

Topics

Holidays, holiday destinations

Aims

- To speak about advantages and disadvantages
- To listen for specific information
- To work with synonyms and definitions with and without dictionaries
- To use synonyms and definitions as a speaking strategy
- To write a monologue or a magazine article

Age group

14+

Level

A2-B1

Time

Approximately 40-60 minutes

Materials

1. [Audio file](#)
2. [Image](#) (Remote house in the west of Scotland)

Introduction

This activity is designed to encourage students to develop their higher-level critical-thinking skills to speak about images. The activity is part of a package of materials, which includes audio to help students develop their listening skills. The focus in this activity is on using synonyms and definitions as a speaking strategy and on speaking about holidays or houses.

Procedure

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| 1. | Show students the photograph and ask them to say where they think it is. Find out if students would like to live there or not, and elicit a list of advantages and disadvantages of such a place. |
| 2. | Ask students why they think the photographer was there and why she took the photograph. Discuss ideas then play the recording for students to listen and check. |
| 3. | <p>Ask students to look at the following phrases on their worksheet and ask them to choose which they think is the definition or synonym that the photographer gives for each.</p> <p>Correct answers in bold</p> <p>1. A self-catering cottage</p> <p>a) A great little house with a fantastic kitchen</p> <p>b) A great big house with a fantastic kitchen</p> <p>2. Self-catering</p> <p>a) You can cook and eat when you want and what you want</p> <p>b) You can eat when you want and what you want</p> <p>3. Eating in a restaurant</p> <p>a) A good option for a family of four</p> <p>b) Very expensive in the UK</p> <p>4. Remote, alone</p> <p>a) Far away, isolated</p> <p>b) Good, permanent</p> <p>5. It appealed to me</p> <p>a) I liked it</p> <p>b) I didn't like it</p> |

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| 4. | Play the recording again for students to listen and check their answers in step 3. Check as www.teachingenglish.org.uk |
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	<p>a class. Point out to your students that Carol (the photographer) uses these definitions and synonyms to reformulate and clarify what she is saying. They help the listener to understand her meaning.</p>
5.	<p>Tell students to choose a photograph from one of the following sets on ELTPics</p> <p><i>Holiday Time</i> set: http://www.flickr.com/photos/eltpics/sets/72157626527253332/</p> <p><i>Homes</i> set: http://www.flickr.com/photos/eltpics/sets/72157625148058641/</p> <p>They should imagine it is a holiday photograph. Using a dictionary to help, students find five words or phrases they could use to describe or talk about their photograph and then think of and write down synonyms or definitions to help explain the meaning of their chosen words.</p>
6.	<p>Tell students to imagine they took the photograph they have chosen and to write a monologue or travel magazine article talking about it and about why they took it. They should include their new words and the definitions / synonyms.</p>
7.	<p>In the following class, put students in pairs to show each other their photograph and tell each other about it. Students change partner and repeat at least three times.</p> <p>If your students have written an article, collect and post them in a blog or put them on the wall for classmates to read.</p>

Contributors

Activity by: Fiona Mauchline
 Photograph by: Stephanie Stanger

Transcript

Carol

I took this photo during a family holiday we had on the coast, um, the west coast of Scotland. We were staying just south of a town called Oban, which is about, oh I don't know, about two hours north of Glasgow, Scotland's biggest city. And I think it was, oh, probably about eight years ago. Eight or nine.

We were staying in a self-catering cottage, a great little house it was, with a fantastic kitchen, and very comfortable...

Interviewer

Self-catering? Yeah?

Carol

Yes – we don't like having to look for restaurants all the time, it's not a good way to spend your holiday time. With self-catering, you can cook and eat when you want and what you want. And anyway, eating in a restaurant with a family of four people is, you know, it's very expensive in the UK.

Interviewer

Yes, that's true. Yeah.

Carol

Anyway, we were on holiday and we'd been spending time just, you know, relaxing and walking along the beaches.... visiting the local villages and pubs and and, yes, just relaxing, and on this particular day we had rented a boat. There was just me, my husband and our two children, and they were about ten and twelve at that time.

And most of the photos I took that day were of us and the children trying to drive the boat and and things like that, but I also took photos of the coast, the beaches, which are incredibly beautiful, and this house caught my eye, you know?, it drew my attention, because it's soooo remote, so – well – alone and and, well, that quite appealed to me at the time. I liked it.

Interviewer

It really does look totally alone, doesn't it? Very, eh, isolated or...or far away from everything.

Carol

Yes, but that's what I like about it. It's good to be alone sometimes, isn't it? I mean, I wouldn't want to live there permanently but sometimes.... you know.....yes. Don't you agree?