

Teaching the Topic

A new baby is the source of two kinds of communication. There are general social conversations about babies (more specific physical stuff with women!) about routines, emotions, expectations, changes. There are also new situations in which people need to communicate for specific purposes.

Resources

Pamphlets and printed information from Plunket, doctors, hospitals, Ministry of Health; information about new mother support groups; vaccination information; parenting web sites.

Activities

- Take along pamphlets from Plunket, birth services etc. Discuss and let your learner ask questions.
- Role play conversations with the doctor, midwife and Plunket nurse. Focus on specific needs – getting inoculations, checking progress, weight increase, feeding problems, sibling rivalry.
- Discuss the differences between disposable and cloth nappies, breast and bottle feeding, sleeping positions.
- Role play telephoning for appointments with the doctor.
- Talk about shopping and vocabulary of baby needs.
- Make a list of the sort of questions people ask new mothers – *Is it a boy or a girl? How much did s/he weigh? Was s/he on time/overdue? Where was s/he born? How long were you in hospital? Was your husband there for the birth? Is s/he your first?* (Women may ask *Did you have a long labour? How was the birth?*)
- Practise responses and continuing conversations from those questions.

Language

- Health and child care for doctor and Plunket. Baby gear, health issues, routines.
- New Zealand slang for babies' body functions – *a poo, a wee, bring up wind, spew.*
- Question forms, understanding and asking.
- Making comparisons with older siblings if relevant.

Using the Worksheet

A possible introductory activity: What happens when a new baby is born in the learner's country? How do friends and family find out about the birth?

The learner reads the birth notice from a newspaper and writes the answers. The tutor and the learner talk about this before the learner writes. Then there is a chart to record the full name, sex, date of birth and weight of the baby.

Main learning points

Read a birth notice for details – names of other family members, place and time of birth. Understand questions and answer orally and in writing. Understand vocabulary – *announce, arrival, weigh/weight, midwife*. Understand abbreviations – *lbs, D.O.B*. Understand the format of a birth notice – family name/names first, the use of parents' first names – *Tom and Claire are pleased to announce...*

What else could be learnt?

Conversion between pounds and kilos. The learner can use the chart to record information about their baby/babies.

Use the format to discuss the birth of the learner's children – if this is appropriate.

Look at some birth notices in the newspaper and apply the questions and table above to these new examples.

Identify the language often used in birth notices – *absolutely thrilled, special thanks, proudly announce* and discuss what it means.

Investigate the procedures and costs involved in putting a birth notice in the newspaper.



Birth notice

Look at the birth notice below and answer the questions.

WILLIAMS

Tom and Claire are pleased to announce the arrival of Mary Anne, a wonderful sister for Michael, on Monday, 27th February (7lbs). Thanks to staff at Wellington Hospital and midwife Kerry.



1. When was the baby **born**? _____
2. What is the baby's **name**? _____
3. Is it a **boy** or **girl**? _____
4. How much did the baby **weigh**? _____
5. What is the **mother's** name? _____
6. What is the **father's** name? _____
7. Does the baby have a **brother** or **sister**? _____
8. **Where** was the baby born? _____
9. Who was the **midwife**? _____

Now fill in the details below.

Family name	First name	Sex	D.O.B.	Weight (lbs)
		Male/female		

(discuss why pounds are often used and not kilos – try converting!)

