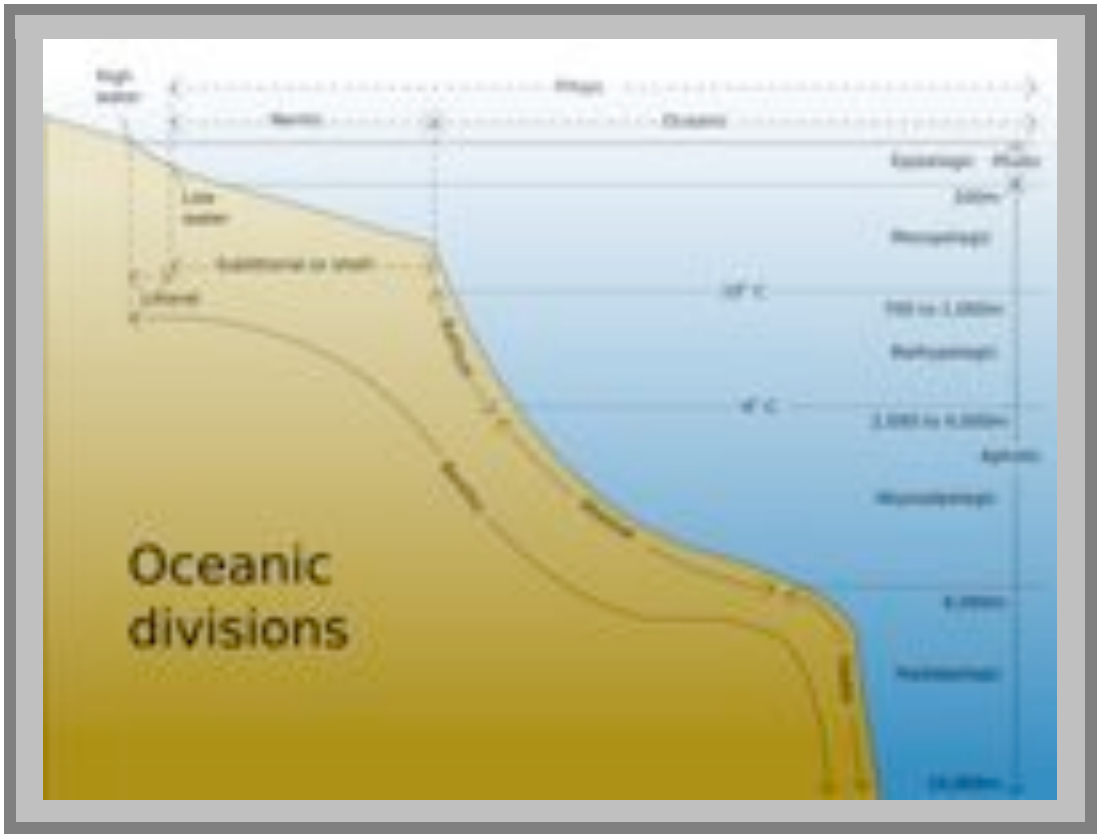
How deep is the ocean?

Language level:	Pre-intermediate (A2) +
Learner type:	Young learners; Teens; Adults; CLIL
Time:	45 minutes
Activity:	Grammar drill
Topic:	Science
Language:	'*How* + adjective' (*How deep*, *how high*, etc) Question forms
Materials:	Song



Preparation, materials and equipment

1. For this activity you will need a version of the song *How deep is the ocean?* The song was written by Irving Berlin and has been recorded by artists such as Ella Fitzgerald, Billy Holiday, Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra, Etta James, Ray Charles, Diana Krall, Eric Clapton, and many others.

   Use any of the following sites or applications to find a version of the song:

   - YouTube (http://www.youtube.com/)
   - The iTunes store (via iTunes media player)
   - Spotify (http://www.spotify.com/)
   - We7 (http://www.we7.com/)

2. Decide how you are going to play the song in class (computer or mobile phone and loudspeakers, for example)

3. Make a copy of the **Song Worksheet** on page 6 for each student.

4. Make a copy of the **Grammar Drill** worksheet on page 7 for each student.

Lesson plan

1. Tell students that they are going to hear a song that consists entirely of questions. Tell them that their task is to count the number of questions that they hear.

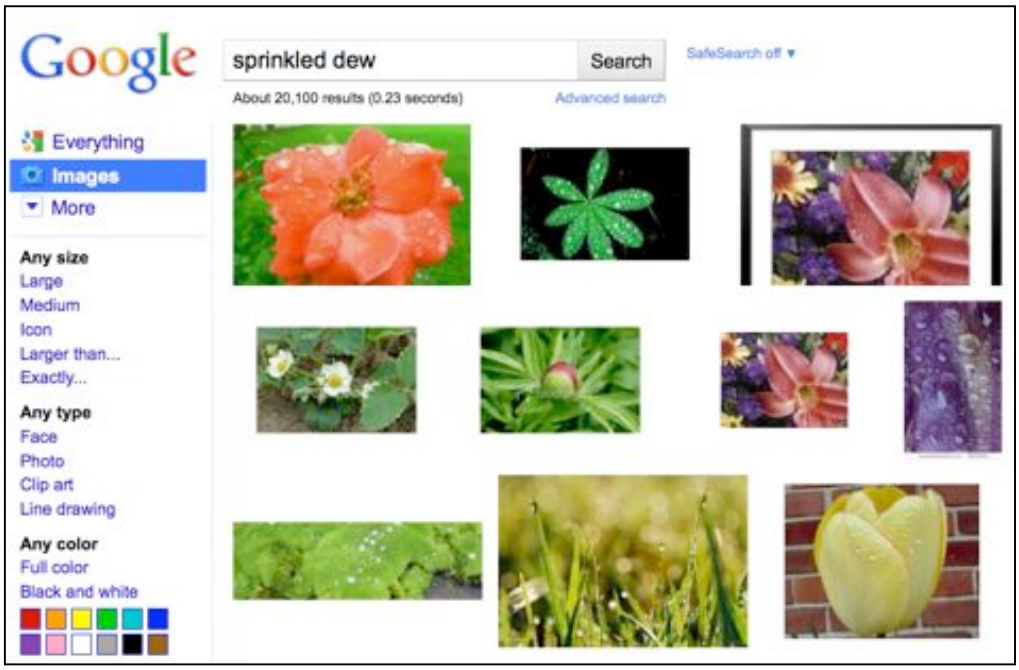
2. Play a single chorus of the song and let students count the questions.

How much do I love you? I'll tell you no lie.
How deep is the ocean?
How high is the sky?
How many times in a day do I think of you?
How many roses are sprinkled with dew?
How far would I travel to be where you are?
How far is the journey from here to a star?
And if I ever lost you, how much would I cry?
How deep is the ocean?
How high is the sky?

3. Let students compare the number of questions that they heard.

4. Give out copies of the **Song Worksheet** on page 6. Students will now be able to identify the 10 questions. In the case of disputes, point out that there are 10 question marks.

> Note that the if you type *sprinkled dew* into an image search engine, you will find pictures to teach / pre-teach these potentially problematic words.



5. Ask students to predict the missing words before they hear the song a second time.

6. Play the song and allow students to check their answers.

7. Ask students what type of word fits into the frame: '*How* _____' (Answer = adjectives) Elicit other similar questions that could be created for example:

- *How old is the universe?*
- *How high is Mount Everest?*
- *How long is a piece of string?*

8. Give out copies of the **Grammar Drill** worksheet on page 7. Ask students to match the answers on the left with the questions on the right.

9. Let students compare answers before doing feedback. Use this as an opportunity to drill the '*how* + adjective' questions. Answers:

1. Approximately 8.6 light years
   How far are we from Sirius?
   (Sirius is the brightest star in the night sky. One light year = the distance you would cover in one year if you could travel at the speed of light)

2. 4-6 kilometers to the abyssopelagic layer
   How deep is the ocean?
   (The abyssopelagic layer = the abyssal zone. The zone never receives daylight and is home to some bizarre deep-sea creatures)

3. Approximately 12,750 kilometres in diameter
   How big is our planet?

4. Between 112 and 120 kilometers/hour
   How fast can an adult cheetah run?

5. 8,848 meters above sea level
   How high is Mount Everest?

6. 6,650 kilometers
   How long is the Nile?

7. Between 6.4 and 29 kilometers
   How wide is the Grand Canyon?

8. About 8 minutes and 19 seconds
   How long does it take light to travel from the Sun to the Earth?

9. 13.75 ±0.17 billion years
   How old is the universe?

(Information obtained from Wikipedia)

10. Put students into pairs so that everyone has a drilling partner. Ask students to test each other's spoken production of the 9 questions on the **Grammar Drill** worksheet.

To do this:

- Student 1 should have a copy of the **Grammar Drill** worksheet in his/her hand but student 2 should not.
- Student 1 reads out a figure on the left hand side of the worksheet (e.g. *8,848 meters above sea level*)
- Student 2 recalls, from memory, the question that the figure is associated with (e.g. *How high is Mount Everest?*)
- Student 1 (who has access to the **Grammar Drill** worksheet) should help student 2 with grammar whenever necessary.
- After all of the questions have been covered, students change roles.

Variations

- Rather than giving out copies of the **Song Worksheet**, ask students to transcribe the lyrics to the song. Give control of the play and pause functions on the audio player to a student of your choice.
- Instead of giving out the **Grammar Drill** worksheet, prepare a worksheet that contains a series similar of '*How* + adjective' questions without answers. As a task (for homework, in the library, etc) ask students to find answers to all of the questions.

Follow ups

- The song contains a juicy second conditional and can be used to introduce the structure (*If I ever lost you, how much would I cry?*)
- The song can also be used to introduce the difference between much and many (*How much do I love you?*; *How many times in a day?*)

Credits

The images used in this activity come from:

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Oceanic_divisions.svg
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Pelagiczone.svg

Song Worksheet

How (1) _____ do I love you? I'll tell you no lie …
How (2) _____ is the ocean?
How (3) _____ is the sky?

How (4) _____ times a day do I think of you?
How (5) _____ roses are sprinkled with dew?

How (6) _____ would I travel to be where you are?
How (7) _____ is the journey from here to a star?

And if I ever lost you, how (8) _____ would I cry?
How (9) _____ is the ocean?
How (10) _____ is the sky?

Irving Berlin

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Song Worksheet

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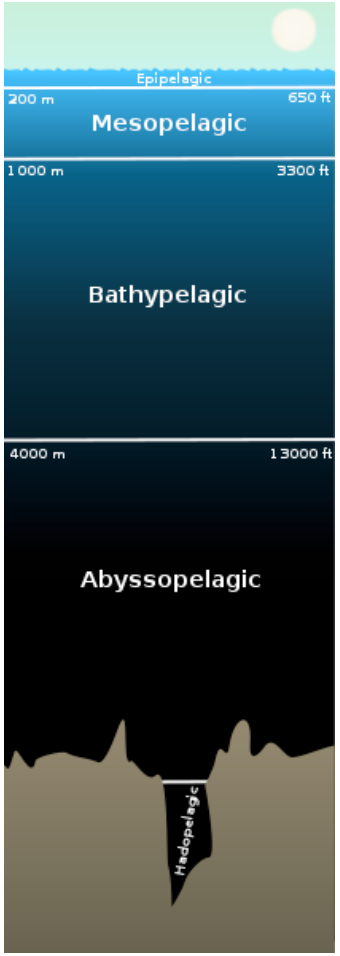
Irving Berlin

Grammar Drill

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