

Sites to see and save

Level

Pre-intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level A2–B1 and above)

Comment

This eLesson starts by looking at the recent collapse of an ancient building in Pompeii and then goes on to look at the different ways in which endanger historical sites all over the world are endangered.

How to use the lesson

- 1 Tell your students you are going to describe a historical event and they have to guess where it is. Ask them not to shout out the answer, but to wait until the end. Read out the description below, one sentence at a time. Pause after each sentence. Alternatively, reveal the sentences one at a time on the board or OHP: *This place is around 2,000 years old. It is visited by 2.5 million tourists a year. It is in Europe. It is not just one building, but a group of buildings and streets. It was destroyed in a natural disaster. Many thousands of people were killed. It is a Roman town. This site is loved by historians and archaeologists, because it shows us a past life. It is in Italy. It is on the west coast of Italy, near Naples. It is near a volcano. The volcano is called Vesuvius.*
- 2 Clarify some relevant words to help students deal with the text, writing these on the board, eg *volcano (n), eruption (n) erupt (v) ash (n) site (n)*. Elicit anything else the students know about Pompeii. If you have the facilities, show some images or video clips of Pompeii. Elicit or tell students what has happened recently there: an important building has *collapsed*. Explain that the Global Heritage Fund is an international organisation which aims to protect historical and culturally important sites.
- 3 Elicit other well-known ancient *sites*. Then try to elicit what possible threats face such sites, putting students in small groups for discussion. If students are forthcoming, brainstorm their suggestions to the board. Students then complete exercise 1 in groups of three – quickly check students understand the different threats before starting. Monitor to see how much students are contributing, curtailing the activity when they run out of things to say. Take feedback.
- 4 Students complete exercise 2, a scanning task. If necessary, remind them at the start how to do this efficiently, eg they look for capital letters to denote a proper noun. Give a tight time limit, eg 1–3 minutes, depending on your group. Take quick feedback.
- 6 Students complete exercise 3, which is a comprehension task: they skim read the text in order to do this, again within a time limit. They check in pairs before feedback.
- 7 For exercise 4, instruct students to just read the first half of the text to find out about Pompeii. At the checking stage, you could write brief answers on the board, for variety.
- 8 In exercise 5 students read the text more closely to find out the problems associated with each different site; allow them to work in pairs if appropriate. Take feedback.
- 9 Exercise 6 focuses on the use of lexical chaining and is useful for students needing to improve their written English. In the text, the thread of discourse is maintained by using similar words; it is a way of avoiding simple repetition or relying simply on pronouns. Do the first example together, using the board to clarify links with arrows and colours.
- 10 Allow students a few minutes to prepare mentally for exercise 7, then put into threes. Be sure to spread out those students with nothing or little to contribute at this point!

- 11 You could highlight the play on words in the title of the text: *sight* and *see* usually collocate: *sightsee*, whereas this is *site*. Stronger students may see this straight away! Your students might benefit from further discussion of the need to protect such sites.

Focus on one particular site of interest, and develop role cards for the different people involved, being sure to include people with different interests, eg Angkor Wat: a local carver who sells mini wooden temples to tourists; a tour guide; a historian; an archaeologist; a tourist coach driver; a local teacher; Minister of Tourism; Minister of Culture. Students could develop the roles, considering their differing points of view, before having the debate in groups.

Answer key

- 1 Students' own answers.
- 2 Pompeii; Mount Vesuvius; Mirador; Guatemala; Lamu; Chersonesos; Ukraine; Angkor Wat; Cambodia; Iraq
- 3 d
- 4
 - 1 79 AD
 - 2 It captures a historic moment in time.
 - 3 It was used by the gladiators before fights.
 - 4 It was caused by exposure and heavy rain.
- 5

Pompeii: bad weather
 Mirador: people cutting down the surrounding trees, looters
 Lamu: modern developments
 Chersonesos: natural damage and human destruction by tourists
 Angkor Wat: the high number of tourists
 Iraq: looters
- 6
 - 1 the ancient city: Pompeii
 - 2 the volcano: Mount Vesuvius
 - 3 the Roman town: Pompeii
 - 4 the men's: gladiators'
 - 5 the surrounding trees: the jungle
 - 6 construction: modern developments

Related websites

The following websites might be useful, for either yourself or your students.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/nov/07/pompeii-building-collapse-italian-government>

http://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/Plans/plan_streets_3.htm

<http://www.chersonesos.org/?p=index&l=eng>

<http://www.voanews.com/learningenglish/home/12-Cultural-Sites-in-Developing-World-Listed-as-Most-Threatened-106575948.html>

<http://www.globalheritagefund.org/>

http://globalheritagefund.org/in_the_news/press_coverage/ghf_vanishing_in_the_news