

Topics: Museums by Adrian Tennant

LEVEL: Intermediate +
AGE: Teenagers / Adults
TIME NEEDED: 90 minutes + project
LANGUAGE FOCUS: Collocations;
 understanding vocabulary in context

LEAD-IN

Put students in pairs. Ask them to look at the photos and discuss what they think each one shows. Elicit ideas and write these on the board.

Key _____
 1. statue / sculpture (Michelangelo's David); 2. people looking at a picture in an art gallery; 3. Egyptian funerary mask (of Tutankhamun); 4. skeleton of a large animal (e.g. a whale)

Next, put students into small groups and ask them to discuss the three questions. Then open the discussion out to the whole class.

READING 1: TITLES

Tell students that the headings are all from reviews written by members of the public as blog posts. Ask students to work in small groups and discuss what each review might be about, based on the heading. Open the discussion out to the class and write some of the ideas on the board.

READING 2: REVIEWS

Ask students to read through the reviews and match the headings to the correct reviews. After a few minutes, put students in pairs and get them to check their answers together. Finally, check the answers as a class.

Key _____
 A. 4; B. 5; C. 1; D. 3; E. 2

Next, ask the students to answer the five comprehension questions. Again, get students to check their answers in pairs before checking as a class.

Key _____
 1. B (US) and D (York); 2. A, D and E; 3. C; 4. because they thought they could do better; 5. D

WORKING WITH THE LANGUAGE

Focus 1: Understanding meaning

Do the first question as a whole class. Get students to read the question and try to find the answer. Elicit a few ideas, writing them up on the board, and then tell them the correct answer. Check that they understand why it is correct and explain if necessary.

Put students in pairs and ask them to help each other to answer the remaining three questions. Monitor and help where necessary before checking as a class.

Key _____
 1. the museum; 2. the experience; 3. the person dressed up as a Viking; 4. the bad art

Focus 2: Language use

Ask students to try to match the words in the two columns. Tell them NOT to look back at the reviews at this stage. Then, when they have finished, get the students to look back at the reviews to check their answers.

Key _____
 1. f; 2. a; 3. e; 4. d; 5. b; 6. c

WORKING WITH VOCABULARY

Focus 1: Meaning

Ask students to look at the reviews and find words that match the definitions. Encourage them to work in pairs and discuss their ideas. If students get stuck, tell them that the words appear in the same order as in the reviews. Check the answers as a class.

Key _____
 1. huge; 2. mesmerize; 3. to pull somebody's leg;
 4. bustling; 5. transported back; 6. overpowering;
 7. dedicated to; 8. curator

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Focus 2: Topic-related words

Students should complete the sentences with the words in the box. Get them to check their answers in pairs before checking as a class.

Key _____

1. *displays*; 2. *on show*; 3. *exhibitions*; 4. *works*; 5. *section*

LISTENING

Ask students to listen to a woman talking about one of the museums or art galleries. Play the recording and ask students which of the reviews, from the Reading 2: Reviews exercise, it is about (review C). Now, ask students to read the third review and circle any differences they can remember between it and the recording. Put students in pairs and ask them to discuss their answers together. Play the recording again, if necessary, and check the answers as a class.

Transcript:

Woman: Wow! I've always dreamed of coming here to see the Mona Lisa, but there is so much more to see. The rooms on Ancient Egypt in particular are fantastic! Sure, the queues were long but then that's no surprise for such an amazing place. Although it's big – huge, actually – the floor plan is so good that you don't have to walk too far to see what you want. I'm definitely coming back.

Key _____

was impressed ('Wow!') / a bit disappointed; loved the rooms on Ancient Egypt / the Greek and Roman section; not surprised / upset that the queues were long; great distances to walk / easy to walk around; would / wouldn't go back

SPEAKING

Put students in small groups and ask them to discuss the questions together.

Afterwards, ask a few groups to report back on their discussion. You might want to open this out to the whole class.

PROJECT

Ask students to carry out the project for homework and ask for volunteers to give their presentations in the next lesson.

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LEAD-IN

a. Look at these photos. What does each one show?

1.



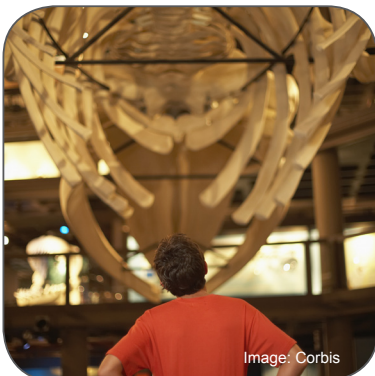
2.



3.



4.



b. Discuss the questions below.

1. How often do you go to a museum or art gallery?
2. When was the last time you went?
3. What type of museum or art gallery was it?

READING 1: TITLES

Read the titles below. What kind of museum or art gallery do you think each one is about?

1. WAITING, WALKING AND A BIT OF CANVAS

2. NO SKILLS REQUIRED

3. A Trip Back In Time

4. ANY SKELETONS IN YOUR CUPBOARD?

5. A Museum You'll Be Hooked On

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READING 2: REVIEWS

a. Read the online reviews of five different museums and art galleries. Match the titles from the previous exercise to each one.

A.

It's just the perfect place to take a seven-year-old. When I told my wife I was taking Jake to a museum she just said "Good luck!" but he was great. The minute we walked through those big wooden doors and he saw the huge skeleton he was mesmerized. I watched his mouth fall open in wonder and he held my hand as we walked from exhibition to exhibition. Of course, there were questions followed by more questions, but he absolutely loved it.

B.

When I first heard of this museum I thought someone was pulling my leg. I mean, how can you have a museum dedicated to barbed wire? Of course, it is in the US – where else would it be? But it is fascinating. Did you know there are more than 2,000 types of barbed wire? Also, I learnt a lot about the history of the settlers in the Midwest. Whatever you do, don't go there with a magnet in your pocket!

C.

I was a bit disappointed – after all, as the home to probably the most famous painting in the world, you'd expect a bit more from the Louvre. Some of the exhibitions were great – I loved the Greek and Roman section with all the jewellery and pottery. I just had two problems with the whole thing – the first was the queues to get in (almost two hours!) and the second was how far you have to walk around the building. I wouldn't go back.

D.

It's almost like living history! You walk in off the bustling streets of York and are transported back more than 1,000 years. Fantastic video and audio displays give you information overload, but the highlight for my two young boys was coming face-to-face with a 'real' Viking – at least, they thought he was real! The place was full of the overpowering smells of delicious food – as soon as we left I had to find somewhere to eat!

E.

Do you like paintings? Appreciate good art? Well this museum might just make you think again. It's dedicated to bad art – that's right, the curators go out of their way to look for paintings and other works of art that just shouldn't be on show and proudly display them! My kids loved it. They walked around saying "I could do better than that!"

b. Read the reviews again and answer the questions.

1. Which two reviews tell you where the museum or art gallery is?
2. Which places were suitable for children?
3. Which place wasn't as good as the person had expected?
4. Why did the children enjoy the bad art museum?
5. Where were people dressed in costumes?

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WORKING WITH THE LANGUAGE

Focus 1: Understanding meaning

Answer the questions below.

1. In text A, what does the word *it* refer to in the phrase ... *but he absolutely loved it*?
2. In text C, what does the writer mean by the phrase ... *the whole thing*?
3. In text D, who is the *he* referred to in the sentence ... *at least they thought he was real!*?
4. In text E, what does the word *that* refer to in the sentence *I could do better than that!*?

Focus 2: Language use

Match the adjectives in the left-hand column with the nouns in the right-hand column without looking back at the reviews.

- | | |
|-----------------|------------|
| 1. bustling | a. food |
| 2. delicious | b. place |
| 3. living | c. doors |
| 4. overpowering | d. smells |
| 5. perfect | e. history |
| 6. wooden | f. streets |

WORKING WITH VOCABULARY

Focus 1: Meaning

Find words and phrases in the reviews that match the definitions below.

1. extremely large in size / very big
2. to attract or interest you so much that you do not notice or pay attention to anything else around you
3. to tell someone something that is not true as a joke
4. a place that is very busy and full of noise and activity but usually in a pleasant way
5. to travel back in time
6. something which is very strong
7. devoted, made or used for one purpose
8. someone whose job is to look after the objects in a museum

Focus 2: Topic-related words

Complete the sentences with the words in the box.

works section on show exhibitions displays

1. All of the _____ are in glass cabinets, making it easy to see them while protecting the items.
2. Apparently, only a small number of items are _____ at any one time and there's lots of stuff in storage.
3. They regularly have new _____ to attract visitors, so it's worth going back again to see what's new.
4. The museum has some of the best _____ of art I have ever seen.
5. The floor plan shows which _____ of the museum you are in and also where to go if you want to see something from a particular era or part of the world.

LISTENING

Listen to a woman talking about one of the museums or art galleries and answer the questions below.

1. Which museum is she talking about?
2. What are the differences between what she says and the review?

SPEAKING

Discuss the questions below in groups.

1. Which of these museums or art galleries would you like to visit? Why?
2. What's the most interesting museum or art gallery you have visited?
3. How much would you be willing to pay to go to an art gallery or a museum?
4. Do you think money from our taxes should be used to subsidise museums and art galleries so that they are either free or inexpensive for people to visit? Why? Why not?

PROJECT

Write a review of a museum or art gallery that you have visited in the past.