

500 places to see before they die

Level 2 • Intermediate

1 Warmer

Where in the world can you find ...

- a) ... Battersea power station?
- b) ... the Nazca lines?
- c) ... the Everglades?
- d) ... Little Italy?

Skim-read the article to check your answers.

2 Key words

Match these key words with the definitions.

interference	devastation	deforestation	squeezed	Regency	derelict
landmark	threatened	degenerating	gloom	folly	vulnerable

1. When something is _____ it is in a weak position and in danger. (para 1)
2. Damage and destruction affecting a large area or a lot of people: _____. (para 2)
3. Becoming involved in a situation although you have no right to do so: _____. (para 2)
4. Something that is _____ is in danger of being harmed or destroyed. (para 3)
5. Something that is becoming worse is _____. (para 4)
6. The process of removing trees from a piece of land: _____. (para 5)
7. Something that is being _____ is being pressed or pushed from all sides. (para 5)
8. When applied to a building this means old, run-down, not looked after, empty, and in a bad condition: _____. (para 6)
9. A _____ is a building that has no practical use and is built as decoration. (para 6)
10. A famous building or object that you recognize easily: _____. (para 6)
11. A period in history – the time from 1811 to 1820 before George IV became King of England: _____. (para 7)
12. Bad depressing news, the feeling of having no hope: _____. (para 8)

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A new guidebook for travellers shows the sites most at risk

Amelia Hill, social affairs correspondent
October 26, 2008

- 1 The first guidebook of 'last chance' holidays will be published tomorrow for travellers who want to visit the most endangered tourist destinations across the world. Frommer's *500 Places To See Before They Disappear* provides a list of sites where it is still possible to see rare and vulnerable animals, special landscapes and unique cultural sights.
- 2 Holly Hughes, one of the authors and a former executive editor of Fodor's Travel Publications, said: 'The devastation brought on by climate change and direct man-made interference is familiar to all of us. But this book is a carefully chosen list of last-chance destinations that travellers can enjoy – if they go soon – for possibly the last time.'
- 3 According to Hughes and co-author Larry West, an award-winning investigative journalist, more than 20 of Britain's best-loved landmarks deserve a place in their book. The Tower of London and Greenwich Maritime Museum, for example, are at risk from rising sea levels which will cause the River Thames to flood.
- 4 With 500 threatened destinations to choose from, she suggests that tourists go to the Everglades in southern Florida. Filled with rare species, this ecosystem is degenerating with alarming rapidity. Already half has been lost to agricultural and urban development. Low water levels and pollution have put what remains at risk. 'The number of birds has fallen by 93 per cent and many of the fish and even the alligators who remain have high mercury levels,' said Hughes.
- 5 The Dead Sea may only be a tourist destination for three more decades. By then, says Hughes, 'it could be completely dry, because the rivers that run into it are being diverted'. Marine life around the Falkland Islands is in great danger from dumping by sanitation companies and ships. The Nazca lines in Peru, one of the world's most interesting and mysterious ancient sites, face destruction as roads are built and global warming and deforestation cause floods and mudslides. Also under threat is New York's Little Italy. Though a small part of the area, made famous by films such as *The Godfather* and *Mean Streets*, has been preserved, it is being gradually squeezed by the rapidly growing Chinatown and SoHo districts.'
- 6 Tourists should also visit some of Britain's ancient architectural treasures which, she says, risk becoming derelict because of a lack of money. Strawberry Hill, Sir Horace Walpole's folly in west London is trying to raise £8m. One of the oldest churches in England, St Mary's, in Stow in Lindsey, Lincolnshire, needs £3m for renovations. Another London landmark, Battersea power station, becomes more run-down every day as government, property developers and local community boards argue over its future.
- 7 Hughes also suggests a trip to Kentish Town, north London, to visit Little Green Street, one of the last complete Georgian streets in London. This perfect piece of Regency London was used as the setting for numerous music and photo shoots. Further north, the Holderness coast, in East Yorkshire, loses nearly 6ft (1.8 metres) a year due to rising sea levels caused by climate change and man-made interference, she said.
- 8 West points out that the guidebook's message is not all gloom. 'Some of the destinations are already on the road to being saved', he said. 'And even in the cases where a site has been lost, or irreversibly damaged, it often has become a place where activists meet and plan to fight on so that the same mistakes aren't made again. The planet is poorer every time we allow something beautiful to die.'

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3 Comprehension check

Are these statements true (T) or false (F) according to the article?

1. The co-authors of the book are a journalist and an editor.
2. The book lists the 500 most endangered birds and animals.
3. Part of the film *The Godfather* was filmed in New York.
4. 93% of alligators in the Everglades have high mercury levels in their blood.
5. Little Green Street is a district of New York.
6. The Nazca lines are on the Falkland Islands.
7. The Greenwich Maritime Museum is near the River Thames in London.
8. There is no hope for any of the places mentioned in the book.
9. The Dead Sea could be dry within 20 years.
10. If you are quick you will still be able to visit the places mentioned in the book.

4 Pronunciation ooOo

renovations vulnerable destruction interference architectural sanitation

- a) devastation has this pronunciation pattern ooOo - which other 3 words above have the same pattern? _____
- b) Which word has the same pronunciation pattern as irreversibly ooOoo _____
- c) Which word has the stress on the first syllable Oooo ? _____
- d) Which 3-syllable word has the stress on the middle syllable oOo ? _____
- e) These two nouns from paragraph 1 are pronounced in exactly the same way but their meanings are different. Write (or look up) a definition for each.
a site _____
a sight _____

5 Discussion

- a) How many tourist destinations can you find in the article? Underline them. Have you been to any of the places that are mentioned? If not, would you like to go to any of the places?
- b) Explain the last sentence of the article in your own words: 'The planet is poorer every time we allow something beautiful to die.' Do you agree with this statement?

6 Webquest

- a) Choose one of the destinations in the article and find it on Google Earth (weblink: <http://earth.google.com/>).
- b) Does the destination have an official website?
- c) What can you see or do there?
- d) How could you travel there?
- e) Where can you stay while you're there?
- f) How much would a trip to visit this destination cost?
- g) What is the weather like there at the moment?

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KEY

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- London, UK
- Peru
- Florida, USA
- New York, USA

2 Key words

- vulnerable
- devastation
- interference
- threatened
- degenerating
- deforestation
- squeezed
- derelict
- folly
- landmark
- Regency
- gloom

3 Comprehension check

- T
- F
- T
- F
- F
- F
- T
- F
- F
- T

4 Pronunciation oooOo

- sanitation renovations interference
- architectural
- vulnerable
- destruction

5 Discussion

- Tourist destinations:
 - The Tower of London
 - The Greenwich Maritime Museum
 - The Everglades in Florida
 - The Dead Sea
 - The Falkland Islands
 - The Nazca Lines in Peru
 - Little Italy in New York
 - Strawberry Hill in London
 - St Mary's Church in Stow in Lindsey
 - Battersea power station, London
 - Little Green Street, London
 - The Holderness coast, East Yorkshire

Teachers' notes

Here you can see photos of some of the places and wildlife (in Britain) mentioned in the book:
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/travel/gallery/2008/oct/26/endangered-britain-ireland?picture=338973178>
 You could show the pictures as a warmer or anytime during the lesson.

This links directly to the book:
<http://www.frommers.com/bookstore/047018986X.html>

The new book title is an homage to / is inspired by the bestseller *1000 Places To See Before You Die*:
<http://www.1000beforeyoudie.com/>

The webquest can be done during class time if you have the technology available. If not, it can be set as homework and the students can present their findings in the next lesson.