

Culture

Emergency services

Learning objectives

- The students read and talk about different emergency services around the world.
- In the project stage, students produce a leaflet about emergency services in their country or region.

Warmer

- 1 Read this situation to the students:

A man has to get a fox, a chicken, and some corn across a river. His boat is only big enough for him and one other thing. If the fox and the chicken are left together, the fox will eat the chicken. If the chicken and the corn are left together, the chicken will eat the corn.

- 2 Put students into small groups to discuss how the man can get everything across the river. Share ideas.

Answer

First, the man takes the chicken across the river (the fox and corn are safe together). The man then takes the fox across the river. He can't leave the fox and chicken together, so he brings the chicken back with him. He leaves the chicken and takes the corn across. Finally, he returns and takes the chicken across the river again.

- 1 Write 999 on the board and see if students can remember what this is (the emergency telephone number in several countries, including the UK, Poland and the UAE). Ask students what kind of emergency services exist in their country, and elicit *Fire brigade*, *Ambulance service*, *Police* and *Search and rescue*. Put students into pairs to complete exercise 1. Check answers and discuss what they would do in each case.

Answers

- 1 Police 2 Ambulance service 3 Fire brigade
4 Ambulance service 5 Police 6 Search and rescue

- 2 Tell students to read the titles in the text and to predict which ones they would expect volunteers to help with. Ask them to read the text and compare their predictions with what they find out. Check answers.

Answers

Ground rescue and Underground rescue

- 3 Ask students to read the text again and answer the questions. Check answers. Extend the task by getting students to write one more comprehension question. Tell them to give their question to a partner to answer.

Fast finishers

Ask fast finishers to think about which emergency service they would prefer to work for and why. Elicit some ideas after checking answers to exercise 3.


Extension activity

- 1 Ask students if anyone has done any first-aid training or any voluntary work in this area. If so, discuss their experiences in class. Tell students to think about their own skills and abilities that would be useful in an emergency and to write down adjectives to describe their personality under pressure.
- 2 Tell students to swap their lists with a partner. They should decide whether they think their partner would be a useful volunteer and, if so, in which area. Nominate three or four students to tell the class about their partner.

Answers

- 1 Specially trained dogs.
2 Ground search and rescue team work with park rangers.
3 Swimmers and surfers, people on boats.
4 Basic medical training so that they can treat injured people, before taking them to hospital.
5 The weather can worsen, and climbers and skiers can have accidents.
6 The Cave Rescue Organisation; it is made up of (cave explorer) volunteers.

- 4 Put students into pairs or small groups to discuss the questions. Give each pair or group a number from one to six, and for feedback, get each one to respond to the corresponding question.

- 5  2.12 Before they listen, ask what they think the show might be about. Tell students to read the sentences and to think about the information they might need to complete each gap, e.g. numbers or words. Discuss their ideas as a class. Play the recording for students to complete the sentences.

Answers

- 1 rock-climbing 2 mountain rescue 3 properly trained
4 helicopter tour service 5 emergency medical 6 prepared

Audioscript

Amanda: Good afternoon everyone. This is Amanda Barnes, and you're listening to *Helping Hands*, a programme about volunteer associations and the people who make them possible. On today's programme, we'll be speaking with two search and rescue workers, so they can tell us a bit about their daily lives, and the challenges of their jobs. First up today, we have Michael Sorenson, a local rock-climbing instructor. Welcome to the programme, Michael.

Michael: Thank you, Amanda.

Amanda: And joining us by phone today, we also have Janet Matthews, a professional helicopter pilot who works with various search and rescue services. Can you hear us, Janet?

Janet: Yes, perfectly, Amanda.

Amanda: Wonderful. Well, let's start with Michael then. Now, you also do volunteer work with the Mountain Rescue Service.

Michael: Yes, that's right.

Amanda: So do you spend a certain number of hours a week helping out?

Michael: Well, sort of. I work full-time at a rock-climbing school, but I volunteer about twenty hours a month, mostly giving free climbing lessons to other mountain rescue volunteers. It's really important that everyone is well-trained in different skills.

Amanda: Oh, I see. I suppose people think volunteer rescuers just wait around for emergency calls, but there's more to it than that, isn't there?

Michael: Yes, there is. In fact, if we're lucky, we don't get many emergency calls for mountain rescue, but we do have to be prepared all the time, and that's where I can help the most, I think. We don't want rescue workers to get injured during an emergency because they aren't properly trained! That would just make matters worse, wouldn't it?

Amanda: Well, yes, that's a good point! And Janet, is that also the case for you, as a volunteer pilot?

Janet: Well, not exactly. Most of my volunteer work is during emergencies, because I own and run a helicopter tour service during the rest of my time. Normally, I take tourists up for helicopter rides over the area, but when there's an emergency, the Mountain Rescue Service calls me to help out.

Amanda: I see, so are you on call all the time then? Anytime, day or night, so to speak?

Janet: Well, there are several helicopter pilots who volunteer in the area. I think there are about eight of us at the moment, and we take turns being on call. But if there's a big emergency, more than one of us might go out to help.

Amanda: I see, and you're on call how often?

Janet: Usually two days a week, like Friday and Saturday, or Sunday and Monday, for example. And usually once a month I participate in some type of safety or training session, like Michael. In my case, I practise rescue missions, with ground, mountain or marine search and rescue teams, or with emergency medical workers from hospitals, for example.

Amanda: And what's that like? I mean, what do they have to do, exactly?


Janet: Well, for starters, they need basic training, just to get in and out of the helicopter safely, to know all the safety regulations, and other things like that. You can't just jump into a helicopter when there's an emergency – rescue workers have to know what they're doing, like Michael said, so they don't cause even more problems.

Amanda: Yes, it's much the same thing, isn't it? It sounds like most of your volunteer work has to do with training, preparation and so on, rather than actual emergency missions.

Michael: Exactly, Amanda. I think Janet would agree that, if we're lucky, we won't really use our emergency skills that often, but we do have to be ready for anything, just in case.

Janet: Well, yes. I think our motto should be 'Be prepared'.

Amanda: Well said, Janet. And with that, we'll take a quick commercial break. We'll be right back.

6  **2.12** Play the recording again. Monitor as students compare their answers with a partner. Check answers.

Answers

- 1** Michael is involved in training. Janet is on call to help mountain rescue in an emergency.
- 2** Michael
- 3** So that they don't cause problems or have an accident.
- 4** Students' own answers.

Cooler

- 1** Ask students to imagine this situation: *You are driving a two-seater car in a heavy storm. You see three people standing at the side of the road. The three people are a young woman, an elderly lady and a middle-aged man. No one's mobile phones are working.* Put students into pairs to decide who they would take and discuss reasons briefly as a class.
- 2** Tell students that the elderly lady is an annoying noisy neighbour of the driver. The middle-aged man is a teacher who always gave the driver low marks at school. The young woman is a thief who broke into the driver's house last month. Give them a few minutes to discuss whether this information changes their decision, and feed back as a class.

Project

Put students into groups of three and ask them to divide the questions for research between them. Encourage students to focus on any local emergency services, where possible, e.g. a local air ambulance. Once they have done their research online, they should pool their findings and create their leaflet. Students display their leaflets in class. Give them time to look at them all.