Big Adventures
Lesson One

Before you read

• Why might you like to have an adventure?
• What kind of adventures might you enjoy?

What are these people doing? Would you be afraid to try?

Language note
A silhouette is a dark shape or shadow, seen against a light background.

Afraid of climbing?
Read about it

- Who is Ken Noguchi?
- Why did Ken Noguchi go to so many countries when he was young?

Asian Kids Taking Challenges

Dear Angela,

I’m looking for an adventure. I want to live a life a little less ordinary, but I don’t know what to do. One of the ways I’ve been trying to find out is to look at what challenges other Asian kids have taken. The best example I’ve found so far is Ken Noguchi, from Tokyo, Japan.

Ken’s father was a diplomat so Ken traveled a lot when he was a kid. His family lived in the United States, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and other countries. He went to a boarding school in Britain but was kicked out for misbehavior. When it seemed he couldn’t control his temper and started falling behind, his father suggested he travel. On one of his trips, he found a book at a train station that changed his life. It was about the adventurer Naomi Uemura who was the first Japanese to climb Mount Everest. He also climbed the highest peaks on each of the other six continents.
Ken Noguchi set out to do the same thing—and became the youngest person to do so. He climbed Mont Blanc in Europe when he was sixteen and Mount Everest when he was twenty-four. Since then, he has worked to improve the environment.

What kind of adventure could I have? I’ve been looking through the atlas and thinking about it. Perhaps I could plan to sail down the longest rivers on each of the continents or hike through each of the world’s greatest forests. But if I need too much training, it might be too much trouble. Perhaps I could swim in the largest lakes on each continent; that wouldn’t take too much training!

Love,

Nancy
A. Answer these questions.

1. What did Ken Noguchi do before he was 24?
2. Why did Ken Noguchi travel a lot when he was young?
3. Who was Ken Noguchi’s hero?
4. Why does Nancy want an adventure?
5. How might Nancy have an easy adventure?

Understand what you read

Homophones
Homophones are words that are pronounced the same way even if they differ in spelling, meaning or origin, such as pair and pear. Some homophones are also spelled alike, as in bear (the animal) and bear (to carry).

Homophones are troublesome in English because they can create confusion in meaning when they are spoken or written. The most important thing to do when dealing with homophones is to look for the context in which they are placed.

Homophones can help you learn pronunciation. A word such as corps, for example, is a homophone for core. Knowing how to pronounce one word can help you pronounce another.

Here are four tips for working with homophones:
• Some t sounds are the same as some -ed sounds: passed/past.
• Contractions are sometimes used to make homophones: lets/let’s.
• Some homophones also have similar -s endings: lay/lei; lays/leis.
• Homophones differ with pronunciation differences in regional dialects. For example, the word clerk in American English rhymes with jerk. But in British English, clerk rhymes with park.
B. Write words that sound like these words:
1. dear __________________________
2. ate __________________________
3. for __________________________
4. frieze __________________________
5. knight __________________________

C. Fill in the missing words. Use the correct form of the word.
- intentional (adjective) done deliberately in order to get a particular result
- patiently (adverb) able to wait calmly for a long time or to deal with difficult situations without becoming angry
- pyramid (noun) an ancient stone building with four walls shaped like triangles that slope to a point at the top
- tragedy (noun) an extremely sad event, in which something very bad happens
- traveler (noun) someone who is on a journey or who travels a lot

Not all adventures are ________________ and many end in _________________. In 1990, an American woman’s horse hurt its leg on a rock near the ________________ of Egypt. That lucky accident helped archeologists find a new series of ancient buildings. A few years later, another young ________________ went riding alone in the desert and she and her donkey fell into a large deep grave. They couldn’t climb out and the woman ________________ finished writing all her postcards then slowly died of thirst. She was found months later.

After falling in the hole, what do you think the second woman wished she had done?

What about you?
What would be an adventure you would like to have? Is there something you would like to do that no one has ever done before?
Lesson Two

Read about it

• Why is travel a great adventure?
• How can volunteering be an adventure?

What’s Left to Do?

There are many adventures in the world, and not all of them involve climbing mountains. If you are young, mostly you just need to want to do something remarkable. You also need the courage to try something different.

Travel has always been one of the great adventures. This does not mean getting on a bus with a herd of other tourists and being led by someone waving a flag and shouting through a megaphone.

Instead, to have a real adventure, set out by yourself or with a friend to really explore. This way, you have to struggle to understand everything about a new place, including the language and customs. A real adventure is to hike or bike, following an old path. For example, you could

Traveling down China’s Grand Canal

Reading strategy

The question in this article is general and not completely answered in the text. Such questions are meant for you to complete by adding your own ideas.

Language note

Prepositions vary, depending on what you are doing. You hike up a mountain, along a road and across a field.
trace the route of China’s Grand Canal that once went from Beijing to Hangzhou. Or you could try to find the Fifty-three Stages of the *Tokaido*, the ancient coastal road connecting the Japanese cities of Kyoto and Edo (modern-day Tokyo).

One way to travel for a longer time and get more involved in another country is to volunteer. Volunteering, especially in poorer countries, can include building homes, helping with medical care and teaching. Other volunteer programs let you dig for dinosaur bones or lost tombs or even cities.

Not every adventure means you have to leave your home. It can be an adventure just to explore new ideas. Cambridge University professor Stephen Hawking is someone who will never climb mountains. He has a disease that affects his muscle control. He uses a wheelchair and speaks using a computer. Hawking’s adventures are in what he thinks.

“My goal is simple,” he says. “It is complete understanding of the universe, why it is as it is and why it exists at all.” Now, that’s an adventure!

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**Vocabulary notes**

1. **affect** (verb) to cause a change in someone or something, or to change the situation they are in
2. **canal** (noun) a long narrow area of water made for ships or boats to travel along
3. **coastal** (adjective) the land next to the sea
4. **goal** (noun) something that you hope to achieve in the future
5. **hike** (verb) to take a long walk in the countryside or mountains
6. **megaphone** (noun) a thing shaped like a big cone, that you speak through to make your voice louder
7. **tomb** (noun) a grave, especially a large one
8. **universe** (noun) all the stars and planets and all of space

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Read and listen again to practice your pronunciation.
A. **Summarize the main idea in one sentence.**

Richard Burton (1821–1890) was an English explorer, linguist, author and soldier who traveled to Cairo, Suez and the holy cities of Medina and Mecca, disguised as an Arab. He spoke dozens of languages and translated now-famous books into English including *The Tales of the Arabian Nights*. While searching in Africa for the source of the Nile he was attacked and had his face scarred by a spear. He also introduced the words pajamas and safari into English.

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B. **Vocabulary check: Fill in the missing letters to find the secret word.**

- te [ ] per
- hi [ ]
- o a l
- o r d i n [ ] r y
- d i [ ] m o t
- u [ ] p p i l y
- c a s t a l
- c a a l
- u n i v e r s
C. Choose the best answer.

1. Climbing mountains is ____ .
   a. healthy and safe
   b. not the only adventure
   c. the best exercise
   d. the only adventure

2. The phrase herd of tourists refers to ____ .
   a. buses
   b. people who travel on buses
   c. groups of travelers
   d. people who hold flags

3. Struggling to learn about a new place ____ .
   a. is not worth the trouble
   b. happens to every tourist
   c. means you forgot your guide book
   d. is a kind of adventure

4. Hiking and biking ____ .
   a. are good ways to see a country
   b. should not be done at the same time
   c. are important to volunteering
   d. are uncommon in poorer countries

5. Volunteers can help others by ____ .
   a. living in people's homes
   b. paying for medical care
   c. teaching
   d. hiking and biking

6. You might find a dinosaur if you ____ .
   a. build a home
   b. have simple goals
   c. build bicycles
   d. volunteer as a digger

7. Stephen Hawking doesn’t ____ .
   a. climb mountains
   b. teach English
   c. hike
   d. all of the above

8. Hawking’s “simple goal” ____ .
   a. involves a megaphone and a computer
   b. is not really so simple
   c. is a trip in his wheelchair
   d. is not in the universe
**Debate**

Take one side, add your own ideas and debate in pairs or groups.

**For:** People need adventures.

**Points:**
- Life can be boring without some excitement from time to time.
- At the end of your life, you won’t wish you’d spent more time in the office.
- Adventures are the spice of life.

**Against:** Adventures are for story books.

**Points:**
- People’s expectations are too high.
- Adventures only sound great after they’re over.
- Not everyone can have adventures; someone has to do the work.

**Debate strategy**

When you debate, always try to sound like you’re winning. Your confidence will help you win.

Say:
- “I’m very confident that you will agree with ... .”
**More ideas to debate**

“Courage is the price that Life exacts for granting peace.”
Amelia Earhart (1897–1937) American pilot

“Courage is the ladder on which all the other virtues mount.”
Clare Booth Luce (1903–1987) American writer

“Courage is doing what you’re afraid to do. There can be no courage unless you’re scared.”
Eddie Rickenbacker (1890–1973) American fighter pilot

“Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear—not absence of fear.”
Mark Twain (1835–1910) American writer

“Keep your fears to yourself, but share your courage with others.”
Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–1894) English writer

“Fortune favors the brave.”
Virgil (70 BC–19 BC) Roman Writer
Learn more

What opportunities are there for you to volunteer? Find brochures or websites that discuss volunteering and report them to your class.

Look online

Check out the website at www.read-and-think.com for extra learning resources.

Add new words to your personal dictionary on page 154.