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Upper Intermediate Student’s Book

Life

Aquarium on Wheels

**Part 1**

**00.18–00.20 speaker on video** Let’s get this stuff out and see what we’ve got here.

**00.22–00.28** In a classroom at the National Aquarium in Baltimore, ten secondary school students are preparing for a lesson.

**00.29–00.37 speakers on video** ‘But look at the camouflage on it …’ ‘The eyes …’ ‘Containers that are made from them …’ ‘We have a frog.’

**00.38–00.45** They’re also preparing a show-and-tell presentation to give to a group of children and creating costumes for a play that they’ve written.

**00.48–00.50 speaker on video** And where’s the poison dart frog container? OK.

**00.51–01.10** Due to their age, this preparation and planning appears to be schoolwork, but it isn’t. In fact, these students are employees of a very special programme called ‘Aquarium on Wheels’.

**01.02–01.12 DejaNé Jones** There’s a lot of kids who do not have the opportunity to come to the aquarium, or see live animals or anything like that, so we bring the aquarium to them.

**01.13–01.33** The overall objectives of Aquarium on Wheels are to entertain and educate. This year’s goal is to explain the importance of the world’s rain forests to young people.

These student teachers want to help their young audience to better understand conservation.

The play is about a species threatened by the loss of the rain forest because it relies on it for food: the monkey.

**01.34–01.46 speakers on video** ‘They’re going to cut down this tree.’ ‘They’re going to cut down this tree?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘How am I going to find my leaves to eat? That means I’m going to have to fight other monkeys! I can’t fight other monkeys; I’m going to mess up my hair!’

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**01.47–01.53 George Faulk** We’re trying to get through to the kids that saving one tree can be important to all the animals in the rain forest.

**01.54–02.06** For aquarium administrators, on the other hand, the programme is about more than just teaching biology, or even teaching about the environment; it’s about offering student employees lessons for life.

Martha Schaum is the programme coordinator at the aquarium.

**02.07–02.17 Martha Schaum** Most kids like to play in the water – let’s be realistic – so marine biology is a really great vehicle to use to teach the other skills that they need to know.

**Part 2**

**02.18–02.24** One set of skills that the secondary school students need are the communication skills necessary to get – and keep – a job.

**02.25–02.35 Martha Schaum** I think for many of them – probably for most of them – they are probably the first in their family to go to college. And so what we’re doing is coming along behind them and saying, ‘You can do it.’

**02.36–02.46 DejaNé Jones** I wouldn’t be the person I am today if it wasn’t for them.

Basically, they taught me responsibility. That’s a big thing I’ve learned here.

**02.47–03.00 Martha Schaum** They knew we were going to discuss the rain forest. That’s a big topic. They had to decide how they wanted to present it, the concept that they wanted to use. They had to write the script. They had to decide the sorts of things that they wanted in the lab.

**03.01–03.09** Through this work, the student teachers learned an enormous amount about organisation and planning, and they also learned a bit about themselves as well.

**03.10–03.16 DejaNé Jones** It means a lot to me. Like I said, I have been here for three years and I really feel like I’ve helped a lot of people understand conservation.

**03.17–03.24** However, for many of these teenagers, the real value of Aquarium on Wheels is more personal; it’s about their dreams for their lives.

**03.25–03.33 Student employee** At first it just seemed like a really cool job to work at the aquarium. Now that I’ve been working here, I’ve finally found out what I want to be. I’ve found out that I want to be a marine biologist.

**03.34–03.37 George Faulk** I want to be an environmental lawyer, so it helps me out a lot.

**03.38–03.52 Student employee** It really … the programme really means a lot to me because I want to major in marine biology. And here at the aquarium I can get the experience that most other students wouldn’t be able to receive.

**03.54–04.09** The programme is proving to be advantageous for these students in helping them to prepare for their future professional lives.

For Martha Schaum, the programme allows her to achieve personal and professional satisfaction from watching these teenagers grow as people.

**04.10–04.16 Martha Schaum** This programme has meant more to me than anything else, because I’ve just, I have watched these kids grow and develop.

**04.17–End** The Aquarium on Wheels programme is having a powerful impact on more than just the rain forests; it’s having a positive effect on everyone involved with this very special programme.

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