.

-**Project:** *"What can you do to help save the future of our planet?"* Students can work as individuals, form groups, start a class project. They can design and put up posters or slogans. They can use the Internet outside the classroom.

#### Fourth session

A. We start the lesson revising the words pupils have learned about ecology and environment. A good way to do this is by building a **syllable pyramid**. Students race to brainstorm words and build a pyramid (one-syllable word at the top, then a two-syllable word, three-syllable word, etc). For example: *one-syllable words: air, green, sun, tree, Earth*, etc. Individual activity. Time: 10-15 minutes.

B. **Discussion.** Work in groups. Below there is a list of what we can do to save our environment. Which measure is most important to you? Working individually, put numbers 1,2,3,... according to its importance (1: most important). When ready, look at answers and compare with other members in the group. Discuss the reason for their choice. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each measure?

Students learn new expressions of agreement and disagreement: *I agree ... , I don't agree..., I think that... , I don't think that...*

**.Avoid taking your car whenever you can.**

- .Save old papers and take them for recycling.
- .Save bottles and glass jars and take them for recycling.
- .Take showers instead of baths.
- .Install solar energy in your house.
- .Join an ecological society e.g. Greenpeace. Time: 25 minutes

**C. FIND SOMEONE WHO**

Students must go around the classroom and ask their mates questions in the present to find out who does these activities:

***Usually takes a shower instead of a bath-----***

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***Saves paper for recycling-----***

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***Saves glass jars and bottles and takes them to a bottle bank-----***

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***Takes his/her own shopping bag when shopping-----***

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***Avoids buying aerosols-----***

Once they have completed their copies with the names of their mates next to each sentence, I ask questions to my students to know more about their habits. Time: 20 minutes.

Fifth session

**A. Extension worksheet:** *Water Conservation and Agriculture.*

Students listen to a CD about agriculture in different parts of the world. The first time they only listen to the texts without the photocopies. After that, once they have the tape script they will listen and read the texts. New words will be underlined and included in the vocabulary of the unit.

***.Fast learners can make their own questions about the texts.***

***.Slow learners will answer questions the teacher prepares for them on the blackboard.***

Sixth session

**Review of grammar:** On line and CD-ROM activities for review of grammar (1<sup>st</sup> conditional sentences). Students work individually or in pairs with computers, in order to carry out the online tasks from different websites and CD-ROM resources.

The teacher observes and helps with possible linguistic or technical problems.

#### Seventh session

**Unit test:** Students carry out a written test on the contents of the unit. Students will also do a listening activity to show their degree of mastery in this skill.

#### Eighth session

Feedback on test unit: review all the contents in the unit. Presentation of reinforcement and consolidation activities similar to the activities already seen in class, for those who fail tests.

### **10.- MATERIALS AND RESOURCES**

I have tried to use different and motivating resources for this didactic unit, simple activities appealing to my students: flash cards, worksheets, CD-ROM, CD- player, the Internet, reference book, blackboard, bilingual and monolingual dictionaries and photocopies.

#### **Bibliography**

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4. GRANGER, C and PLUMP J (1987) *Play Games with English*. London: Heineman.
5. KENDALL, M (2005) *Burlington Beginner´s Material for Multi-cultural classes*. Burlington.
5. MURPHY, R. (1987) *English Grammar in Use (with answers)*. Cambridge: CUP
6. WATCYN-JONES, P (1997). *Pair Work 1*. London: Penguin.

#### **Interesting Websites:**

1. [www.uwex.edu/erc/gwah#What%20is](http://www.uwex.edu/erc/gwah#What%20is) (useful for the project)
2. [www.webenglishteacher.com](http://www.webenglishteacher.com)
3. [www.cambioclimatico.britishcouncil.es](http://www.cambioclimatico.britishcouncil.es)