

'Mingling is part of the adventure': a family trip to Wales shows why hostels are booming

Level 3: Advanced

Article summary: This article describes a journalist's experience going to a hostel in Wales and considering the advantages compared to more private holidaymaking experiences.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Defining relative clauses

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student, *The Guardian* website if you want to share the images

1. Warmer

- a. This activity aims to get students thinking about their preferences when they go on holiday, particularly in terms of socialising and privacy.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do this task individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. As an extension activity, ask students to highlight the key words in the article.

Key:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. <i>mingle</i> | 11. <i>chit-chat</i> |
| 2. <i>draughty</i> | 12. <i>communal</i> |
| 3. <i>bunk rooms</i> | 13. <i>coveted</i> |
| 4. <i>awkward</i> | 14. <i>snug</i> |
| 5. <i>private rentals</i> | 15. <i>scuttle</i> |
| 6. <i>incredulously</i> | 16. <i>airy</i> |
| 7. <i>amiably</i> | 17. <i>revival</i> |
| 8. <i>scepticism</i> | 18. <i>go-to</i> |
| 9. <i>bleak</i> | |
| 10. <i>tween</i> | |

- b. Before reading the article carefully, students use the key words to fill the gaps in the sentences to ensure that they know how the words are used in other contexts.

Key:

1. *draughty*
2. *revival*
3. *incredulously*
4. *go-to*
5. *awkward*
6. *airy*
7. *communal*
8. *bunk rooms*
9. *amiably*
10. *coveted*
11. *private rental*
12. *scepticism*
13. *scuttled*
14. *bleak*
15. *chit-chat*
16. *snug*
17. *mingle*
18. *tween*

3. Comprehension check

- a. Students answer the questions based on the information in the article. Encourage students to justify their answers with references to the article before writing the corrected sentences.

Key:

1. *Hostels now provide home comforts and a sense of community.*
2. *Penguins*
3. *They were sceptical.*
4. *EM Forster's A Room With a View and Agatha Christie's Death on the Nile*
5. *In the 1930s*
6. *Better. She 'needn't have worried'.*
7. *An army nurse and a couple from Spain*
8. *Had snowball fights and played board games*
9. *In better health than ever*
10. *Yes. They'll be her go-to for adventures like this.*

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4. Key language: Defining relative clauses

- a. This activity is designed to help students notice how defining relative clauses are used, the forms they take, and how to spot them. If necessary, review defining *relative clauses*: they are used to add information about the subject or object of a sentence. It can be used to put across more information in fewer words, or simply as a stylistic choice. They often use a relative pronoun to connect the information.

Encourage them to look for the key words in the example sentences, and to try to identify how the sentences in the article are put together.

Key:

1. *Hostels now provide home comforts and a sense of community, which private rentals will never match.*
2. *Head up Moel Siabod to the lake, and that's where the penguins are.*
3. *Our daily adventure plans were settled, inspired not by an internet search or guidebook, but by the easy exchange of recommendations that happen so often in the communal spaces of hostels.*
4. *I picked up tips on thermal gloves from an army nurse who shared my despair over cold fingers.*
5. *The trip had sparked an appreciation for something I hadn't realised our holidays were missing; a sense of community.*

- b. This activity is designed to give students the opportunity to have controlled practice using defining relative clauses, now expanding the number of relative pronouns available to them. Note that sentences 1, 3 and 4 have multiple possible answers.

Key:

1. *This phone has a battery that/which other models can't match.*
2. *We stopped at a café where you can charge your laptop.*

3. *Our decision was based on advice which/that people shared during the meeting.*
4. *I spoke to a neighbour who/that understood my frustration.*
5. *It was dinner time when I realised my fridge was broken.*

- c. Here students can write their own sentences using defining relative clauses. To support students, you can remind them of the topic of holiday destinations, or to mix up the interaction a little, you can put different ideas on the board to inspire students to write, such as what they do at the weekend, sports, favourite stories and so on.

5. Discussion

- a. Students discuss the statements related to the article and give their reasons and justifications for each answer, referring to their own experiences wherever possible. Feel free to refer them back to their warmer discussions, now having read the article. You can also refer them to the original Guardian article to give them a visual of Wales, the hostel and the journalist's experience.

6. In your own words

- a. Encourage students to envision their perfect holiday experience. Encourage them to use the internet to find out more about the options for travelling and accommodation in the British countryside. Have them consider the arguments made in the article and whether they agree with them or not. If students disagree within their groups, the presentation could take the form of a debate or a list of pros and cons. You can also keep the relative pronouns on the board to support students in practising the lesson's language point.
- b. For online classes or more digitally inclined students, presentations could be replaced with the creation of a video for a streaming platform.