

Green fingers

Task 1 – Picture dictation: My garden

Listen to a description of a garden. Draw what you hear:

Task 2 – Reading: Green fingers

Read the text and answer the questions.

1. Which activity is sometimes illegal?
2. Which activity can you learn about on a course?
3. Which activity was unpopular in the past?

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Allotment gardening

In Britain, more and more people want to grow their own fruit and vegetables. If you don't have a garden you can grow your own food on an allotment. An allotment is a small piece of land used specifically for gardening. In the past some people thought that allotment gardening was boring and just for old men. Now allotments are in fashion and everyone wants one. There are more than 100 000 people on allotment waiting lists in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Guerrilla gardening

Guerrilla gardening is political gardening generally practiced by environmentalists. It involves using

abandoned areas of land to grow plants and is not always legal. Some guerrilla gardeners work in secret at night to grow vegetable or flower gardens. Others work more openly in the daytime and they ask local communities to help them. In 2000, guerrilla gardeners organised a mass gardening action in Parliament Square in the centre of London. Thousands of gardeners occupied the square and planted vegetable and flowers. More recently, local people and guerrilla gardeners converted Leaf Street in Manchester, in the north of England into a thriving community garden.

Foraging

Foraging (finding food to eat in the wild) is an alternative to a supermarket trip for some people in Britain. There are more than 400 edible plants in the UK. How do you know which ones you can eat? One option is to do a course to learn all about foraging for food. A foraging course can teach you about when raspberries are in season, how to find wild garlic, which mushrooms are safe to eat and where to find snails. Hugh Fernley-Whittingstall, TV cook and expert forager, believes that food found in the wild is healthier and tastier than anything you can buy in the supermarket. What do you think?

Glossary:

Waiting list – a list of names of people waiting for something not available now

Thriving – full of life

Edible – something you can eat

Task 3 – Poll: What do you think?

Read the statements and circle your response.

- Everyone needs a garden - *I agree / I disagree / I'm not sure*
 - It's a good idea for local governments to grow vegetables instead of flowers in city centres - *I agree / I disagree / I'm not sure*
 - Foraging for food is better than shopping at the supermarket – *I agree / I disagree / I'm not sure*
- a) Compare your opinions with the people in your group
b) Tell the class about your group

Task 4 – Role play: who needs an allotment?

You are a member of the London allotment society. This society has one allotment to donate to the person who needs it most. Read the information that the teacher gives you. Explain to your partner why your candidate needs the allotment.

Task 5 – Matching: TV and radio programmes

Match the names of British TV and radio programmes with the correct description. Tell your partner which programmes you would like to watch or listen to and why.

1 The Edible Garden

2 Grow your Own Drugs

3 Gardener's Question Time

4 Three Hungry Boys

5 The City Gardener

A Ethnobotanist James Wong investigates plant based medicine. His natural remedies for common minor illnesses frequently use plants that seem exotic, but many of these plants can grow really well in our own back gardens.

B Expert gardener and renovator Matt James inspires city-dwellers to transform their outdoor spaces into beautiful gardens.

C Trevor, Thom and Tim, three marine biologists try to survive by foraging for food in Scotland for a month

D A group of experts answer gardening questions from a live audience. The programme is recorded in a different location each week.

E Alys Fowler examines different foods and shows how anyone can grow, cook and eat from their own garden - even if they live in a city.

Task 6 – Discussion

a) Ask and answer the questions with a partner.

- Is gardening popular with young people in your country?
- Why do you think people want to grow their own food in Britain?
- Does guerrilla gardening exist in your country?

- Do you think guerrilla gardening should be legal?
- What fruits and vegetables are in season at the moment in your country?
- Would a course on foraging for food be popular in your country? Why/Why not?
- What plants have you got or would you like to have at home?

b) Make a question about plants, gardening or food to ask your teacher.

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