



THE SINKING OF THE LUSITANIA

a CLIL lesson

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1. Student group profile

This history lesson is for high school students with an English level of B1+/B2. I presume that students have already done a CLIL lesson before and that they are used to having lessons which are centered on content and language.

2. Student's prior knowledge, skills, competences

Content

Students know facts and events which concern the first two years of the First World War (1914-1915) and the main causes of this war. Students are able to read and interpret historical texts and first-hand documents as well as being able to talk about historical topics.

Language

Most students have a B1+/B2 level of English. Therefore, they are able to use the past tenses. Students know basic historical terminology, but probably need a glossary for subject-specific terms and uncommon, low-frequency words.

3. Learning outcomes expected for this lesson (with regard to Content and Language)

Students will learn

Students will acquire knowledge about the sinking of the Lusitania by a German submarine attack and the consequent reaction of the American people. They also will also learn why the US decided to enter into the war against Germany and its allies. Furthermore, students will acquire a topic-specific terminology.

Students will be able to

Students will be able to contextualize the events in an historical framework. Specifically, they will be able to connect the Sinking of the Lusitania to the First World War. Furthermore, they will be able to use the past forms in order to explain past events.

4. Methodology

In this CLIL lesson students will discuss the topic (during a brainstorming activity) after having watched an original 1918 cartoon on the Lusitania. Students will work in pairs in order to complete two different kinds of exercises on the basis of a written text.

5. Assessment

Students will be given two different kinds of exercises: the first one is related to the content and the second one is related to the language. (The exercises are included in the Appendix.) Students will work in pairs in order to reinforce cooperation skills.

6. Tools

1. Video

“*The Sinking of the Lusitania*”, a cartoon created by the artist Winsor McCay in 1918 (9.36 minutes) Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FhCWmlu1H_g

2. Written text

An article entitled “*WW1 sinking Lusitania recalled*”, written by Rumeana Jahangir for the BBC News. Source: <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-merseyside-32020234>

NB. The text given to students, which is included in the Appendix, is a short version of Jahangir’s original article and is re-entitled “I”.

3. Glossary

A glossary which contains topic-specific terms and low frequency words (included in the Appendix).

4. Exercise 1

An exercise focused on language (included in the Appendix).

5. Exercise 2

A quiz focused on the content (included in the appendix). The quiz is available on *Kahoot!* at this link:

<https://create.kahoot.it/#quiz/305becb6-60c8-4a80-bf02-e253165b1322>

NB. *Kahoot!* is a game-based learning platform

7. The 4C’s

This lesson is focused on content, communication, cognition and culture:

Content

The episode of the sinking of the *Lusitania* which was one of the reasons behind the US decision to join the war.

Communication

During a brainstorming activity, students will express their ideas about what they saw during the viewing of the cartoon “*The Sinking of the Lusitania*”. Most of their communication will be centered on describing scenes and processes.

Cognition

Students have to *remember* (LOTS) what they have previously seen watching “*The Sinking of the Lusitania*”. Since they have no previous clues about the topic of the lesson and the cartoon is mute (but there are some short written captions), students have to *decode* such an unusual source in order to obtain information from it. Furthermore, they have to *evaluate* and *choose* the right verbs in order to complete the first exercise and also have to *remember* what they read about the written text in order to complete the second exercise.

Culture

From watching the “*The Sinking of the Lusitania*”, which is a cartoon created by the artist Winsor McCay in 1918, students will have the opportunity to get in touch with a characteristic medium and original source, which was popular in the American culture at that time.

ACTIVITIES (1-4)

ACTIVITY 1

1. Aim: Introducing the content.

2. Interaction: Individual work.

3. Activity procedure: Students will watch the cartoon entitled "The Sinking of the Lusitania" and then start a brainstorming activity.

4 Tools: The video is available at this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FhCWmlu1H_g

5. Consolidation and/or assessment: The teacher writes on the board what it is expressed by students and, if it is necessary, gives students some suggestions in order to stimulate brainstorming.

6. Timing: 15 minutes.

ACTIVITY 2

1. Aim: Learning the content.

2. Interaction: Pair work.

3. Activity procedure: Students work in pairs. Each pair will read a written text which is focused on the sinking of the Lusitania. Students have to read the text together in order to help each other understand it.

4. Tools: A written text entitled "*The Sinking of the Lusitania*" (included in the Appendix).

5. Consolidation and/or assessment: The teacher walks around the class and is ready to help students if necessary.

6. Timing: 10 minutes.

ACTIVITY 3

1. Aim: Using the language.

2. Interaction: Pair work.

3. Activity procedure: Each pair will solve an exercise which consists in completing the sentences using the correct verbs in the right tense form.

N.B. Students cannot read the original text during this exercise.

4. Tools: The exercise 1 (included in the Appendix).

5. Consolidation and/or assessment: At the end of the exercise, each pair will read aloud one whole paragraph completed with the answer. In case the answer is incorrect, the right answer will be given by the other students (peer correction).

6. Timing: 15 minutes.

ACTIVITY 4

1. Aim: To ensure that content has been acquired.

2. Interaction: Pair or individual

3. Activity procedure: Students will use their devices (tablet, mobile phones, computers, etc.) to connect themselves to *Kahoot!* in order to solve a quiz which is focused on the content.

N.B. Students cannot read the original text during this exercise.

4. Tools: The exercise 2 (included in the Appendix)

The quiz is available on *Kahoot!* at this link:

<https://create.kahoot.it/#quiz/305becb6-60c8-4a80-bf02-e253165b1322>

5. Consolidation and/or assessment: After each students has answer, *Kahoot!* will the correct answer.

6. Timing: 5 minutes

APPENDIX

The appendix contains:

1. A short version of an article written by Rumeana Jahangir for the BBC News.
2. A glossary (which contains topic-specific terms and low frequency words).
3. Exercise 1 (an exercise focused on language).
4. Exercise 2 (a quiz focused on the content).
5. Exercise 1 with answers.
6. Exercise 2 with answers.

THE SINKING OF THE LUSITANIA

After war broke out in 1914, Germans faced food and fuel shortages due to its ports being blockaded by Britain's Royal Navy.

The German navy wanted to retaliate against Britain, which continued to import supplies from the US. Their weapon of choice was submarines, known in German as Unterseeboot (undersea boat) or U-boat (U-boat).

In February 1915, Germany declared the seas around the British Isles a war zone.

The Imperial German Embassy in Washington D.C. placed a warning notice to passengers travelling on ships owned by Britain and her allies in 50 US newspapers. It was placed next to sailing notices for Lusitania in New York newspapers, which was taken as an indication that it was directed towards the ship.

However, many people did not think the Germans would be audacious enough to attack a famous liner carrying many American citizens.

Lusitania survivor Parry Jones told the BBC: "I don't think anybody took very much notice about this because they thought no nation would dare go to the point of sinking a passenger liner and especially a liner so famous as the Lusitania."

On a sunny afternoon on 7 May 1915, the Lusitania was sailing near southern Ireland with about 1,300 passengers and nearly 700 crew members. After 14:00, a U-boat, unleashed a torpedo that soon struck the giant liner.

It only took 15 minutes for the Lusitania to sink, compared to nearly three hours for the Titanic. Approximately 1,200 people died while there were about 770 survivors.

In 1918, a New York court established the Lusitania was carrying 4,200 cases of small arms ammunition but was neither armed nor carrying explosives.

ADVERTISEMENT.

NOTICE!

TRAVELLERS intending to embark on the Atlantic voyage are reminded that a state of war exists between Germany and her allies and Great Britain and her allies; that the zone of war includes the waters adjacent to the British Isles; that, in accordance with formal notice given by the Imperial German Government, vessels flying the flag of Great Britain, or of any of her allies, are liable to destruction in those waters and that travellers sailing in the war zone on ships of Great Britain or her allies do so at their own risk.

IMPERIAL GERMAN EMBASSY
WASHINGTON, D. C., APRIL 22, 1915.

"All the News That's Fit to Print."

The New York Times.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 8, 1915—TWENTY-FOUR PAGES.

LUSITANIA SUNK BY A SUBMARINE, PROBABLY 1,000 DEAD; TWICE TORPEDOED OFF IRISH COAST; SINKS IN 15 MINUTES; AMERICANS ABOARD INCLUDED VANDERBILT AND FROHMAN; WASHINGTON BELIEVES THAT A GRAVE CRISIS IS AT HAND



THE WEATHER
Fair, calm and breezy, 70 to 80, with light winds; no rain; light sea; clear sky.

BROOKS: THE PRESIDENT
Washington Deeply Struck by Disaster and Feels a Crisis.

BOLLETTS AT WHITE HOUSE
Wilson Reads Then Closes, but is Stunned at the Nation's Calamity.

HINTS OF CONGRESS CALL
Loss of Lusitania Revivifies Fears of Our First Warning in Germany.

CAPITAL: FURY OF RUMORS
Rumors That Liner Was to Be Sunk Have Spread Rapidly Since News Came.

THE LOST CURRENT STEAMSHIP LUSITANIA
Where the First Torpedo Struck. AS Where the Second Torpedo Struck.

CONRAD OFFICE HERE DESIGNED FOR NEWS
Fate of 1,918 on Lusitania Long in Doubt.

Loss of the Lusitania Fills London With Horror and Utter Amazement
New York Held Back for Hours—American Crowds With All Night at Steamship Offices for Word of

SOME DEAD TAKEN ABOARD
Signal Handed Survivors at Queenstown and Kinale.

STEWARDS TELL OF DISASTER
The Torpedo Strikes into the Engine Room.

SHIP LISTS OVER TO FOR
Makes It Impossible to Lower Many Boats. No Handouts Must Have Gone Down.

ATTENDED IN BRIDGE
Passengers at Lusitania—Harris and Reed Seen to Struggle As the Ship Left New York.

LONDON, Saturday, May 8
The Great liner Lusitania which sailed out of New York last Saturday with 1,918 on board, was at the bottom of the Irish coast, the result of the attack.

She was sunk by a German submarine, which fired two torpedoes, killing 100 and wounding 100 others, according to reports.

It was reported that the ship was carrying 4,200 cases of small arms ammunition.

The great search of the sea for the ship has begun.

At the time, the Germans said the arms cargo justified their attack, claiming the ship was "carrying large quantities of war material". A number of divers have surveyed the wreck, but no explosives have ever been found.

With the death of about 130 Americans in the tragedy, Britain used the disaster to entice the US into the war on the side of the Allies. However, it was another two years before the US declared its official entry in 1917.

GLOSSARY

NOUNS:

Crew: a group of people who work on a boat/ship

Diver: a person who explores under-water

Embassy: a group of officials who represent their government in a foreign country

Shortage: a deficit of something

Supply: essential things (food, equipment, etc.) that people need

Weapon: an object (such as a missile) which is used to kill people or damage other things during a war

Wreck: something (such a ship) which has been destroyed

VERBS:

To blockade: to prevent goods or people from entering in or living a place

To dare: to be brave/hazardous enough to do something

To entice: to try to persuade someone to go in a place or to do something

To retaliate: to harm or annoy someone who is harming or annoying you

To strike: to hit deliberate someone or something

To survey: to examine something in order to find out information

To unleash: to suddenly send something (e.g. a missile) somewhere

Exercise 1: Complete the sentences!

THE SINKING OF THE LUSITANIA

After war _____ in 1914, Germans faced food and fuel shortages due to its ports being blockaded by Britain's Royal Navy.

The German navy wanted to retaliate against Britain, which continued to import supplies from the US. Their weapon of choice was submarines, _____ in German as Unterseeboot (undersea boat) or U-boat (U-boat).

In February 1915, Germany declared the seas around the British Isles a war zone.

The Imperial German Embassy in Washington D.C. placed a warning notice to passengers travelling on ships owned by Britain and her allies in 50 US newspapers. It _____ next to sailing notices for Lusitania in New York newspapers, which was taken as an indication that it was directed towards the ship.

However, many people did not think the Germans _____ audacious enough to attack a famous liner carrying many American citizens.

Lusitania survivor Parry Jones told the BBC: "I _____ anybody took very much notice about this because they thought no nation would dare go to the point of sinking a passenger liner and especially a liner so famous as the Lusitania."

On a sunny afternoon on 7 May 1915, the Lusitania _____ near southern Ireland with about 1,300 passengers and nearly 700 crew members. After 14:00, a U-boat, unleashed a torpedo that soon struck the giant liner.

It only took 15 minutes for the Lusitania to sink, compared to nearly three hours for the Titanic. Approximately 1,200 people died while there _____ about 770 survivors.

In 1918, a New York court _____ the Lusitania was carrying 4,200 cases of small arms ammunition but was neither armed nor carrying explosives.

At the time, the Germans said the arms cargo justified their attack, _____ the ship was "carrying large quantities of war material".

A number of divers have surveyed the wreck, but no explosives _____.

With the death of about 130 Americans in the tragedy, Britain used the disaster to entice the US into the war on the side of the Allies. However, it _____ another two years before the US declared its official entry in 1917.

Use the following verbs in the right tense form (four of them should not be used)

would be to be (x 2) to know to think (not) to sail to go to acclaim
to establish to break out to place to find to placate to claim to break in

Exercise 2: Quiz!

1. What caused the Lusitania to sink?

- A) A torpedo from a German U-boat
- B) A bomb from a German plane
- C) A German mine
- D) An iceberg

2. On which date did the sinking of the Lusitania take place?

- A) May 7th, 1916
- B) May 7th, 1915
- C) April 7th, 1916
- D) June 7th, 1915

3. Approximately how many people died as a result of the Lusitania sinking?

- A) 1000
- B) 1200
- C) 1500
- D) 1600

4. What was the Lusitania transporting when it was sunk?

- A) Small arms ammunition
- B) Explosives
- C) Torpedoes
- D) All of these

5. The Imperial German Embassy in Washington D.C., issued written warnings to passengers saying that to travel to England was to do so at their own risk.

- A) True
- B) False

6. Which island was the Lusitania approaching, as it was sunk?

- A) Isle of Wight
- B) Iceland
- C) Ireland
- D) Isle of Man

7. How long did it take for the Lusitania to sink?

- A) 15 hours
- B) 30 minutes
- C) 3 hours
- D) 15 minutes

8. In which year did the US declare its official entry in the war?

- A) 1915
- B) 1916
- C) 1917
- D) 1918

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Use the following verbs in the right tense form (four of them should not be used)

would be	to be (x 2)	to know	to think (not)	to sail	to go	to acclaim
to establish	to break out	to place	to find	to placate	to claim	to break in

Exercise 2: Quiz!

1. What caused the Lusitania to sink?

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