

Unearth

*Ruby Hembrom**

BACKGROUND

My approach to sharing a methodology to understand the global context to sustainable development is infused with what I am already doing with Adivasi children – an English language building through reading initiative, which focuses on filling the opportunity gaps for us. The aim is to use Adivasi's illustrated books on the Santal Creation stories series as instruments to achieve a mastery of English and on another level accomplish something more critical – re-initiating children to these wonderful stories of Adivasi origin. We practice the language reading texts by Adivasi's on Adivasi issues in English.

English has become that language in India. We are not professing for a replacement of English but as a supplement to our native and regional languages that we already know.

Not knowing English robs us of the chance to compete, defend and advance. Denied equal opportunity of living and livelihood; chances of survival and sustenance are minimised due to this. We don't stand a chance if do not arm ourselves with the ways of modernity, especially English. We are standing at the borders, at the boundaries never being able enter the arena where we should matter or able to assert our identity.

English is no longer a language of arrogance but a language of necessity in India. A lot of content and concepts around Sustainable development are in English and being equipped to read, understand discuss and articulate our thoughts, views and arguments in that language is one step towards sustainable literacy.

English is that one tool that will give us a fighting chance to stand our ground as visible peoples who refuse to be forgotten.

WHAT: THE UNEARTHING CHALLENGE

A word-search puzzle that introduces concepts of Sustainable Development.

TARGET GROUP

Can be customised for different/all age groups and audiences. A basic know-how to reading and writing would be helpful. However, in-case of people who don't read; they can be paired or grouped with those who can.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

PARTICIPANTS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- acquire key related vocabulary
- imbibe correct spelling and usage of the words
- pronounce the words accurately
- gain awareness on concepts related to sustainable development
- discuss and share views on the concepts and what it means to them
- furnish solutions to the best of their ability to nurture a sustainable life.

HOW: FACILITATOR/S LEAD THE SESSION

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Photocopies of the puzzle, prepared in advance for the participants.
- Print out of the key to the puzzle for the facilitator.
- Whiteboard and markers.
- A watch/clock or timer.
- Additional material like pictures, videos and articles that could add to the session. This is personal preference.

RESOURCES

Websites where such puzzles can be generated for free can be used. Options to create the puzzles in multiple languages are available.

I used <http://worksheets.theteacherscorner.net/make-your-own/word-search/>

The types of puzzles that can be used are limitless.

METHOD

A word search or crossword puzzle is used to introduce the terms to the participants; depending on the age group. Distribute the photocopied puzzle to the participants and set a time by when they should finish the activity. 10 minutes is a good enough time, depending on the age of the participants.

This could be an individual, paired or small group activity.

Once the words have been unearthed and everyone is delighted by the discovery; you start building up the lesson word by word, concept by concept through definitions, examples, images, stories or any method of your choice that explains the meaning and implication of the words.

This word search exercise forms the basis of the lesson that flows. This is what participants can physically take away with them and thus also acts as a record of the words, terms, and concepts covered and would act as a reinforcement and quick reminder of the session.

Here is an example of the word search activity one could use. The words that the participants have to unearth are at the bottom of the grid:

Name: _____
Created with TheTeachersCorner.net [Word Search Maker](http://TheTeachersCorner.net)

The Unearthing Challenge!

Our session today covers words that are hidden in the grid. Your challenge is to unearth them. The letters that form the words run in all directions—up, down, diagonal, forward and backward. So keep a sharp eye and keep looking. All the best!

A	Z	W	N	A	T	U	R	A	L	R	E	S	O	U	R	C	E	P	U
T	S	C	A	F	C	P	E	Z	G	P	L	J	H	G	V	J	K	S	E
Q	U	B	O	T	C	J	U	Q	S	D	R	Z	R	I	W	A	K	U	S
K	H	H	I	N	E	M	F	E	N	V	I	R	O	N	M	E	N	T	A
T	A	U	Q	O	S	R	W	Q	X	B	E	D	U	C	A	T	I	O	N
T	A	M	B	M	F	E	D	X	I	K	E	F	V	X	H	E	Q	C	I
Z	E	A	X	G	X	W	R	L	G	J	Z	F	R	H	X	T	R	H	T
M	A	N	J	Z	T	K	W	V	B	M	T	T	L	Y	O	S	U	A	A
X	R	R	P	N	X	G	F	W	A	S	T	E	M	B	U	T	Y	G	T
Q	Y	I	S	M	L	F	I	W	E	T	I	J	F	S	Z	Z	E	R	I
L	X	G	R	F	I	S	U	S	T	A	I	N	A	B	L	E	R	I	O
G	R	H	W	W	P	O	L	L	U	T	I	O	N	G	N	X	P	C	N
J	V	T	C	L	I	M	A	T	E	C	H	A	N	G	E	B	E	U	L
R	A	S	J	Q	Q	Y	Q	Y	E	D	V	G	M	U	O	U	N	L	C
E	O	L	M	I	R	C	T	U	J	R	V	V	V	Q	X	S	E	T	C
V	Z	Q	S	B	I	O	D	I	V	E	R	S	I	T	Y	I	R	U	W
E	C	O	S	Y	S	T	E	M	A	D	W	K	E	G	Y	U	G	R	V
N	L	Z	U	T	G	E	Z	T	W	N	W	L	H	M	W	Y	E	E	E
E	U	D	L	Y	Z	D	E	V	E	L	O	P	M	E	N	T	B	C	F
K	P	Q	Y	Q	X	T	U	V	S	B	K	Q	M	V	P	V	S	Q	M

AGRICULTURE
DEVELOPMENT
ENVIRONMENT
SANITATION

BIODIVERSITY
ECOSYSTEM
HUMAN RIGHTS
SUSTAINABLE

CLIMATE CHANGE
EDUCATION
NATURAL RESOURCE
WASTE

CONSERVATION
ENERGY
POLLUTION
WATER

Here is the key:

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K	H	H	I	N	E	M	F	E	N	V	I	R	O	N	M	E	N	T	A
T	A	U	Q	O	S	R	W	Q	X	B	E	D	U	C	A	T	I	O	N
T	A	M	B	M	F	E	D	X	I	K	E	F	V	X	H	E	Q	C	I
Z	E	A	X	G	X	W	R	L	G	J	Z	F	R	H	X	T	R	H	T
M	A	N	J	Z	T	K	W	V	B	M	T	T	L	Y	O	S	U	A	A
X	R	R	P	N	X	G	F	W	A	S	T	E	M	B	U	T	Y	G	T
Q	Y	I	S	M	L	F	I	W	E	T	I	J	F	S	Z	Z	E	R	I
L	X	G	R	F	I	S	U	S	T	A	I	N	A	B	L	E	R	I	O
G	R	H	W	W	P	O	L	L	U	T	I	O	N	G	N	X	P	C	N
J	V	T	C	L	I	M	A	T	E	C	H	A	N	G	E	B	E	U	L
R	A	S	J	Q	Q	Y	Q	Y	E	D	V	G	M	U	O	U	N	L	C
E	O	L	M	I	R	C	T	U	J	R	V	V	V	Q	X	S	E	T	C
V	Z	Q	S	B	I	O	D	I	V	E	R	S	I	T	Y	I	R	U	W
E	C	O	S	Y	S	T	E	M	A	D	W	K	E	G	Y	U	G	R	V
N	L	Z	U	T	G	E	Z	T	W	N	W	L	H	M	W	Y	E	E	E
E	U	D	L	Y	Z	D	E	V	E	L	O	P	M	E	N	T	B	C	F
K	P	Q	Y	Q	X	T	U	V	S	B	K	Q	M	V	P	V	S	Q	M

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II. SINGING SYLLABLES

To practice the pronunciation of the words introduced and also reinforce the concepts.

WHAT

This is a group activity and a minimum of 6 people are required to effectively execute this.

It's a simple guessing game or joining the parts to form the word game; where the word has been broken down into syllables. The denner or seeker has to, from listening to the syllables being sung, of the chosen word, by the group try and put them together and guess the word.

How

To start with everyone in the group has to choose a familiar nursery rhyme, short song or chorus. Old Mac Donald or Ba-ba- black sheep are common choices. It doesn't matter what you choose as long as everyone knows it. This will form the string that ties the entire activity/game together.

Next, one person from the group is chosen the denner or seeker and is asked to leave the room.

The group inside decides on a word from the Target List from the earlier puzzle. Let's say they choose the word CONSERVATION. This word has 4 syllables and the syllables can be broken down into: CON-SER-VA-TION. Now the group inside will each be allotted a syllable. If it is group of 20 (minus the denner), then each syllable will have at least 4 or 5 singers. Once the syllable and person allocation is done, the group shuffles; so that the same syllable singers are not sitting next to each other. This shuffling should be done as much as is practically possible. When the shuffling has fixed the seating or standing arrangement (sitting in circle or standing) they start singing the syllable allotted to them to the tune of the rhyme or chorus chosen. So the CON group keeps singing: 'Con-con-con-con....' the VA group: 'vey-vey-vey' and the TION: 'shun-shun-shun' to the tune chosen.

Remember this is a practice for pronunciation and not spelling and they have to sing it so that the denner can locate the pieces of sound and put them back together to figure out the word. So SER will be sung just: 's-s-s-s' and not 'ser-ser-ser' as this is about pronunciation and not spelling.

The denner on hearing the singing walks into the room. The group indicates, by showing fingers, the number of syllables the broken word has as the only immediate clue to start the game 4 in this case. The denner's task is to walk around the room, hearing the singing and try and join the parts to form the word. Whenever he/she hears or identifies a sound, he/she goes to white/black board to note it down. The

group continues to sing while he/she tries to decipher the small parts of sounds that will ultimately form the word. It is going to be quite a cacophony but it's a great way to have fun, bond and learn. So he/she could hear 'shun' first and write it on the board. He/She will write it just like he/she hears it so sometimes you could find a 'shin' but no negative marking for that. When the denner has figured out 4 possible sounds; he/she works to put them together. The group can stop singing while he/she deciphers the jumbled sounds. There will be some mistakes and some successes but the group keeps egging them on. The denner can request the group to sing once again just to be sure and the group should oblige. Once the word has been 'found' and pronounced accurately we can urge them to spell the word. So from a 'Kon-s-ve-shin' we graduate to CONSERVATION.

Having a timer; ups the challenge and is also a way to check a person from taking too long.

Now every one has to have the chance to be the denner or seeker and discover a new word.

This activity reinforces pronunciation, spelling and also the meaning and context of the word.

Ruby Hembrom is the founder of adivaani (the first voices) a publishing and archiving outfit of, by and for Adivasis. She belongs from the Santal tribe of India.

You can view her complete profile and the organisation she is associated with at: http://www.learn2change-network.org/?About_Us__Our_Network__Activists#anker_ruhe