

12



CARE
GLOBAL
TEACH
LOCAL!

MONTHS OF SOCIAL ISSUES

ELT CALENDAR OF SPECIAL DAYS

Margarita Kosior

July

December

October

02 FEBRUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

03 MARCH

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

04 APRIL

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

06 JUNE

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

08 AUGUST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

10 OCTOBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

11 NOVEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

12 DECEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Special Days:

- July: Children walking with dogs
- December: Rio 2016 Paralympic runner
- October: Homeless man with suitcase and sign "ANYTHING Hungry HELPS"
- February: Bicycle Day (24)
- March: Mother Earth Day (22)
- June: Bicycle Day (3)

CARE GLOBAL. TEACH LOCAL!

GISIG

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Views expressed in this 12 Months of Social Issues: ELT Calendar of Special Days are not necessarily those of the IATEFL GISIG, of IATEFL or its staff or trustees.

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A note from IATEFL GISIG

365 days , 52 weeks, 12 months a year. That is a lot of time for things to happen, for the world to change, for people to make a difference. We all like to celebrate special days, remember those who sacrificed their lives for us, marvel at the resilience of the human spirit.

There are so many different, important days in a year. So many people and things that affect our lives. Sometimes in our day-to-day lives in the classroom, we want to teach our learners something different and meaningful, something that will engage them, teach them about the issues that are important and affect us. How do we bring these important issues into our classrooms in a sensitive and educational way, which will raise awareness and help develop understanding and empathy in our learners?

Look no further. *12 Months of Social Issues* helps you do this and much more. This very special teachers' resource book will help teachers across the globe to teach their students about some of these important events. IATEFL's Global Issues SIG is very proud to bring you Margarita Kosior's labour of love. A book that is very much needed in times of uncertainty and instability for educators, to help local communities and wider society shape a better future.

Varinder Unlu
IATEFL GISIG Coordinator

A note from the author

Although incorporating social issues into ELT is presently growing in popularity, more often than not it has the form of a mere one-off occurrence. The creation of an ELT calendar of special days, a pack of ready-to-use ideas (B1-B2 student materials complete with teacher's notes), is an attempt to turn global education into a more systematic effort. It is a compilation of lessons, one per month, focusing on a different special day (mostly UN and UNESCO) each time. In this way, this volume consists of 12 complete sessions.

The publication meets two basic goals: developing linguistic competence (receptive and productive skills, vocabulary and grammar) and raising awareness of important issues. Raising awareness is essential, especially today, in the days of crisis and instability. Since world crisis and instability both stem from and lead to the crisis of human relationships, a few of the lessons in the volume focus on nurturing such bonds and values. Stronger human relationships will inevitably lead to better collaboration, fewer conflicts and a better world.

It is, therefore, our duty as educators to make our students aware of social issues and global injustice, and to help them realise that their voices can be heard and that, when in unison, they will resonate even louder. To this end, the lessons in this volume do not only present important social issues, but also encourage students to take action, reach out to the wider community, and make a difference.

Margarita Kosior

3 June - World Bicycle Day

Language level: B1+

Duration: 90 minutes

The aim of this session is to:

- engage Ss in discussions on the topic of cycling;
- enhance vocabulary related to the topic;
- develop Ss' writing skills (writing a short narrative);
- develop Ss' reading skills (skimming and scanning);
- enhance Ss' cooperation skills;
- enhance Ss' critical thinking; and
- trigger reflection.

What you will need: classroom computer, projector and screen / copies of Appendix

Teacher's notes

Step 1

Write the following questions on the board:

1. Do you have a bicycle?
2. How often do you cycle?
3. Where do you usually go by bike?
4. Do you believe cycling is safe in your area?

Ss work in groups of 4-5. Each student asks all the other group members all four questions and writes the answers down in their notebooks. After they have collected answers from all the group members, they spend a couple of minutes preparing a short summary each, and one volunteer from each group presents the findings to the rest of the class.

E.g. In our group, all of us have bicycles, but only two of us cycle every day. One person cycles only at the weekend, and two people only during summer holidays...

Ask Ss additional questions to engage them in a group discussion, e.g. Do people in your country cycle all year round? What makes cycling safe/unsafe in your area?

Step 2

Write the following words on the board or project them on the screen:

accelerate	cautious	off-road	childhood	saddle	helmet	pedal
recreational	inflate	mountain bike	gear	obsession	outdoors	frame
pastime	race	traffic	repair	handlebar	lock	equipment

Make sure that Ss know the meaning of all the words. Then, ask Ss to use seven of the words in the box in the correct form to write a paragraph in which they describe a memorable cycling experience, or a story they have heard from somebody else. Alternatively, they can come up with their own narrative. After they finish, get a few volunteers to share their stories with the rest of the group.

Ask Ss if the stories they heard referred to positive or negative experiences, and what made those experiences positive/negative.

Step 3

Write the words *bicycle* and *cycling* on the board. Ss take turns to come up to the board and write words/phrases / short sentences which they associate with bicycles and cycling. Make sure that the following points are included:

1. environmentally friendly means of transport
2. physical exercise

Step 4

After Ss have finished Step 2, ask them to categorise the information on the board (*e.g. bicycle parts, health and environmental benefits*) and if most of the words/phrases they have written have positive or negative connotations. In case of negative connotations (*e.g. being involved in a road accident when riding a bicycle*), ask Ss what can be done to change those to positive ones (*e.g. creation of safe bicycle lanes*). Explain to Ss that World Bicycle Day is celebrated on 3 June. If Ss haven't written a sufficient number of positive connotations to justify this celebration, ask them to come up with more.

Step 5

Project the text in Appendix on the screen, or prepare copies for Ss. Explain that it is a blog post written by Agnete from Copenhagen about the cycling culture in her hometown. Then, follow the steps below:

1. Ask Ss to read the text and then focus on the underlined sentences in Paragraphs 1 and 2.
2. Get Ss to work in pairs to compare the information in those sentences to their own cities (they can do internet research to find specific facts and figures).
3. Tell Ss to read again Paragraph 3 and ask them what the focus of that paragraph is (*Agnete's hopes for the future of cycling in Copenhagen*).
4. Ask Ss what their hopes for the future of cycling in their hometown are, and what can be done to create or further enhance the cycling culture in their area.

Step 6

Ss work individually to write a letter to the mayor of their city or to a town official to ask for changes in order to create a cycling culture in their hometown.

Appendix 1

Copenhagen – a City of Cyclists

Paragraph 1

¹I live in a city where there are five times more bicycles than cars. Can you believe it? They say that my hometown, ²Copenhagen, is the most bicycle-friendly city in the world, and more than half of Copenhageners travel to work or school by bike. I think it's amazing. ³Copenhagen has a total of 454 km cycle lanes, so you can get anywhere you want by bike! ⁴Cycling in my city is safe, too, and bicycle accidents are very rare.

Paragraph 2

⁵Most teenagers I know love cycling, and I cycle a lot, too. I love cycling because I think it is healthier and safer than other forms of transport. ⁶My bicycle can take me anywhere I want to go, and it's good for the environment, too, which I think is very important. There are more bikes than cars in the streets of our city and I think it's amazing! The benefits for the environment are obvious: lower carbon emissions and less pollution. In other words, cycling brings benefits to everyone. My parents are also happy that I cycle a lot, because they don't have to give me a lift all the time. They say it's good for their pocket 😊.

Paragraph 3

I hope more and more people choose cycling instead of driving in the future. This would further reduce congestion problems, traffic noise pollution and air pollution. I also hope that more cycling lanes are built, so that we can get to our destinations faster. Cycling is already safe in Copenhagen, but it can get even safer. I wish more countries around the world adapt the Danish cycling culture; it would be really good for the people and the planet.

Appendix 2

Recommended additional resources

Talk:

- [“The Amazing Way Bicycles Change You”; TEDxZumbroRiver Talk by Anthony Desnick \(2016\)](#)

About the author



Margarita Kosior

Educator, teacher trainer, conference presenter, materials writer, storyteller and children's author

Hobbyist photographer and dancer

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As an advocate for social justice, Margarita Kosior believes in spreading awareness of global issues through ELT. Margarita has incorporated social issues into her teaching since the beginning of her career when, as a novice teacher, she still didn't know much about Global Education. She simply believed that what she was doing was the right thing to do. Since then, she has participated in relevant projects, presented at international conferences and written ELT materials based on social issues ranging from modern day slavery, disabilities, the Holocaust, to kindness, as an underlying value necessary to make a big change in the world.

Margarita shares her insights and teaching tips on her blog: [ELT for a Better World](https://www.eltforabetterworld.com) and she is the author of a series of children's stories, **Tales of strays**.