

Trees

Nawal Al-Khaja ■ Bahrain

Lesson 1: Save the Palm Trees

(70 minutes)

SKILLS TO BE EMPHASIZED

Listening and speaking

TARGET STRUCTURE

Imperative, modal auxiliary: *can*

TARGET VOCABULARY

palm tree, date, thirsty, water (verb), *hurt, parrot, ladybug*

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students should be able to:

- say why trees are important.
- listen for gist.
- use *can* (to show ability) accurately in meaningful situations.
- sequence the events while/after listening to a story.
- take part in a role play.

Materials

Model or picture of a palm tree, copies of “We Love You, Palm Tree” conversation for students, flash cards with illustrations of “A Talking Tree” that show:

- Dina waters the palm tree.
- Dina is smelling flowers.
- Dina watches her dad leave.
- Dina stands with her dad in front of the palm tree.

(Instead of illustrations, you could also put the above statements on the flash cards.)

ACTIVITY 1: Warm-up

(Pre-listening, 10 minutes)

- Elicit some characteristics and uses of trees. Ask students to describe trees. Ask them: What do we use trees for?
- Show the students a model/picture of a palm tree. Ask them what the tree is called. (Provide the word *palm* if students don't know it.)
- Then write *palm tree* on the board.

ACTIVITY 2: Presentation

(Listening, 20 minutes)

A Talking Tree

- Introduce the idea of a talking palm tree. Ask the students if they have ever heard trees talking. Ask them why palm trees might talk. Elicit answers. Introduce the words *thirsty, hurt, and water*. Ask the students to think about what a tree might say if it could talk. Give students an example: “I am *thirsty*. Please *water* me. Don't kick me—you'll *hurt* me.”
- Write the example on the board and underline the key words.
- Tell the students that they are going to listen to a conversation called “A Talking Tree” (see script on next page). As they listen, have students work in pairs to sequence the flash cards (either pictures or statements) to appear in the order of the story.
- Read “A Talking Tree” to the class once or twice as required. **Variation:** If possible, you could make a tape recording of the conversation, having different people read the different parts; then, instead of reading the conversation, you could play the recording.
- Elicit the correct order of the pictures (or statements).

ACTIVITY 3: Practice

(Post-listening, 15 minutes)

- Ask students questions to practice the modal auxiliary *can*. For example, you might say: “The tree in the story can talk. Can animals talk? Can you fly? Can you sing? Can birds sing?”
- Have the students imagine that they are animals and have them write sentences about what they can do.
- Encourage the students to ask each other questions in pairs, such as: Can you fly? Can you swim? Can you live in a tree?

A TALKING TREE

Dina, an American nine-year-old girl, and her family arrived in Bahrain on the 15th of September. Dina wanted to look around, so she went outside to play in the garden. While she was looking at the flowers and smelling them, she heard someone crying. She ignored it at first. But the crying didn't stop. So she asked...

Dina: Who's crying?

Tree: It's me!

Dina: I can't see you. Where are you?

Tree: I'm here; it's me, the palm tree.

Dina: A talking palm tree? Wow!

Tree: Yes, but only children can hear me!

Dina: Why children?

Tree: Because I like you, and you don't hurt me.

Dina: Who hurts you?

Tree: People.

Dina: How?

Tree: Ahh! They don't water me! I'm thirsty. And... people killed all my family! They burned them all.

Dina: Oh! Do trees have families? Why did they burn them?

Tree: Yes we do, my dear. Well, to make space to build big houses. You know, one day, they'll be sorry!

Dina: I can imagine that. How can I help you?

Tree: Oh, please give me some water. Nobody has watered me since July! I'm thirsty.

Dina: Ohhh! That's bad! Let me bring you some water. Wait a minute. Dad! Dad! Come quick! There is a talking tree in our garden.

Father: A talking tree! (To himself: That's nonsense.) O.K, let's see it!

Dina: Come with me and listen. Let me first water you. Here you are. Palm Tree, this is Dad. Please tell him about your problem.

Tree: (Silence)

Dina: You have been talking to me! Say something! Don't worry! Dad can help you, too!

Tree: (Silence)

Dina: Oh, wait, Dad, she'll talk! Wait!

Father: I have to go to work. Be a good girl!

Dina: (talking to the palm tree) Why did you do that to me?

Tree: I told you. I only talk to children! Let me ask you something! Why don't you tell your friends at school about our problems? Maybe they can do something.

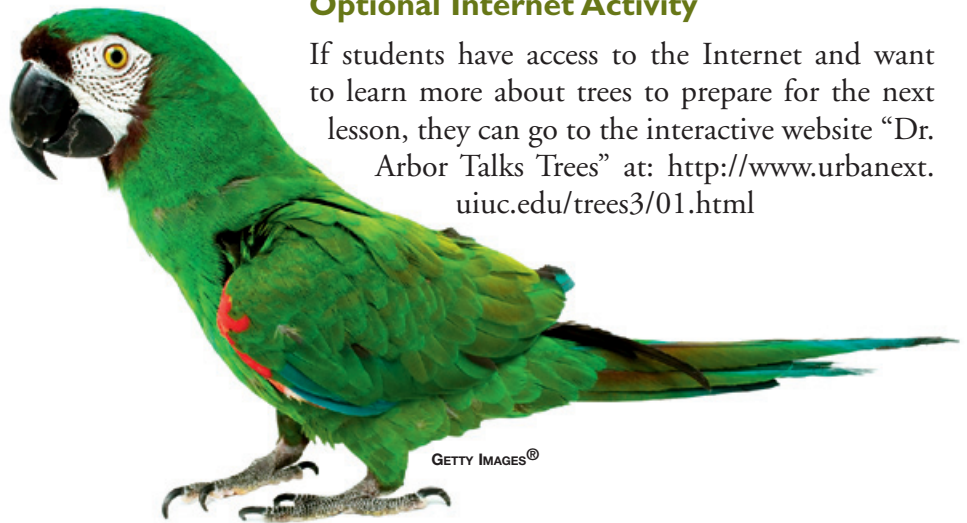
Dina: I start school tomorrow! OK, I will. I promise.

- Invite students to demonstrate their abilities and to review the imperative. For example, tell them to: sing like a bird; fly like a butterfly; fight like a lion; jump like a frog, etc.

ACTIVITY 4: Controlled Role-Play

(15 minutes)

- Introduce the idea that when Dina was in the garden talking to the palm tree, she was not alone. Maybe there were animals in the garden who could talk. Invite the students to predict what animals might have been present.
- Confirm predictions. Write the animal names on the board. Introduce the words *ladybug* and *parrot*.
- Distribute copies of the conversation “We Love You, Palm Tree.” Read the conversation aloud while the students follow about the number of characters who they are, etc.
- Give the students time to read the conversation carefully.
- Divide the class into groups of five. Assign each group one of the roles. Have the students reading the conversation in their groups.
- Encourage groups of students to perform the story for the rest of the class.



ACTIVITY 5: Student Self-evaluation

(10 minutes)

Hand out a Self-Assessment Sheet (see example below) and ask students to fill in the blanks on the form.

Self-Assessment Sheet	
☆	This is what I learnt today:
★	_____
★	_____
★	_____
★	_____
★	_____
	I still have problems with:

	Today's lesson made me feel (circle one):
	☺ ☹ ☹

ACTIVITY 6: Follow-up

(Homework)

Optional Internet Activity

If students have access to the Internet and want to learn more about trees to prepare for the next lesson, they can go to the interactive website “Dr.

Arbor Talks Trees” at: <http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/trees3/01.html>

WE LOVE YOU, PALM TREE

by Nawal Al-Khaja

- Tree:** Help, help!
- Parrot:** Help, Help!
- Dina:** Who's there?
- Parrot:** Who's there?
- Tree:** It's me, the palm tree.
- Parrot:** It's me, the palm tree.
- Dina:** A talking palm tree! Wow!
- Parrot:** A talking palm tree! Wow!
- Tree:** Please help me! I need water. I'm thirsty.
- Parrot:** Please help me! I need water. I'm thirsty.
- Ladybug:** Please help our friend! If she dies, we die.
- Parrot:** Please help our friend! If she dies, we die.
- Ladybug:** (to himself angrily) Oh be quiet! He always repeats what others say.
- Parrot:** What did you say? What did you say?
- Ladybug:** Nothing!
- Little bird:** (on the garden's fence) Tweet, tweet. We eat your dates. We build our nests. We hide under your leaves. Thank you very much. You are very kind and generous.
- Parrot:** You are very kind and generous.
- Dina:** How can I help you?
- Parrot:** How can I help you?
- Tree:** Tell your friends at school. Let them do something to save me and my family.
- Parrot:** Save me and my family! Save me and my family!
- Ladybug:** Oh, be quiet, please. Stop it!
- Parrot:** Stop it! Stop it! Stop it!
- Little bird:** (hugging the tree) Tweet, tweet. We like you palm tree. We all love you. Please, Dina, help stop the cutting of trees. Do something!
- Dina:** OK. Let me see. I start school tomorrow. I will tell all my friends and my teacher that we need to save the trees. I promise I will.

Lesson 2: Trees are Terrific

(45 minutes)

SKILLS TO BE EMPHASIZED

Reading and listening

TARGET STRUCTURE

Present simple tenses (review *can*)

TARGET VOCABULARY

Parts of a tree—*roots, trunk, leaves, branches, bark*

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students should be able to:

- label parts of a tree.
- identify the function of each part of a tree.
- compare different kinds of trees.
- (long-term objective) develop a sense of responsibility towards trees.

MATERIALS

Optional worksheet for comparing trees (You can adapt the worksheet to reflect the kinds of trees you have in your country.)

ACTIVITY 1: Warm-up

(10 minutes)

Review the previous lesson. Elicit information about the talking tree and about palm trees.

ACTIVITY 2: Presentation

(Listening, 20 minutes)

1. Ask the students to close their eyes and imagine the world without trees. Elicit their feelings about such a world.
2. Ask the students to respond to some general knowledge questions, such as:
 - Do we need trees? Why?
 - What good are trees to us?
 - What do trees need to live?
3. Use drawings, photos, or other materials to elicit from students the part of trees (leaves, branches, trunk, roots) and the functions of

each part. (You might want to focus this part of the lesson on trees that are common in your country. You can show students leaves, nuts, fruits you have collected from local trees.)

Activity 3: Vocabulary Building

(15 minutes)

Parts of a Tree

1. Have students draw a tree and label the parts of the tree. Walk around the room as students make their drawings and offer them feedback.
2. When the students have finished their drawings, have pairs of students compare their drawings and discuss what kinds of trees they drew, what colors and shapes the trees are, etc.



Optional Internet Activity

1. If your classroom has a computer with Internet access, tell the students that they are going to read and listen to interesting facts on trees at the following website: "Trees are Terrific... Travels with Pierre," <http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/trees1/flash/index.html>

Have students gather around the computer(s) to listen to the lesson. Let them take turns clicking on the "Next" button to go to the next page of the website.

2. Have students work in pairs to complete a worksheet like the one below.
3. After the students have completed their worksheets, have them share their observations with the whole class.

Sample Worksheet

Compare Two Kinds of Trees		
	Oak tree	Palm tree
Shape of the tree		
Size of the tree		
Weather the tree likes		
Color of leaves in seasons		
Fruit or seeds	acorn	
What the tree gives us		



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Follow-up Activity

Adopt a Tree Project

If possible, with the help of the local community, have students work in groups to plant trees. Have them plant the trees in the school yard or in the neighborhood. Invite the students to take care of the trees and to keep records of any changes they observe, using a "My tree, My friend" card. (See example below.)

If students are not able to plant their own trees, encourage them to "make friends" with existing trees in the school yard or their neighborhoods and to record their visits to those trees.

My tree, My friend

Date of visit:

This is my tree. It is _____ centimeters high.

The leaves are _____

Picture/drawing of your tree



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