

Lesson plan | Countryside is GREAT

Topic: The countryside, National Parks and UK rural attractions

Objectives:

- To introduce/ discover more about various aspects of the British countryside
- To identify the meaning of vocabulary in the context of countryside and National Parks
- To practise reading for specific detail and gist
- To discuss the importance of the preservation of the countryside and attitudes towards rural areas and National Parks
- To ask and respond to questions about countryside attractions in the UK

Level: Intermediate+

Introduction:

This lesson is about the countryside and, in particular, National Parks and UK rural tourist attractions. The lesson aims to develop speaking and listening skills through discussion (based on the students' own experiences and opinions) and an information-gap activity. The main text in the lesson may be used either as a reading or listening activity and provides practice of the sub-skills of reading/ listening for gist and specific detail.

Procedure:

Warmer (10 mins)

Task 1

- Hand out Task 1 and ask the students to make sentences from the words in the word cloud
- Elicit, from the word cloud, the phrase 'Britain has some of the world's most inspiring landscape'– ask students if they agree with this statement

Task 2

- Show the 'Countryside is Great' poster and ask students what they can see in the picture
- Ask students to choose the adjectives from the box that they would use to describe the poster
- Establish whether the students feel positively or negatively towards the image they have been shown and elicit synonyms and antonyms where possible
- Tell the students that before they learn more about the British countryside, they will discuss their own attitudes towards rural areas

Speaking (10 mins)

Task 3

- Allocate pairs
- Hand out Task 3 and encourage students to use the vocabulary from the previous activity

Lesson plan | Countryside is GREAT

- Give students a few minutes to prepare their responses to question 1 and then monitor as they give a short talk about their own attitudes, giving feedback where required and making a note of common errors
- Encourage students to join up with another pair to discuss the countryside in a wider context (question 2) for a few more minutes and then feedback as a whole group, promoting effective debate in relation to the different opinions of those present – it may be useful to check understanding of *preserve/preservation*
- Address any common errors noted during pair and group discussion

Pre-reading activity (5-10 mins)

Task 4

- Hand out Task 4, drawing students' attention to the names/ locations of the National Parks
- Play the video clip of Daniel <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A38Wzc9azQg>
- Elicit the names of the National Parks which were not mentioned

Reading (10-15 mins)

Task 5

- Hand out Task 5 and direct students to the while-reading question
- Discuss as a group why it is/isn't a good idea to have National Parks
- Ask students why the National Parks weren't mentioned in Daniel's video (they may need a little time to locate the specific information within the text)

Post-reading vocabulary activity (10-15 mins)

Task 6

- Ask the students to find the words in bold in the text and write them next to the correct definition
- Feedback as a whole class, drilling for accurate pronunciation and eliciting what part of speech each word is
- Fast learners can be directed to the questions at the bottom of the page and, once everyone has finished, these can be discussed as a whole class

Tasks 7 and 8 (20-25 mins)

Information-gap activity

Each student will need a copy of Task 7, however Task 8 will only need to be copied once per four students, and cut up so that there is one text per student

- Divide the class into groups of four
- Give each student a copy of the questions (Task 7) and one of the texts (taken from Task 8)
- Ask them to complete the four questions that their text gives the answers for
- Once completed, instruct them to ask questions to the other people in their group to answer the remaining questions
- Monitor the activity, making a note of common errors
- Ask students to consider which of the attractions they would most like to go to and why

Lesson plan | Countryside is **GREAT**

- Discuss their responses as a whole group and address any common errors noted

Extension activities

Task 9

- Hand out Task 9
- Briefly explain the options in Activity 1 and allow students to make their own choice about which task they would like to do
- Monitor and give guidance where required, although try to avoid inhibiting creativity by necessitating complete accuracy
- Ask students to present their work to the class

Answers:

Task 4

The two National Parks which aren't mentioned in the video clip are the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads and the South Downs.

Task 5

The Norfolk and Suffolk Broads are not mentioned as they constitute a water network (and cannot therefore be given the same status as National Parks - which are areas of land), however they do have National Park status.

The South Downs National Park is not mentioned as it only gained its status in 2010 and the video was made in 2009.

Lesson plan | Countryside is GREAT

Task 6

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| organisations with administrative powers in a specific field | authorities |
| make up; form; compose | constitute |
| paid for | funded |
| support; keep in existence | upkeep |
| an official position/title | status |
| made certain; guaranteed | assured |
| maintenance; keeping something in good condition | sustain |
| selected; set aside for a duty/purpose | designated |
| more important than anything else | paramount |
| uncommon; deviating from the norm | exceptional |
| head of a government department | Secretary of State |
| verified; made official | confirmed |
| the same; an equal amount of something | equivalent |
| involving two or more people/ organisations working together for the same purpose | collaborative |
| make easier or possible | facilitate |

Questions

- a) When did the volcanic activity which is responsible for Giant's Causeway occur?
Between 50 and 60 million years ago.
- b) When was the estate of Chatsworth bought and by which family is it owned?
The estate of Chatsworth was bought in 1549 and it is owned by the Cavendish family.
- c) How many people are estimated to make use of the Chatsworth estate on an annual basis?
It is estimated that more than a million people use it in some way every year.

Lesson plan | Countryside is GREAT

- d) What is the Scottish word for 'lake'?
'loch'

- e) What is the name of the film, set at Chatsworth House, in which Keira Knightley takes the lead role?
The Duchess

- f) What is the nickname of the Loch Ness Monster?
'Nessie'

- g) What are the polygonal interlocking rock columns at Giant's Causeway made of and how many are there?
They are made of basalt rock and there are approximately 40,000 interlocking columns.

- h) Who owns Stonehenge?
The Crown (the monarchy/Royal Family)

- i) What is Ireland's top tourist attraction?
Giant's Causeway

- j) In which year was Giant's Causeway declared a World Heritage Site?
In 1986

- k) What is the name of one of Derbyshire's most popular tourist attractions?
Chatsworth House

- l) What is the name of the largest lake in Scotland (by volume) and how deep is its deepest point?
Loch Ness, which has a depth of over 700 metres at its deepest point.

- m) What happens in Wiltshire each year at the time of the summer solstice?
Stonehenge is in alignment with the sun, which attracts many visitors.

- n) Approximately how old is Stonehenge?
4000-5000 years old

- o) Why was Stonehenge constructed?
The reason behind the construction of Stonehenge remains a mystery

- p) What is the name of Scotland's fastest growing city?
Inverness

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Notes:

Task 4

If you show the video of Daniel, there are a couple of things to bear in mind:

- There is no sound to the video
- The video is the result of a 'gentleman's agreement' – this might need some explanation prior to showing the clip. Alternatively, you could just show the clip from 0.16 – 2.02

If you don't have access to YouTube or you choose not to include the video, don't mention the South Downs when you call out the names of National Parks, as the reason that it is not mentioned in the video is related to when the video was made.

Task 6

More able students may be encouraged to use the National Corpus (<http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/>) to find common collocations for the given vocabulary and examples of the words in context.