



Smithsonian Institution

This content package contains a variety of thematic content to address themes around Education/Education Diplomacy and are intended to be particularly useful for English language learning. Resources are at a variety of levels, which are indicated by beginner, intermediate, and advanced. We have split the content by the type of media or usage: Activities & Lesson plans; Websites; Videos & Podcasts. Please send any feedback to Liz Tunick (TunickL@si.edu).

Activities & Lesson Plans

Smithsonian Quests: <http://smithsonianquests.org> (intermediate)

Smithsonian Quests inspire students to explore their own ideas and interests online, in school, at home, and beyond. The quests connect and reward learners of different ages and in different regions as they learn through discovery and collaboration. Rewards include digital badges that students take with them for life. *Use these quest activities as part of an ongoing program for your American Space, where visitors/participants spend each visit earning a different badge by completing a particular quest. Recommended quests would include:*

- Diplomat
- Oral Historian
- Eco-Journalist
- Symbols Spotter

Artful Connections videoconferences: <http://americanart.si.edu/education/video/> (beginner/intermediate/advanced)

These videoconferences from the Smithsonian American Art Museum allow you to visit the museum without leaving your American Space. Free of charge, museum docents lead the study of U.S. history and culture by using works of American art in real-time videoconferencing. *Participate in these videoconferences with any level of English language learners in your American Space as real practice in listening and speaking skills with a native English speaker.*

Bilingual materials from Latino Center: http://www.latino.si.edu/education/education_bilingualmaterials.htm (intermediate/advanced)

The Smithsonian Latino Center develops and hosts a variety of learning materials that are bilingual in English and Spanish. *Use these materials for either independent or group exercises in reading comprehension.*

Recommended materials include:

- Sabor: Salsa in the United States
- Panama as a Crossroads
- Our Journey's Stories: Portraits of Latino Achievement

America's Signs and Symbols Teacher Guide:

http://americanart.si.edu/education/video/americas_signs_and_symbols.pdf (beginner/intermediate/advanced)

Familiar icons of America—the Statue of Liberty, the flag, the bald eagle—symbolize the United States both to residents and to others around the world. Artists use these images to communicate their personal ideas and to encourage probing thought on American society. *Use the guide for ideas about activities around discussing the*





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expression of ideas through art relating to America. Though the guide is connected to visiting the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the activities can be done from anywhere and includes activity sheets you can print.

Websites

Preparing for the Oath: <http://americanhistory.si.edu/citizenship/> (intermediate)

Preparing for the Oath: U.S. History and Civics for Citizenship is a web-based learning tool from the National Museum of American History that supports aspiring citizens' efforts to prepare for the civics portion of the naturalization test, but is also useful for anyone interested in learning about America. Website includes: videos and activities that showcase artifacts from the Smithsonian Institution's collections and exhibitions; 100 questions and answers from the naturalization test; a word list with definitions of terms; lesson plans which can be adapted for American Spaces; and a transcription. *Use this web tool as a resource for either individual practice in reading comprehension or a guided, group activity focusing on reading comprehension and speaking skills. The spoken English is slow and appropriate for non-native English speakers.*

American Indian Responses to Environmental Challenges: <http://nmai.si.edu/environment/Default.aspx> (intermediate/advanced)

This website, developed by the National Museum of the American Indian in collaboration with four Native American communities, documents how they are responding to environmental challenges in their homelands. Site includes videos, maps, and simple quizzes that test listening and reading comprehension. *Use this website as a resource for either individual practice in listening and reading comprehension, or a guided, group activity focusing on listening comprehension.*

Infinity of Nations Culture Quest interactive: <http://nmai.si.edu/exhibitions/infinityofnations/culturequest/> (intermediate)

Infinity of Nations Culture Quest is an interactive website developed by the National Museum of American Indian to explore the diversity of native groups from centuries ago to the present. Culture Quest includes a map that allows users to explore by region, as well as activities to explore specific objects from those regions more closely. *Use this website as a resource for either individual practice in listening and reading comprehension, or a guided, small group activity focusing on reading comprehension.*

National Zoo Habitat Adventure:

http://nationalzoo.si.edu/education/conservationcentral/challenge/index_broadband.htm (beginner/intermediate)

In "Habitat Adventure: Panda Challenge" from the Smithsonian National Zoological Park, you will help make decisions about a fictional forest reserve by using field guides, a camera, and other tools, as well as talk to local people to help you make the best decisions. *Use this interactive website as a tool to engage individual or family visitors to your American Space in a reading comprehension exercise. English text is written and spoken.*

3D Smithsonian tours: <http://3d.si.edu/tour-browser> (advanced)

This website features guided online tours of Smithsonian collections objects that have been modeled in 3D. This is especially useful for those interested in technology, art, and/or the intersection. *Use this web tool as a resource for individual visitors to engage in an exercise in reading comprehension. Consider also using the objects as story starters, or otherwise use as the focal point to practice speaking skills.*





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Digging for Answers interactive quiz: http://smithsonianeducation.org/idealabs/digging_for_answers (intermediate)

Digging for Answers is an interactive web quiz developed by Smithsonian Education that covers a wide variety of topics (science, culture, art, etc.). *Use this website as a resource for either individual practice in reading comprehension, or a small group activity focusing on reading comprehension.*

Seriously Amazing trivia: <http://seriouslyamazing.si.edu/> (intermediate)

Seriously Amazing is a website with interactive trivia questions that showcase the Smithsonian's research, expertise and collections on a wide variety of topics from science to culture to art. *Use this website as a resource for either individual practice in reading comprehension, or a small group activity focusing on reading comprehension. Use the questions to organize a trivia night or quiz game.*

Videos & Podcasts

"Ask Smithsonian" video series: <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/videos/category/ask-smithsonian/> (intermediate)

This video series from Smithsonian Magazine features short videos that answer user-submitted question on a wide range of everyday topics. *Use these videos to practice listening comprehension as part of an ongoing English club or as a new program series. Recommended videos include:*

- Why do we sleep?
- Why are lakes freshwater and oceans saltwater?
- Are humans the only animals to use stars to navigate?
- Why do we have an appendix?

Silk Road Stories podcasts: <http://www.asia.si.edu/podcasts/storytelling.asp> (intermediate)

This podcast series from the Freer and Sackler Galleries includes American immigrants from Asia telling the stories and tales of their youth. *Use these podcasts to practice listening comprehension as part of an ongoing English club or as a new program series. Consider a follow up activity in which participants/visitors tell their own stories of their youth, as an activity to work on English speaking skills. Recommended podcasts include:*

- Peach Boy
- The Cowboy and the Weaving Lady
- The Ruti Eaters

Student Podcast series: <http://americanart.si.edu/education/resources/guides/podcast.cfm> (intermediate)

These podcasts are written and recorded by students to provide their own interpretation of works in the Smithsonian American Art Museum's collection. This resource page discusses how to lead a podcasting project with your Space audience. *Use this resource as a guide for your own podcast-recording activity, to practice vocabulary and speaking skills with intermediate-advanced English language learners.*

