

Intermediate English Comprehension – Book 1

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Note from the author

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Thank you!

Stephen

How to use this eBook

The 'Intermediate English Comprehension' series is designed specifically to help you develop your English reading comprehension skills. These are skills you will need in 'real life', as well as to pass the various intermediate level English exams.

How you use the book is entirely your choice. Each of the fifteen articles has a glossary of key words and a set of ten questions. The answers to the questions can be accessed by clicking the link, or by going to the end of the book. Many learners find it helpful to first read the glossary, before reading the text. However, some learners begin with the text - there is no correct way.

You may decide to write the answers down on paper, but this is not necessary. Because the texts are short, you can answer the questions mentally. Try not to look up every unfamiliar word by using your device's dictionary. Instead, try and work out the words from their context before checking the meaning.

When checking your answers, use your own judgement to decide if you are right. Remember this is a learning experience, not a real test!

The video links are for readers who would like to find out more on the various topics, they are not related to the questions.

Finally, enjoy! The articles cover a wide range of fascinating topics and, if nothing else, they should make interesting reading.

The Komodo Dragon



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Over three metres long, with extremely sharp claws, huge teeth and a poisonous bite... Does this sound like something from a horror film? In fact, it is a description of the Komodo dragon. These reptiles are real and they are one of nature's most incredible creatures. Read on to find out what makes them so special.

Komodo dragons have lived on some of Indonesia's islands for thousands of years, but these modern day dinosaurs were only discovered about 100 years ago. One story tells that the Komodo dragon was first discovered during WWI (World War One), when an airplane **crash landed** in the waters around the islands. The story tells how the pilot swam to Komodo Island, where he was **surrounded** by the terrifying, huge lizards. It sounds like something out of an action movie, and the story is actually a myth.

We don't know exactly when Komodo dragons were first discovered but the earliest stories come from 1910 to 1912. The existence of the Komodo dragon was **confirmed** in 1926. This was the year that the explorer W. Douglas Burden **led an expedition** to Komodo. He was working for the American Museum of Natural History. He returned from his trip with twelve dead specimens and two living komodo dragons.

The Komodo dragon is the largest living lizard in the world. Some Komodo dragons can be 3 meters long and can weigh more than 130 kg. This means that Komodo dragons are the heaviest lizards on Earth. They have long heads with short **snouts**, scaly skin, short legs, and big, strong tails. The largest dragon ever found was 3.13 m long. It weighed 166 kg, however this might have included a large amount of undigested food in its stomach. Normally, the largest Komodo dragons weigh about 70 kg.

Komodo dragons are the top predators on the islands where they live. They will eat nearly anything, including **carrion**, smaller dragons, wild horses and pigs, large water buffalo and sometimes unlucky humans! Although the Komodo can run **briefly** at 20 kilometres per hour, Komodo dragons usually hunt using camouflage and patience. They can spend hours in one place, waiting for their prey. When their unfortunate victim passes, the dragons attack and rip it to pieces.

Komodo dragon saliva has more than 50 types of bacteria. If the prey animal is bitten and escapes, it usually dies of blood poisoning quite quickly. If this happens, the dragons follow and **locate** the dead or dying animal by using their excellent sense of smell.

Many large **carnivores**, such as tigers, do not eat 25 to 30 per cent of their prey. They leave the stomach, **hide**, bones, and feet. However, Komodo dragons are less wasteful and leave only about 12 per cent of their prey. They eat bones, feet, fur and skin - they even eat the stomach!

A Komodo dragon can eat 80 per cent of its own body weight. However, when they feel scared or nervous, Komodo dragons can **throw up** the contents of their stomachs. This makes them lighter so they can escape more easily.

There is a population of roughly 4000 Komodo dragons on the island of Komodo and the smaller surrounding islands. However, the species is endangered **due to** hunting, natural disasters such as volcanic eruptions, forest fires and human expansion.

Komodo dragons have always been popular in zoos around the world. Visitors love their huge size and scary reputation. However, they are quite rare in zoos because they are vulnerable to infections and parasitic diseases.

Despite all that we have learned about these magnificent creatures during the last century, we still have **a great deal to learn**. Who knows what secrets these amazing reptiles will **reveal** in years to come?

[Click on this link to see a short video on Komodo dragons.](#)

Glossary

crash landed - 'to crash land', to land an aircraft in an emergency situation.

surrounded - 'to surround', to make a circle around someone or something.

confirmed – 'to confirm', to say with certainty that a report or fact is true.

led an expedition – 'to lead an expedition', to be the person in charge of an expedition.

snouts - a snout is the projecting nose and mouth of an animal.

carrion - the decaying flesh of dead animal.

briefly - for a short time, e.g. "she visited him briefly"

locate – 'to locate' means 'to find'.

carnivores – animals which eat meat.

hide - here hide is a noun and means an animal's skin, not the verb 'to hide'.

throw up - 'to throw up', a phrasal verb meaning 'to vomit'.

due to - because of.

a great deal to learn - 'a great deal' means 'a lot'.

reveal – ‘to reveal’, to tell a fact or secret that was unknown.

in captivity - not living in the wild but in a zoo.

Questions about the text

1. Why is the bite of a Komodo dragon dangerous?
2. Why might a Komodo dragon vomit?
3. How do Komodo dragons hunt?
4. How are Komodo dragons different from other large carnivores?
5. What happened in 1926?
6. Name three factors that have made Komodo dragons endangered.
7. How do Komodo dragons find prey which they have bitten, but which has escaped?
8. There are not many Komodo dragons **in captivity**. Why is this?
9. How many Komodo dragons did W. Douglas Burden take back to America?
10. True or false? - Komodo dragons can run quickly for long periods of time.

[Click here to check your answers.](#)

Jainism



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We have all heard of the six biggest religions: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. However, there are hundreds of lesser-known religions around the world. Jainism is one of these ancient belief-systems.

Jainism wasn't started by just one person. Its teachings have been shared at different times by a 'tirthankara'. A tirthankara means 'a teacher who shows the way'. Other religions, such as Islam, call this kind of person a 'prophet'. Jains believe that tirthankaras have **achieved** the highest spiritual level of existence. Jains believe that these teachers can then show others how to achieve this for themselves. In the era which Jains call the 'present age', there have been twenty-four tirthankaras

There are two **sects** of Jains. One is the Digambara sect and the other is the Svetambara sect. Each sect agrees about the basics of Jainism, but they disagree about other things. One thing they disagree about is the spiritual status of women. Svetambara Jains believe that tirthankaras can be men or women. They say that Malli (one of the twenty-four tirthankaras) was a princess. However, Digambara Jains believe that women can't be tirthankaras. They say that Malli was a man.

Jains believe that animals, plants and human beings, all have living souls. They believe each of these souls is equal and that we should treat them with **compassion**, love and respect. Because of this belief, Jains are strict vegetarians. They try not to harm animals, including insects. Jains see vegetarianism as a way for a peaceful existence, non-violence and **cooperation**.

The most important rule in Jainism living is non-violence. Non-violence is one of the five mahavratas (the five great **vows**) of Jainism. The other mahavratas are: non-attachment to belongings (things you own), honesty (not lying), not stealing, and sexual **restraint** (with **celibacy** as the ideal).

A man called Mahavira taught the five mahavrats. Mahavira is an extremely important person in Jainism, although he is not the religion's **founder**. He was the most recent of the twenty-four tirthankaras and he was responsible for shaping the religion into its present form.

Jains believe that the universe is not an illusion and that it really exists. Furthermore, they believe that nothing in the universe is ever destroyed or created. Instead, they believe that it simply changes from one form to another. Jains believe that the universe has always existed and that it will continue to exist forever. Just like modern scientists, Jains believe that the universe is **regulated** by cosmic laws. They also think it has its own energy processes, which renew it and help it to work properly.

Jains do not believe that any sort of god created the universe. However, they **venerate** ‘liberated souls’. Liberated souls are souls who have escaped the cycle of rebirth and who are now free. Jains worship these souls as an example of perfection and something which they can try and follow in their own lives.

Another belief of Jainism is karma. The idea of karma in Jainism is completely different to karma in the Hindu religion, Buddhism and in western society. Jains believe that karma is a kind of delicate material (like floating dust or particles, which stick to the soul). They believe that these particles are not **intrinsically** harmful. However, Jains believe that when they attach to a soul they affect the life of that person.

Jains believe that human beings attract karma particles when we do, think or say things. Furthermore, we attract karma particles if we kill or hurt something, when we tell lies, steal etc.

Presently, Jainism is a minority religion. It has about four million followers in India. Despite their small numbers, Jains have shaped and contributed **significantly** to Indian society with their political ideas and good actions. Jains also have an ancient literary tradition. They are the religious community with the highest degree of literacy in India.

[Click on this link to see a documentary on Jainism.](#)

Glossary

achieved - ‘to achieve’, to reach or attain a desired objective, level, or result, e.g. "he achieved his ambition to become a journalist"

sects - a sect is a group of people with somewhat different religious beliefs.

compassion - sympathetic pity and concern for the sufferings or misfortunes of others: "the victims should be treated with compassion"

cooperation – working together, from the verb ‘to cooperate’.

vows - a vow is a promise.

restraint - the action of keeping someone or something under control.

celibacy - this word has two meanings. 1. Never having sex. 2. Being unmarried.

founder - the person who starts an organisation or company.

regulated - ‘to regulate’, to control or supervise.

venerate - ‘to venerate’, to treat with great respect.

intrinsically - by its very nature, e.g. “tigers are intrinsically dangerous”.

significantly - in an important way.

have in common – to share the same idea, belief, hobby, quality etc.

according to - based on what is said or stated by.

Questions about the text

1. What is the most important belief of Jains?
2. Why do Jains not eat meat?
3. What is one of the differences between the Digambara and Svetambara sects?
4. Who changed Jainism into its current form?
5. Which belief do Jains **have in common** with scientists?
6. How have Jains changed Indian society?
7. What are the five great vows of Jainism?
8. Who was the founder of Jainism?
9. According to the text, was Mali male or female?
10. True or false? – Most Jains cannot read.

[Click here to check your answers.](#)

Vampires



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Vampires have never been more popular. It seems that the public can't get enough of blood sucking characters at the cinema, in books or on television. The Twilight novels by Stephenie Meyer have sold over 42 million copies worldwide. The American TV shows 'True Blood' and 'The Vampire Diaries', both have millions of fans. These films, TV shows and books **portray** vampires as good-looking, sexy characters. However, vampires haven't always been so loved...

According to the **folklore** of many cultures, a vampire is a creature that feeds on the life force of humans (usually in the form of blood) to survive. In western European culture, the vampire myth is of Slavic origin. In this mythology, a vampire was once a human, who after death becomes a bloodsucking **predator**. The description of these creatures **varies** in each region, however much of what we 'know' about vampires comes from Hollywood scriptwriters and comic book authors. Traditional myth has mixed with facts from the movies.

In most cultures vampires were human, but they are now somewhere between life and death. Therefore, they are often called 'the undead'. Among the Slavic peoples, Greeks and parts of Eastern Europe, a vampire was a **corpse**. In these countries, people believed his or her body was **swollen** and blood came out of the mouth or nose. Their nails, hair and teeth were longer than when they had been buried.

In ancient China, vampires were called 'Shi Jiang'. People believed they had stiff **limbs** so they could only move forward in small jumps, with outstretched arms. These vampires were completely blind, but they detected people by their breath. The ancient Chinese believed that if a person was bitten by a vampire, then they became one too.

In Transylvania (which many people think is the origin of the vampire myth), vampires were said to be thin, pale, had long nails and pointed teeth called fangs. In Bulgaria and Poland, the description of vampires was not very attractive at all. These vampires were said to have one nostril and a kind of **sting** on the end of their tongue!

In every culture which had the vampire myth, there were different ways of protecting yourself against them. If a person had been bitten by a vampire, the Celtic people used to bury the body upside down to

stop the victim **coming back** as a vampire. For the same reason, the Thracians and ancient Bulgarians used **to amputate** limbs and cut the feet, or other parts of body, before burying it.

In Rhodes and some other Greek islands, a wax cross was **placed** between the lips of the corpse. A piece of pottery with the inscription "Jesus Christ conquers", was also buried with the body to **prevent** it from becoming a vampire. In Eastern Europe, it was normal to put a clove of garlic in the mouth of the dead body. However, in the Saxon regions of Germany, it was a lemon in the mouth.

The vampire myth was made famous by the novelist Bram Stoker in his gothic horror novel 'Dracula', which was published in 1897. In this literary classic, a young solicitor called Jonathan Harker, travels from England to Transylvania to work for the mysterious Count Dracula. He soon realises that there is something strange happening at Count Dracula's mysterious castle and terrible things begin to occur.

The idea of vampires has **fascinated** people for centuries. In modern times, western society and Hollywood have created a new type of vampire, which is attractive to many women and teenage girls. These vampires are sexy but they also have an air of danger about them. What will vampires look like in the future? Nobody can predict this, although it seems certain that we will be as interested in them as ever.

[Click on this link to see a short video on the history of vampires.](#)

Glossary

portray - 'to portray', depict, show, represent.

folklore - the traditional beliefs, customs, and stories of a community, passed through the generations by word of mouth.

predator - an animal that naturally preys on others.

varies - 'to vary', to be different, to change.

corpse - a dead body.

limbs – arms and legs.

swollen - 'to swell', to become larger or rounder in size, normally as a result of a collection of fluid.

sting - a sting is a small sharp-pointed organ, bees and wasps have stings on their tails.

coming back - 'to come back', a phrasal verb meaning 'to return'.

to amputate - to cut off (a limb), typically by surgical operation.

placed - 'to place', to put.

prevent - 'to prevent', 'to stop'.

fascinated - 'to fascinate', to be very interesting.

citrus fruit - oranges, lemons, grapefruits and limes.

Questions about the text

1. In ancient Chinese myths, why did vampires jump forwards instead of running?
2. Who buried dead bodies upside down to prevent them turning into vampires?
3. Where did people believe vampires had one nostril?
4. Which two authors are mentioned in the text?
5. Where did people place a **citrus fruit** in the mouth of a corpse?
6. Name one place where vampires were said to have blood coming from their mouths.
7. Where was the novel 'Dracula' set?
8. Where did people place a wax cross in the mouth of a dead person?
9. Who used to cut off the arms and legs of dead people before burying them?
10. True or false? – Vampires in ancient China hunted by sight.

[Click here to check your answers.](#)

Big Ben



© [Kmiragaya](#)

When it comes to England, few images are as famous around world as ‘Big Ben’. The **chimes** of the clock are used in films, and the image is used on London postcards. A visit to see ‘Big Ben’ is **a must** for all tourists to London, however most people are **unaware** of the history behind this iconic attraction.

The name ‘Big Ben’ originally only **referred to** the bell of St. Stephen's Tower (in the photo above) belonging to the Palace of Westminster. Today the name Big Ben refers to the bell, the clock and the tower itself. Furthermore, on September 12, 2012, the tower was officially renamed Elizabeth Tower to commemorate the **Diamond Jubilee** of Queen Elizabeth II.

The neo-Gothic tower was **constructed** after a large part of old palace of Westminster palace burned down on October 16, 1834. Charles Barry and his assistant Augustus Pugin were the architects responsible for design of the new building. However, it was Augustus Pugin who designed the clock tower, which **resembles** his earlier designs (such as Scarsbrick Hall). The reconstruction lasted until 1858.

Despite being one of the world's most famous tourist attractions, the interior of the tower is not open to foreign visitors. However, UK residents can organise tours by contacting their MP (Member of Parliament). If someone is lucky enough to arrange a visit, they need **to be fit** as the tower has no lift (‘elevator’ in American English). They must climb the 334 stairs to the top!

Nobody is certain where the **nickname** ‘Big Ben’ comes from. Some people believe that the first time the nickname was used, it referred to Sir Benjamin Hall, who had installed the great bell. However, other people believe that it is named after the English boxing heavyweight champion Benjamin Caunt.

'Big Ben' has appeared in many films. One very famous film was the 1978 version of 'The Thirty Nine Steps'. In this film, a bomb has been linked to the clock hands. The hero Richard Hannay tries to stop the clock's hands by hanging from one of them. It is an extremely exciting scene.

In 'Thunderball', the fourth James Bond film, a criminal organisation called SPECTRE waits for a chime of Big Ben. This is the signal that the British Government has agreed to its **demands**. More recently, 'Big Ben' appeared in the film 'Shanghai Knights' starring Jackie Chan and Owen Wilson. In the popular Sci-Fi show 'Dr Who', the tower was partly destroyed in the episode 'Aliens of London'.

In 2008 a survey of 2000 people found that the tower was the most popular landmark in the United Kingdom. Many great changes have taken place since it was first constructed and it has **observed** them all, an unchanging symbol of London.

[Click on this link to see a short presentation about Big Ben.](#)

Glossary

chimes - the sound made by clocks, from the verb 'to chime'.

a must - something you must do.

unaware - 'to be unaware' is to not know something.

referred to - 'to refer to', to speak of, be the name of.

Diamond Jubilee – a special anniversary of an event (in this case a celebration of sixty years as queen).

constructed - 'to construct', to build.

resembles - 'to resemble', to look like, to be similar to.

to be fit - to be healthy, in good physical shape.

nickname - a familiar or humorous name given to a person or thing instead of, or in addition to, the real name.

demands - a demand is a strong request.

observed - 'to observe', to watch, see.

Questions about the text

1. Which boxer is mentioned in the text?
2. Can foreign tourists go inside Big Ben?
3. In which TV programme was the tower of Big Ben partly damaged?
4. Who designed the clock tower?
5. Why would a person need to be healthy to go to the top of Big Ben?

6. When did a fire destroy part of the old palace of Westminster?
7. What did Sir Benjamin Hall do?
8. In which film is a bomb linked to the hands of Big Ben?
9. How can a UK resident go inside Big Ben?
10. Who was Charles Barry?

[Click here to check your answers.](#)

The Maya Civilisation



[© FilTV](#)

The Maya people were an ancient civilisation and they lived in the area that is modern day Mexico, between approximately 2000 BC and 1600 AD. Many people have heard of them due to their **prediction** that the world was going to end on December 21st, in the Year 2012 (thankfully this didn't happen!).

The Maya invented the most **advanced** form of writing in the ancient Americas. It is often referred to as hieroglyphics and this is because it looks like Ancient Egyptian writing. It is the only known writing system of the Pre-Columbian New World, which represents a spoken language. Altogether, the system has more than one thousand different glyphs. A glyph is a picture or a symbol used to represent a sound, a word, or a **syllable**.

Just like modern people, the Maya wrote books about their gods, their leaders, their daily life and special occasions. These books were not like the books we have today because Maya books were made of soft **bark** and were **folded** like a fan. A book was called a codex (the plural is 'codices') and the reader had to unfold them to read them. Like modern books, codices had drawings as well as glyphs.

Around 600 years after the Maya civilization had vanished, explorers from Spain arrived and they found many Maya codices. The Spanish priests incorrectly believed that they had found pictures of demons and devils so they destroyed all the codices that they found. Many were destroyed, but luckily not all of them. Approximately 10,000 individual codices have been found **so far**.

It has been an extremely long and difficult process **to decode** the Maya writing. In the late 19th and early 20th century, experts mostly decoded parts with numbers, the Maya calendar, and astronomy. However, major **breakthroughs** happened during the 1950s up to the 1970s. Towards the end of the 20th century, experts could read most of the Maya texts, and new research continues to discover new meaning.

The Mayas worshipped the gods of the natural world daily. Worship of the gods was an important part of their lives. Some Maya gods were the God of Rain, Lady Rainbow, the God of Maize (corn), and of course, the God of Sun. The Mayas believed that if they didn't pray to these important gods, then nothing would grow and everyone would **starve**.

The Mayas believed in an afterlife (or heaven). Ordinary people buried the dead in their homes, beneath the floor. In this way, they could be with their ancestors and their ancestors could be part of their daily life. However, **nobles** and rich people were buried in tombs.

All of the men, but none of the women, used mirrors. The Maya people believed that looking into a mirror required lots of **courage**. They said that monsters from the Place of Awe could put their hands through the mirror and kidnap you (taking you into the Otherworld).

Maya daily life and culture was strongly connected to their religion. The priests made decisions about almost every aspect of Maya society. They said when to plant, marry, and who **to sacrifice**... Although it was not as common in the Maya culture as in the Aztec culture, the Maya used to practise human sacrifice. In some religious rituals, priests killed people by cutting the person's chest open and taking out their still beating heart as an offering to the gods.

Although this seems **barbaric** to modern people, the Maya civilisation was extremely advanced in other ways. For example, the ancient Maya had **sophisticated** methods of food production. They used raised fields, terracing, forest gardens, and wild harvesting to support the large populations in some areas.

Archaeologists are still only just beginning to discover many aspects of Maya civilisation. However, the little we already know continues to fascinate and amaze us.

[Click here to watch a documentary on the Maya civilisation.](#)

Glossary

prediction - something a person believes will happen.

advanced - modern or ahead in development or progress.

syllable - a unit of pronunciation having one vowel sound, with or without surrounding consonants.

bark - in this context, the tough, protective outer skin of the trunk, branches, and twigs of a tree. folded - 'to fold' to bend over on itself so that one part of it covers another.

so far - until now.

to decode - to convert (a coded message) into intelligible language.

breakthroughs – a sudden, dramatic, and important discovery or development, e.g. in science.

starve - 'to starve' to die from lack of food.

nobles – important people who are members of the aristocracy.

to sacrifice – to offer or kill as a religious sacrifice.

barbaric – savagely cruel, exceedingly brutal.

sophisticated - developed to a high degree of complexity.

Questions about the text

1. Why did the Mayas think it was important to worship their gods?
2. Why is Maya writing called hieroglyphics?
3. Who carried out human sacrifices in Maya culture?
4. Why did the Spanish priests burn the Maya books?
5. How many Maya texts have been found up to now?
6. Name two things that could be found in a codex.
7. During human sacrifice, how was a person killed?
8. In what area did the Maya live?
9. Why did you have to be brave to look into a mirror in the Maya culture?
10. True or false? – The Spanish killed the Mayas.

[Click here to check your answers.](#)

Cloning



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Imagine a world where parents can recreate a child who died. Or, where governments grow armies of soldiers. A world where rich individuals have a copy of themselves in case they need an **organ** transplant. Or where scientists grow slaves to work twenty hour days in **fast food restaurants**.

All these situations have been in films and they are all examples of the science fiction of human cloning. Although scientists have not cloned humans, some people believe that this is **inevitable**...

Cloning is when scientists make a genetically identical copy of an organism in a nonsexual way. It has been used for many years to produce plants (even growing a plant from **a cutting** is a type of cloning).

Scientists have been experimenting with animal cloning for many years. Nobody really talked about it until the birth of the first cloned mammal in 1996, a sheep called Dolly. Since Dolly, many scientists have cloned other animals, such as cows and mice. These recent successes in cloning animals have caused **great controversy** amongst scientists, politicians and the public.

So how is cloning done? There are two processes which can be used to clone an organism. The first is artificial embryo twinning. This is the less technologically advanced way to clone. As the name **suggests**, this technology is similar to when identical twins are created in nature.

In the natural world, twins happen after the fertilization of an egg cell by a sperm cell. When the fertilized egg tries to divide into a two-celled embryo, the two cells separate. Each cell continues dividing independently, this means there are now two separate babies inside the mother. Because the two cells came from the same egg, the twins are identical at a genetic level.

Artificial embryo twinning does the same thing, but it takes place in a **petri dish** instead of in the female's body. Scientists do this by separating a very early embryo into individual cells. They then allow each cell to divide and develop on its own. These embryos are placed into a **surrogate** mother, who later **gives birth to** the babies. The embryos are genetically identical because they came from the same egg.

Another cloning method is somatic cell nuclear transfer, abbreviated to SCNT. This is different from artificial embryo twinning, however it produces the same result - an exact clone, or genetic copy, of an organism. This was the same method used to create Dolly the Sheep.

A somatic cell is any cell in the body except the two types of reproductive cells (the sperm and the egg). The somatic cells of all mammals have two complete sets of chromosomes. However, the sperm and egg cells only have one complete set of chromosomes.

To make Dolly the sheep, researchers took a somatic cell from an adult female sheep. Next, they transferred the nucleus from that cell to an egg cell, which didn't have a nucleus (it had been removed). After some chemical changes, the egg cell, with its new nucleus, was behaving just like a newly fertilized egg. It developed into an embryo, which was **implanted** into a surrogate mother.

The fertilization of an egg by a sperm and SCNT both produce an embryo. So what exactly is the difference between these methods? An embryo is made of cells that contain two complete sets of chromosomes. The difference between fertilization and SCNT is where those two sets came from.

In fertilization, the sperm and egg both contain one set of chromosomes. When the sperm and egg join, the fertilized egg has two sets of chromosomes - one from the father (sperm) and one from the mother (egg).

In SCNT, Scientists remove the single set of chromosomes in the egg cell and then replace it with the nucleus from a somatic cell (this already contains two complete sets of chromosomes). Therefore, in this type of embryo, both sets of chromosomes come from the somatic cell – from one organism, not two.

If scientists clone humans, they will probably use SCNT - the same **procedure** that was used to make Dolly the sheep. With scientific **advances**, it seems certain that one day scientists will have the ability to clone humans. The question is, should they?

[Click here to watch this BBC report on human cloning.](#)

Glossary

organ – an internal body part, e.g. the heart, lungs etc.

fast food restaurants – McDonalds, Burger King etc.

inevitable – something that will happen, no matter what.

a cutting – a small part of a plant that is used to grow a new plant.

great controversy – something which causes disagreement and discussion.

suggests – ‘to suggest’, to cause you to think that (something) exists or is the case.

petri dish – a shallow, circular, transparent dish with a flat lid, used in experiments.

surrogate – a substitute.

gives birth to – ‘to give birth to’, to physically have a baby.

implanted – ‘to implant’, to put something inside something else.

procedure – a way of doing something.

advances – improvements in something, e.g. science, medicine.

Questions about the text

1. How did scientists clone Dolly the sheep? Using artificial twinning or somatic cell nuclear transfer?
2. Which of the two cloning methods is the most technologically advanced?
3. Apart from a sheep, which other two animals are mentioned in the text?
4. Why are clones which are created using artificial twinning ‘genetically identical’?
5. Which three groups find human cloning controversial?
6. Which two types of cell are not examples of somatic cells?
7. Was Dolly the sheep the first animal clone experiment?
8. Give an example of when a gardener would use cloning?
9. According to the text, if scientists clone humans, which method would they use?
10. True or false? – Dolly was grown in a tank.

[Click here to check your answers.](#)

Language Death



© [Daemys](#)

It is **estimated** that there are between 6000 and 7000 languages spoken around the world today. However, many of these languages are dying. Some linguists believe that in one hundred years, over 80% the world's languages will **cease** to be spoken. Why is this happening? What can be done to stop it? Should anything be done to stop it?

How and why do languages die? There are several ways. Languages which have geographically **isolated** population of speakers can die when their speakers are **wiped out** by genocide, disease, or natural disaster. For example, The Daily Gazette reported that in 2001 a huge earthquake in India killed about 30,000 speakers of Kutchi. This left only 770,000 speakers of the language.

However, most of the time language death is not as dramatic as this. Most cases of language death happen when the speakers of a language becomes bilingual. **Gradually**, they begin to use the second language more often, until they stop using their original language. This process can be a choice or it can be forced on a population (for example by the government). One example of forced language death happened in Hawaii. When the island became part of the US in 1898, the American government **banned** schools from teaching the Hawaiian language, almost causing it to become extinct.

A language can be **declared** dead even when it still has native speakers. If there are only a few **elderly** speakers of a language and they no longer use that language for communication, then the language is almost dead. If no children are learning it as their first language - the language will not continue after the present generation. This is a slow process where each generation learns less and less of the language. In these cases, the transmission of the language from adults to children usually becomes less **common**. Finally, adults speaking the language will raise children who never learn it properly, or at all.

As globalisation spreads around the world, more language death seems inevitable. 6% of the world's languages are spoken by 94% of the world's population. The other 94% of languages are spoken by only 6% of the population. One good example is the Island of New Guinea. The island has just 0.1% of the world's population, however its residents speak 16% of the world's languages! As the tribes of New Guinea become more **involved** in the world, many of their languages may be lost.

Although many people feel sad about language death, other people see it as progress. They believe that a single global language, spoken by everyone as their mother tongue, would be brilliant. They say that wars and conflict would be less **likely**, if everyone spoke the same language.

Although language death might seem inevitable, many people are fighting against it. In 1983, the Hawaiians created the 'Aha Punana Leo organisation to reintroduce their language **throughout** Hawaii. 'Aha Punana Leo means 'language nest' and in 1984 the organisation opened language **immersion** preschools and later they opened some secondary schools. In 1999, the first graduates who were taught completely in Hawaiian, left school. Another example of language **revival** is Hebrew. In the last century, Hebrew changed from a written language to Israel's national language. It is now spoken by over five million Israelis.

Having one global language that everyone understands would certainly be an advantage and English seems to be taking this role. However, must this mean the loss of other languages? Is it possible for people to **retain** their own language while learning another? Only time will tell...

[Click here to watch a short video on language death.](#)

Glossary

estimated – 'to estimate', to calculate or judge without checking properly.

linguist – a person who studies languages.

cease – 'to cease', to stop.

isolated - far away from other places, buildings, or people; remote

wiped out – 'to wipe out', to kill all.

gradually – bit by bit, not all at once.

banned – 'to ban', to not be allowed, to prohibit.

declared – 'to declare', to announce officially.

elderly – old.

common – occurring, found, or done often; prevalent.

involved -connected or concerned with someone or something.

likely - probably: "we will most likely go to a bar"

throughout – in every part.

immersion – the action of immersing someone or something completely in a liquid or language.

retain – 'to retain', to keep.

revival - an example of something becoming popular, active, or important again.

Questions about the text

1. Where were schools stopped from teaching a language?

2. What are the two examples of language revival?
3. According to the text, how could we avoid more wars?
4. Where are 16% of the world's languages spoken?
5. Which three factors can kill language speakers?
6. How many languages are spoken in the world today?
7. Name three languages mentioned in the text.
8. What happened to reduce the number of people who speak Kutchi?
9. When did Hawaii become part of the US?
10. True or false? – The American government banned people from speaking Hawaiian.

[Click here to check your answers.](#)

British Cuisine



© [Garuti](#)

Many people from other countries believe English **cuisine** to be **bland**, boring and unadventurous but this is simply not true! England, and the rest of Great Britain, has a huge selection of delicious **dishes**. Some dishes are traditional and some are newly arrived from around the globe.

Traditionally, British cuisine has included beef, lamb, pork, chicken and fish. It is normally served with potatoes and one other vegetable. The most popular and normal foods that British people eat are the sandwich, fish and chips, pies like the Cornish pasty, **trifle** and roast dinners. Many of Britain's most popular dishes have unusual names like Bubble & Squeak or Toad-in-the-Hole.

On Sundays, many British families come together to eat a traditional Sunday lunch. Often, it **consists of** roast meat, (cooked in the oven for between two to three hours), two different types of vegetables (such as carrots or peas), potatoes and a Yorkshire pudding. However, although 'pudding' normally refers a dessert, this dish is not a dessert like other puddings. Instead, it is part of the main meal. Yorkshire pudding is made from flour, eggs and milk. The mixture is similar to pancake mixture and it is a sort of **batter baked** in the oven. The usual meats eaten for Sunday lunch are beef, lamb, pork or chicken.

A very well-known and traditional East End London meal is pie and mash (mashed potato). When they were first invented, the pies were filled with **eels**. This is because at the time eels were a cheaper ingredient than beef. However, about fifty years ago, shops started selling mince beef pies instead.

Another very famous British dish is the 'full English breakfast' shown in the photo above. This consists of bacon, fried egg, sausage, black pudding, beans and toast. Although you can buy this meal in cafes (and it is sometime eaten by families as a special weekend treat), it is definitely not what British people

eat every day. The average British person eats cereal or toast for breakfast, often **accompanied** by a cup of tea.

Although there are many traditional English dishes available, British people are perhaps the most adventurous eaters in the world when it comes to trying new dishes. With the arrival of immigrants in the 1950s, came **a whole host of** new dishes.

One such example is Asian food, which has become increasingly popular in the UK and is now a part of the nation's normal diet. Many families choose international cuisine instead of British dishes three out of seven nights of the week. The Indian dish chicken tikka masala was Britain's most popular meal, but this has now been replaced by Chinese stir-fry.

Chinese stir-fry is a Cantonese dish. It is **typically** full of fresh vegetables and it also contains noodles. It is now the most frequently cooked meal in the UK. One out of five British people now eat it once a week. Over two-thirds of British people say that its **appeal** is that it's much easier to prepare than other traditional British cuisine. A normal stir-fry only takes a few minutes to prepare and cook in a wok (a pan used in Chinese cooking).

Every year, British people spend £7.6 billion on fast food, including fish and chips, pizza, burgers and Thai, Chinese or Indian takeaway. The average person spends £11.54 a week on food and drink outside the home, of which £8 goes on food and soft drinks and the rest on alcohol.

[Click here to watch a short video about British cooking.](#)

Glossary

cuisine – the French word for ‘cooking’.

bland – boring.

dishes – plates, but here it means types a particular variety or preparation of food.

trifle – a type of dessert.

consist of – to be made of.

batter - a mixture consisting chiefly of flour, egg, and milk (‘batter’ can also be a verb meaning ‘to hit’).

baked – ‘to bake’, to cook in the oven.

eels – a snake-like fish.

accompanied – ‘to accompany’, to be present or occur at the same time as (something else).

a whole host – a large selection of.

typically – normally.

appeal – what makes it attractive.

Questions about the text

1. What made people use eels in pies?
2. What do most British people have for breakfast?
3. Why does Britain have so much international food?
4. Why is stir-fry a popular meal?
5. How many vegetables are served with a traditional Sunday lunch?
6. What is Britain's most popular meal?
7. What are the usual meats served with a traditional Sunday lunch?
8. Where does chicken tikka Masala come from?
9. Which three examples of Asian food are mentioned in the text?
10. True or false – Each week the average British person spends over £10 on food and drink outside the home.

[Click here to check your answers.](#)

Cosmetic Surgery



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We all like to look good, however a growing number of people are now having **cosmetic** surgery in order to improve their physical appearance. Although some people need reconstructive surgery after illness or accidents, many people are now choosing to have an operation **solely** for cosmetic reasons.

Nose reshaping surgery, also known as rhinoplasty or a 'nose job', is one of the most common cosmetic surgery procedures across the world. The majority of people who have a nose job do it for cosmetic reasons (to look good). However, other people **request** it to fix breathing problems and to help **alleviate snoring**.

Rhinoplasty was first developed in ancient India, by the physician Sushruta. The surgeon and his medical students developed plastic surgical techniques for rebuilding noses and earlobes. These had been **amputated** for religious, criminal, or military punishment. Nowadays, most 'nose jobs' involve making the nose smaller or slimmer. Many patients want their surgeon to remove unwanted lumps or bumps.

A lot of people want to lose weight. **Achieving** the look they want needs healthy eating and regular exercise. However, even after exercising and eating well, some people have areas of fat around their bodies. Liposuction surgery, also known as fat removal surgery, is designed to help remove these areas of fat and reshape particular areas of the body.

The usual areas of the body that can be treated with liposuction surgery include: arms, thighs, stomach, hips, buttocks, knees and the chin. However, liposuction surgery can be done to any area of the body. Liposuction is often used at the same time as other cosmetic surgery procedures such as the tummy tuck, breast reduction and male chest reduction.

Another well-known cosmetic procedure is the 'face lift'. Signs of ageing such as lines, **wrinkles**, loose skin, **crow's feet** and brown spots are part of getting older. Many people try to **reverse** these signs of aging with the help of face lift surgery.

Face lift surgery, also known as rhytidectomy, is one of the most commonly requested procedures by both men and women who want to look younger. It is done to remove the skin that has lost its natural

elasticity (usually around the eyes, mouth and jaw line). It also makes the skin tighter, reduces lines and wrinkles and **rejuvenates** a tired-looking appearance.

Like all surgical procedures, cosmetic surgery has **risks**. When cosmetic surgery goes wrong, patients can end up dead or **disfigured**. If a face lift doesn't work properly, the patient can be left with **scarring, an involuntary facial tick** or they may not be able to close their mouth or eyes properly. Breast implant operations have been known to leave women with terrible scarring or different sized breasts.

Although plastic surgeons can earn a lot of money, in some cases they **decline** to operate on some patients. This is sometimes because they think the person does not need the surgery. Surgeons can also decline a patient because their medical history, such as high blood pressure, can make the operation too risky.

With such risks, you would think that many people would stop having cosmetic surgery but you would be wrong. In fact, the number of people using surgery to improve their appearance is growing every year. It seems we humans are a **vain** species and many of us won't allow price, or medical risks, to stand in our way!

[Click on this link to watch a short video on cosmetic surgery](#)

Glossary

cosmetic - involving or relating to treatment intended to restore or improve a person's appearance.

solely - only

alleviate – ‘to alleviate’, to make a problem better.

request – ‘to request’, to ask.

snoring – ‘to snore’, to breath making noises when sleeping.

amputated – ‘to amputate’, to cut off a body part.

achieving – ‘to achieve’, to get, to obtain.

wrinkles – the lines on the skin caused by aging.

crow's feet – wrinkles around the eyes. A crow is a type of black bird.

reverse – ‘to reverse’, to go backwards or try and change something.

rejuvenate – ‘to rejuvenate’, to make (someone or something) look or feel younger, fresher, or more lively.

risks – a risk is situation involving possible danger.

disfigured – ‘to disfigure’ to spoil the attractiveness of something or someone.

scarring – A scar is a permanent mark on the body caused through an accident or surgery.

an involuntary facial tick – a movement of the face which a person cannot stop.

decline – ‘to decline’, to say no to something.

vain – caring too much about your appearance.

Questions about the text

1. Who was the first person to do a nose job?
2. Why might a cosmetic surgeon refuse to operate on someone?
3. Which cosmetic procedure would you have to remove fat?
4. Other than appearance, why might someone have a nose job?
5. Other than surgery, what two ways of losing weight are mentioned?
6. In ancient India, why did they amputate people’s noses and earlobes?
7. Apart from death, what are the risks of breast enlargement?
8. Which type of surgery might leave a patient unable to close their mouth?
9. Name three signs of getting older which are mentioned in the text.
10. True or false? – The number of people having cosmetic surgery is rising each year?

[Click here to check your answers.](#)

Stockholm



© Sokolovsky

In 17th century, Sweden became a **major** European power. Because of this, the city of Stockholm grew in size and importance. In 1634, Stockholm became the official capital of the Swedish empire. By the second half of the 19th century, Stockholm had grown enormously. New industries **emerged** and Stockholm was transformed into an important trade and service centre.

Today, Stockholm is still Sweden's capital city and it is located on the country's south-central east coast. This is also the location of Sweden's third largest lake, Lake Mälaren. In 2010, The Stockholm metropolitan area had a population of just over two million people, which is approximately 20% of Sweden's population (**roughly** 26% of Stockholm's residents are immigrants or have non-Swedish heritage).

Stockholm is sometimes called 'The Venice of the North', this is because it is made up of fourteen islands and has many bridges and waterways, which can remind visitors of the Italian city with its **numerous** canals.

Stockholm is an extremely attractive city and a big reason for this is its beautiful architecture. One lovely example is the city's oldest section, Gamla Stan ('Old Town', in Swedish). This area has kept many of its original **medieval** buildings. It has narrow streets and is filled with gift shops and restaurants. Another thing which makes Stockholm an attractive city is the high number of parks - over 30% of the city is made up of parks and green spaces!

Stockholm is home to over one hundred museums, which are visited by millions of tourists every year. The most visited of these museums is the Vasa Museum. This museum contains the incredible Vasa warship. The ship dates from the 17th century and it **sank** on its first ever voyage in 1628. The museum is on several levels so visitors can view the ship from different angles. A new museum dedicated to Abba, the famous Swedish pop group, opened in Stockholm in 2013 and is also likely to be very popular.

The capital has an **extensive** network of underground trains called 'T-bana'. There are also **commuter** trains and buses. For tourists, there are **vintage trams** which go from the city centre to Djurgården

Island during the summer months. Underground station entrances are easy to find as they have a blue T on a white background.

As the capital city of Sweden, Stockholm is the home of the government and the royal family. However, Stockholm is also Sweden's financial centre. Many major Swedish banks have their **headquarters** in Stockholm and it is the location of Sweden's stock exchange (Stockholmsbörsen). Furthermore, approximately 45% of Swedish companies, with more than 200 employees, have their headquarters in the capital.

In recent years, tourism has had an important part in the city's economy. Stockholm is the 10th most visited destination in Europe, with over 10 million tourist overnight stays per year. Many of the tourists arrive on cruise ships, which can dock within walking distance of the city centre.

There are many things for tourists to do in Stockholm. For example, there are many cafés. Café culture is very important in Sweden. On average, the Swedish drink 4.5 cups of coffee each day. Getting a coffee, served with a dessert or cake, is now a favourite Swedish pastime. They call it 'fika', which translates as '**indulge in** coffee and chat at leisure'.

The Stockholm **archipelago** is a popular destination in the summer months. It begins just a few miles east of the capital, covering about 140 kilometres (90 miles) from north to south. There are only 150 inhabited islands and many Stockholmers have summerhouses there. The landscape is very diverse. The inner archipelago has woods and forests but some of the outer islands are treeless and rocky.

Stockholm has something for everyone, from backpackers **on a budget**, to couples looking for a luxurious and romantic break. It's a city with a lot going on!

[Click here to watch a video on Stockholm](#)

Glossary

major – big, important.

emerged – 'to emerge', to come out. In this context, 'to become'.

roughly – in this context 'approximately'.

numerous – many

medieval - of or relating to the Middle Ages.

sank – the past tense of 'to sink', to go down under the water.

extensive – large, big.

commuter – someone who travels to work.

vintage – something old and of high quality.

trams – a type of transport also known as a trolley car.

headquarters – the main offices of an organisation.

indulge in – ‘to indulge in something’, to enjoy it.

archipelago - a group of islands.

inhabited – ‘to be inhabited’, to have inhabitants (people who live there).

on a budget – ‘to be on a budget’ to plan how you will spend your limited money.

Questions about the text

1. What are ‘T-bana’?
2. What is the most popular museum in Stockholm?
3. What do some people call Stockholm?
4. Which part of Stockholm has old-fashioned buildings?
5. What four types of transport are mentioned in the text?
6. When do trams travel to Djurgården Island?
7. What is a popular Swedish leisure activity?
8. What does the Vasa Museum have?
9. Who has their headquarters in Stockholm?
10. True or false? – Many people live on the Stockholm archipelago.

[Click here to check your answers.](#)

Papua New Guinea



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Papua New Guinea is a country in Oceania which **occupies** the eastern half of the island of New Guinea (and over 600 smaller islands). It is located in the south-western Pacific Ocean. Cape York, which is the northern **tip** of Australia, is only 150km away from Papua New Guinea. The country is divided into four regions with twenty **provinces**. The capital is Port Moresby.

The country's has a very **diverse** landscape and in some places it is extremely **rugged**. The New Guinea Highlands (a chain of mountains) go from one end of the island to the other end. There is a **populous** region in the highlands and this has many tropical rainforests. There is also the long Papuan peninsula, called the 'Bird's Tail' by the islanders.

There are Rainforests in the lowland and coastal areas and huge wetland areas around the Sepik and Fly rivers. This extreme landscape means that it is hard for the country to improve transportation **infrastructure**. In some areas, airplanes are the only way to travel because it is so difficult to travel on land.

The highest mountain is Mount Wilhelm, which is 4509 metres high. Coral reefs surround Papua New Guinea and they are protected by law. The country is located on the 'Pacific Ring of Fire', this is where several **tectonic plates** meet. There are many active volcanoes and these erupt frequently. Earthquakes are also quite common and they are sometimes accompanied by tsunamis.

Human bones have been found which have been dated to about 50,000 BC. These ancient people probably migrated from Southeast Asia. Interestingly, the archaeologist Tim Denham says that **agriculture** was independently developed in the New Guinea highlands around 7000 BC and it is one of the few areas of original plant domestication in the world (Denham, 2003). There was a major migration of Austronesian speaking peoples roughly 2500 years ago. They went to coastal regions and they introduced **pottery**, pigs, and certain fishing techniques (a study about these people was published by Peter Bellwood in 2006).

In 1884, Germany took control of the northern half of the country and ruled it as a colony for some decades. This part of the island was known as German New Guinea. In the same year, the southern half was colonised by the United Kingdom and called British New Guinea.

During World War I, Papua New Guinea was occupied by Australia. A peaceful independence from Australia occurred on 16 September 1975, and today the two countries have a close relationship (Australia is Papua New Guinea's biggest **aid** donor). Papua New Guinea became a member of the United Nations on 10 October 1975.

Papua New Guinea has more languages than any other country in the world. There are over 820 indigenous languages, however most have fewer than 1000 speakers. The most widely spoken language is Enga, with about 200,000 speakers, then Melpa and Huli. The languages of Papua New Guinea are **classified** into two large groups: Austronesian languages and non-Austronesian (or Papuan languages). There are three official languages for Papua New Guinea: Hiri Motu, Tok Pisin and English.

Today, there are more than a thousand different cultural groups in Papua New Guinea. Because of this **diversity**, there are many different styles of cultural expression. Each cultural group has its own artistic traditions, unique dances, types of weapon, costumes, singing styles, music, architecture etc. Most of these different cultural groups have their own language. People typically live in villages and use **subsistence farming**. In some areas people hunt and collect wild plants (such as yam roots) to **supplement** their diets. People who become very good at hunting are respected by the other villagers.

Travelling in Papua New Guinea can be challenging because there is almost no tourism infrastructure and there is **limited** information available in books and on websites. However, this is exactly why travellers find this country so interesting. The natural beauty and collection of cultures offer some incredible experiences to travellers.

[Click here to see a short video on Papua New Guinea](#)

Glossary

occupies – 'to occupy', to fill or take up a space.

tip – the pointed or rounded end or extremity of something.

provinces – a division of a country.

diverse – something with lots of variety and different parts.

rugged – having a broken, rocky, and uneven surface.

populous - having a large population; densely populated.

infrastructure – buildings, roads, airports etc.

tectonic plates – huge slabs of rock beneath the Earth's surface. .

agriculture – farming.

pottery – pots, dishes, and other articles made of earthenware or baked clay.

aid – help in the form of money and food.

classified – 'to classify', assign (someone or something) to a particular class or category.

diversity – difference, variety.

subsistence farming – farming that provides for the basic needs of the farmer without anything extra to sell.

supplement – ‘to supplement’, add an extra element or amount to: "she tried to supplement her husband's income".

limited – ‘to limit’, to restrict.

Questions about the text

1. Which language in Papua New Guinea has the most speakers?
2. With which other country does Papua New Guinea have a close relationship?
3. Papua New Guinea was ruled by three different countries. What were they?
4. Other than farming, how do people get extra food?
5. What three natural disasters are mentioned in the text?
6. What is the capital city of Papua New Guinea?
7. What are the official languages of the country?
8. Why is an airplane often the easiest way to travel around the country?
9. What did the Austronesian speaking peoples bring when they migrated 2500 years ago? Name two things.
10. True or false? – The highlands of Papua New Guinea are uninhabited.

[Click here to check your answers.](#)

The Paleo Diet



© Radist

From the Atkin's diet to the South Beach diet, it seems that every year a new way of eating becomes popular as people in the Western world try to lose weight or be healthy. This article looks at one such diet, the Paleo diet.

The Paleo diet (shortened from Palaeolithic diet) is also known as the Caveman diet or Stone Age diet. It is a diet which tries to copy what we believe our ancestors ate during the Palaeolithic era. This era lasted for two and a half million years until about ten thousand years ago, when modern farming began.

The Paleo diet contains mainly fish, some meats like chicken and beef, eggs, fruit and vegetables, **fungi** (mushrooms), roots, and nuts. It **excludes** grains (like wheat), legumes, potatoes, dairy products, **refined** salt, refined sugar, and some oils.

Protein makes up 15% of the calories in the average western diet, which is **considerably** lower than the average of 19-35 % of hunter-gatherer diets. This is one of the key features of the Paleo diet – a much higher amount of protein.

Another key feature is the amount of fibre. The Paleo diet contains much more fibre from vegetables and fruit but not grains. In fact, supporters of the Paleo diet believe that grains are bad for humans as they are **relatively** new to us (the last 10,000 years) and our bodies are still not adapted to eating them. This is the same with all **dairy** products.

So what would a Paleo diet meal look like? On the website www.thePaleodiet.com, there are recipe ideas. For example, for breakfast they suggest an omelette containing onion, peppers, mushrooms, broccoli, free-range eggs and **diced** turkey or chicken breast. While for lunch they suggest a salad made from spinach, radishes, peppers, cucumbers, carrots, avocados, walnuts, almonds and **sliced** apples or pears with meat or seafood.

In the modern world there are still human populations who eat a diet which is similar to our Palaeolithic ancestors (examples include the indigenous tribes in Papua New Guinea and the people of

the Amazon rainforest). Supporters of the Paleo diet believe that these people are free from many harmful diseases which are found in modern western societies.

However, there are some **dieticians** who disagree with the diet and believe it could even be harmful. One study by Professor Thompson in 2013 looked at **mummies** from about 5000 years ago and from four different cultures (ancient Egyptian, ancient Peruvian, Ancestral Puebloan and Unangan). The Egyptians, Peruvians and Puebloans were all farming societies but the Unungans of Alaska were hunter-gatherers.

Scientists scanned the mummies using the latest technologically advanced equipment and they found that all the mummies showed signs of atherosclerosis (the hardening of the **arteries**) and cancer. Critics of the Paleo diet say that this proves it has no benefit. However, **defenders** of the diet believe that the study does not prove anything completely.

As with all diets, the Paleo diet has its supporters and its **critics**. However, it won't be long before the next diet idea becomes popular. Worrying about what we eat is a big part of western society, although cavemen had other problems to think about, such as catching their next meal. How times have changed!

[Click here to watch a video about the Paleo diet.](#)

Glossary

fungi – plants like mushrooms.

refined – ‘to refine’, to remove impurities or unwanted elements from something.

excludes – ‘to exclude’, to keep something out.

considerably – a lot.

relatively – viewed in comparison with something else.

dairy – made from milk.

diced – ‘to dice’, to cut food into small cubes.

sliced – ‘to slice’, to cut with a knife

mummies – a mummy is a well-preserved, desiccated body.

arteries - the tubes in the body which carry oxygenated blood.

defenders – people who ‘defend’, to keep safe or try and stop attack.

critics - people who express an unfavourable opinion of something.

Questions about the text

1. Why are people from the Amazon rainforest mentioned?
2. Why do supporters of the diet believe that dairy and grains are bad for us?

3. Other than the Paleo diet, which two diets are mentioned?
4. Which ancient people did not farm?
5. Name four foods not allowed in the Paleo diet.
6. Which has less protein – the Paleo diet or the average western diet?
7. What is a suggested breakfast with the Paleo diet?
8. Is bread allowed with the Paleo diet?
9. Which two diseases are mentioned in the text?
10. True or false? – fish is banned with the Paleo diet.

[Click here to check your answers.](#)

Invasive Species



[© Amwu](#)

Burmese pythons in Florida, parrots in the UK, camels in Australia – these are all examples of invasive species. An invasive species is any species of plant or animal, which is present in an ecosystem where it is not **native**. This article will take a look at some invasive animal species and look at some of the **factors** which brought them to their new homes.

The **phenomenon** of animal species living in new places has increased hugely in the last century. Invasive species are either introduced by humans **on purpose** (e.g. for hunting or to try and control another animal species) or accidentally (e.g. when animals escape and begin **to breed** in the new environment).

One example of an escaped invasive species is the American mink in the UK. The mink is a medium-sized member of the weasel family. The first American mink were brought to British fur farms in 1929 and some escaped. All wild mink in Britain today are **descendants** of these escapees. Their natural colour is a dark brown, appearing almost black in some light. Mink have damaged the UK ecosystem because they hunt and kill many animals, such as: water voles, kingfishers (a rare type of bird) and crayfish (a kind of small lobster).

Another example of an escaped invasive species is the Burmese python in Florida, USA. Burmese pythons are native to many parts of Southeast Asia and southern regions of China. They are endangered in Southeast Asia where they are hunted for their skins and captured for sale as **exotic** pets. They can grow to 5.5 m long and weigh over 91 kg, making them one of the world's largest snakes. They have light brown skin and dark red or brown **blotches** outlined in black. The snakes were kept as pets but some escaped into the wild. There are now at least five thousand Burmese pythons in Florida and they have **reduced** the number of native species, e.g. racoons, alligators, deer etc. by hunting and eating them.

Not all invasive species have escaped into the wild, some were introduced on purpose. One such example is the cane toad. The cane toad is a large toad which is native to Central and South America, but which has been introduced to various islands throughout Oceania and the Caribbean. Originally, cane toads were used **to eradicate** insects from sugar cane and this is where they got their name.

However, they are now considered a pest because they kill many other animals. Another problem is that they are highly poisonous to any animal which kills and eats them.

So far we have heard about escaping animals and humans deliberately introducing animals into an ecosystem. However, there is a third way that invasive species colonise a new environment – by **hitchhiking!**

One example of a ‘hitchhiking’ invasive species is *carcinus maenas* (known as the ‘green crab’ in the US and the ‘shore crab’ in the UK). This crab arrives in new **habitats** by taking a ride on ships, hiding in **packaging** and clinging to driftwood. It is native to the north-east Atlantic Ocean and Baltic Sea, but it has colonised similar habitats in Australia, South Africa, South America and North America.

The main disadvantage of invasive animal species is that they **disrupt** the new ecosystem. This may be because they kill native animals or eat native plants and crops. Because of this, many governments are trying to eradicate invasive species. However, these species are very adaptive and getting rid of them can be difficult, not to mention expensive. Will some of these animals become permanent residents in their new homes? Or will they be **evicted**? Only time will tell...

[Click here to watch a short video on invasive species](#)

Glossary

native – being from a place.

factors - a circumstance, fact, or influence that contributes to a result or outcome.

phenomenon – a remarkable person or thing.

on purpose – done intentionally, not by accident.

to breed – to reproduce, used for animals and not people.

descendants – a person, plant, or animal that is descended from a particular ancestor.

blotches – patches, mark.

reduced – ‘to reduce’, to make less.

to eradicate – to kill all of them.

hitchhiking – ‘to hitchhike’, to travel by getting free rides in passing vehicles.

habitats – a particular type of environment regarded as a home for animals and plants.

packaging – materials used to wrap or protect goods.

disrupt – ‘to disrupt’, seriously change or destroy the structure of something.

evicted – ‘to evict’, to expel someone from a property in a legal way.

Questions about the text

1. Why were cane toads introduced to new places?
2. Name an invasive species that has been introduced to Great Britain.
3. Which birds do mink hunt and kill?
4. Which animals do Burmese pythons feed on?
5. Why are cane toads dangerous to other animals?
6. Before they escaped, why were Burmese pythons in Florida?
7. Which three continents has the green crab colonised?
8. Why did people farm mink?
9. Where are camels found as an invasive species?
10. True or false – Mink are brown.

[Click here to check your answers.](#)

Cleopatra



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Cleopatra is one of the best known women in history. She has inspired films, plays, books, monuments and songs – but who was she really? What were the details of her life? Read on to find out what made the Egyptian **monarch** so special.

Cleopatra was born around 69 BC - 68 BC. She was born into the Ptolemaic **dynasty**. The Ptolemaic dynasty came from Greece and ruled Egypt after Alexander the Great's death during the **Hellenistic period**. Traditionally, the Ptolemies only spoke Greek and refused to speak Egyptian. This is why Greek, as well as Egyptian languages, was used to write official court documents such as the Rosetta Stone.

When Cleopatra's father Ptolemy XII died in 51 BC, she began to rule with her younger brother Ptolemy XIII. The brother and sister married, which was the tradition at that time. We will never know if she was as attractive as the stories say, however she was definitely an extremely intelligent woman and a skilful politician. Cleopatra brought **prosperity** to Egypt (the country was **bankrupt**). She also brought peace as Egypt was **split** by civil war. Unlike her family, she learned to speak Egyptian and told people that she was a **reincarnation** of the Egyptian goddess Isis.

Things began to change in 48 BC. This is the year when Egypt got involved with the **conflict** in Rome which was developing between Julius Caesar and Pompey. Pompey escaped to the Alexandria (the Egyptian capital). Ptolemy gave the order to murder Pompey and he was quickly killed. Caesar arrived in Egypt and he and Cleopatra became lovers. At this time, Cleopatra was not living in Alexandria because she had been **exiled** by Ptolemy. Now she had Caesar's support, she was again queen (with Roman military support). Ptolemy was killed in the fighting.

In 47 BC, Cleopatra had Caesar's child - Caesarion - however Caesar never publicly admitted that the Caesarion was his son. Cleopatra went with Caesar to live in Rome. Cleopatra returned to Egypt after

Caesar's **assassination** in 44 BC. Ptolemy XIV, Cleopatra's other brother, passed away at this time (some people believe she had something to do with it). Cleopatra now began to rule Egypt with her son Caesarion.

Three years later, in 41 BC, there were problems in Rome. Mark Antony, whose mother had been Caesar's cousin, was **quarrelling** with Octavian (the adopted son of Caesar). Mark Antony and Octavian both wanted power in Rome.

Mark Antony and Cleopatra started a political and romantic relationship. They had three children together - two sons and a daughter. In 31 BC, the combined armies of Mark Antony and Cleopatra tried to **defeat** Octavian's forces at Actium (the **battle** took place at sea), on the west coast of Greece.

Cleopatra and Mark Antony **fled** to Egypt after Octavian won the battle. Octavian **pursued** the couple and he also conquered Alexandria in 30 BC. Mark Antony committed suicide and Cleopatra did the same, killing herself on 12 August 30 BC. Many people believe Cleopatra famously killed herself by making an asp (a poisonous snake) bite her. However, some historians believe that she drank a poison - we will never know for sure.

Now its ruler was dead and its army was defeated, Egypt became a province of the Roman Empire. Although her **reign** was over, Cleopatra lives on as one of history's most interesting and memorable women.

[Click this link to watch a video about Cleopatra.](#)

Glossary

monarch – a king or queen.

dynasty – a line of hereditary rulers of a country.

Hellenistic period - The Hellenistic period describes the era which followed the conquests of Alexander the Great.

prosperity – the state of being prosperous, e.g. becoming rich.

split – 'to split', to separate.

to be bankrupt – to have no money

reincarnation – the rebirth of a soul in a new body.

conflict – a serious disagreement or argument.

exiled – 'to exile', to expel someone from their native country.

assassination – murder, killing.

quarrelling – 'to quarrel', to argue.

defeat – 'to defeat', to win a victory over someone in a battle or other contest.

pursued – 'to pursue', to follow.

fled – past tense of ‘to flee’, to run away, escape.

battle – a fight between two armies.

reign – the time a king or queen rules a country.

Questions about the text

1. How many children did Cleopatra have?
2. How did Caesar die?
3. What two ways of killing herself might Cleopatra have used?
4. What two problems did Egypt have when Cleopatra became queen?
5. Where was Actium?
6. Who gave the command to kill Pompey?
7. What happened to Cleopatra’s two brothers?
8. What strange Egyptian tradition is mentioned?
9. What two languages does the text say that Cleopatra spoke?
10. True or false – Cleopatra was intelligent.

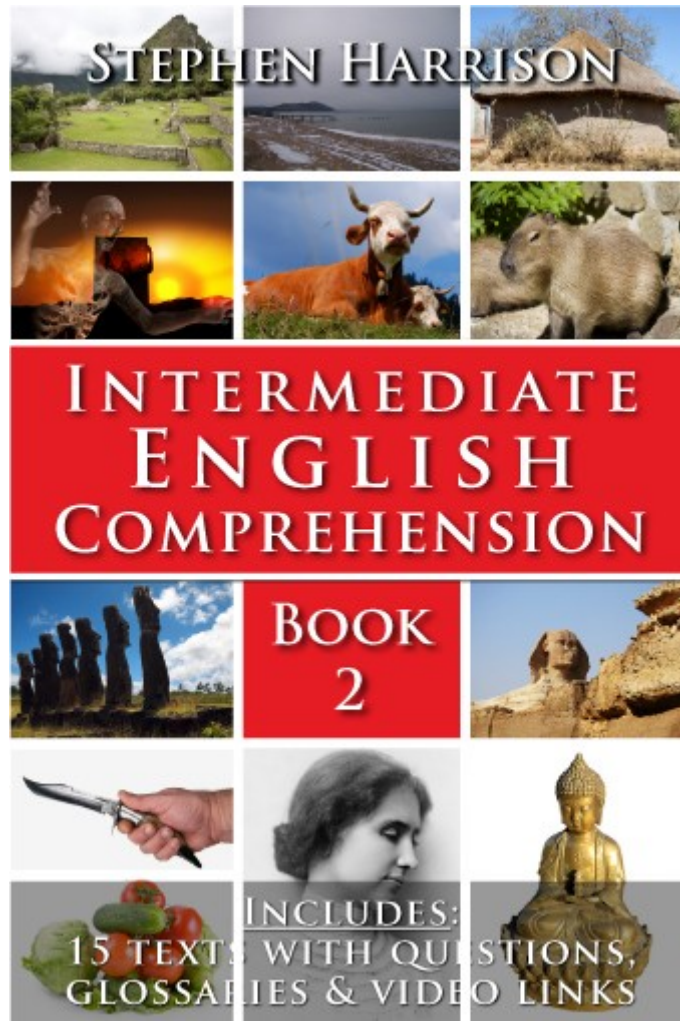
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~~~~ Free sample ~~~~

## Intermediate English Comprehension – Book 2

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# Machu Picchu



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Machu Picchu (which means “old mountain” in the Quechua language) is a ruined Inca city from the 15th century. The ruins are at a very high altitude (about 2400 metres above sea level). Machu Picchu is in the Cusco Region of Peru, South America. It is often called the "Lost City of the Incas" and it is one of the most famous symbols of the Inca civilization. It is situated on top of a mountain above the Urubamba Valley in Peru (home to the Urubamba River), which is 80 kilometres northwest of Cusco.

Machu Picchu is a mysterious place. Experts know its functions were both residential and religious, but they are still guessing about its cosmic positioning and its political importance. However, most archaeologists believe that the Incas built Machu Picchu as an estate for an Inca emperor called Pachacuti (1438–1472),

Machu Picchu is divided into different parts. In one part you will find the three major archaeological treasures: the Intihuatana (a huge ritual stone), the Temple of the Sun (where the Incas worshipped the sun god) and the Room of the Three Windows (an impressive room). These three buildings were dedicated to Inti, the Inca sun god and their most important deity (god).

Another part of the ancient city is the Popular District, also called the Residential District. It is the place where the working people lived. It includes storage buildings and simple houses. There is also a royalty area, which is a group of houses in rows over a slope. Finally, the Monumental Mausoleum is a statue covered in carved drawings. It was used for religious rites and human sacrifices!

Machu Picchu is the most popular South American archaeological site and it has an extremely high number of visitors. Every day coach tourists, backpackers and serious hikers visit the ancient ruins. Unfortunately, the number of visitors has worried people, such as international scientists and archaeologists. Since being discovered in 1911, the number of tourists visiting Machu Picchu, has skyrocketed. For example, in the year 2000 there were 400,000 visitors. Such a large number of people walking around was causing damage to the ground so the Peruvian government restricted the number of visitors to 2500 per day in 2011.

The central buildings of Machu Picchu are in the classical Inca architectural style. This style uses special polished walls. This building technique was called ashlar and the Incas were very good at it. The ashlar style of building uses blocks of stone which are made to fit together completely without mortar. Many intersections in the central city are so perfect that even a sheet of paper will not fit between the stones.



Although mortar was used in some buildings, it was not common. There was a very good reason for this. Peru is a seismic country, which means there are many earthquakes. Not using mortar made buildings more earthquake-resistant. When there are earthquakes, the stones of the dry-stone walls can move slightly without collapsing. This was an extremely clever idea of the Incas.

Machu Picchu is set in beautiful humid subtropical forests. There are endangered species of plant, such as ferns and palms. There are several endangered animal species. The most famous is the spectacled bear, also known as the Andean bear. This beautiful creature is the only bear species in South America.

Another beautiful, yet deadly, creature found in the area surrounding Machu Picchu is the jaguar. This spotted cat looks like the leopard, although it is usually larger and less slim. It has a very unusual killing method as it bites into its prey's skull piercing the brain. Although a jaguar could easily kill a human, they will not normally attack groups of people so visitors to Machu Picchu are usually safe.

With its splendid architecture, breath-taking views, interesting history and wonderful wildlife, Machu Picchu is an incredible place. Although their civilisation is gone, the Incas have left us this treasure. Can we look after it?

[Click this link to watch a video about Machu Picchu.](#)

## **Glossary**

functions – what something is used for.

residential – where people live.

cosmic – about the universe, cosmos.

estate – a large area of land belonging to someone.

treasures – precious things.

dedicated – ‘to dedicate’, make something for a particular person.

storage – used to store things.

slope – a surface of which one end or side is at a higher level than another.

covered in – having all over, e.g. ‘I am covered in spots!’

hikers – people who walk for pleasure.

skyrocketed – ‘to skyrocket’, to go very high, very fast.

restricted – ‘to restrict’, to put a limit, to stop.

polished – ‘to polish’, to make smooth and shiny.

mortar – a mixture of lime with cement, sand, and water, used in building to bond bricks or stones.

slightly – a little bit.

is set in – ‘to be set in’ to be located.

prey – a creature which is hunted and killed.

piercing – ‘to pierce’, to make a hole in.

### **Questions about the text**

1. What happened in 2011?
2. Which two rare animals are mentioned in the text?
3. Why was the high number of tourists a problem?
4. Which natural disaster is common in Peru?
5. Who did the Incas worship?
6. What has happened to the number of visitors to Machu Picchu since 1911?
7. What is ashlar?
8. What was the advantage of not building with mortar?
9. Who was Pachacuti?
10. True or false? – The Incas practiced human sacrifice.

# Capybara



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The capybara is the biggest **rodent** in the world. They are about 50 cm tall and 130 cm long. A fully-grown capybara weighs between 35 and 70 kilograms. Capybara means “master of the grasses.” in Guarani (a language spoken by indigenous people). Capybaras are semi-aquatic, which means they spend much of their lives in the water. They **inhabit** the southern parts of Central America and the northern parts of South America. Their habitat includes **savannahs** and rain forests but they always live near ponds, rivers, or lakes.

Capybaras live close to the water in groups of about 20. They are excellent swimmers and **divers**. If they have to, they can even sleep underwater (with only their noses showing). Water is essential to capybaras because if they are scared, they will dive into the **murky** ponds or rivers and hide from their predators (these include: include anacondas, caimans, jaguars, pumas, eagles and ocelots). Capybaras can stay underwater for five minutes.

Although many animals hunt capybaras, their main **threat** is humans. Humans hunt them for their meat and their skin, which can be made into leather. In some countries, people have started to farm capybaras. As with all rainforest animals, deforestation is also a threat.

Capybaras are very well-adapted to a semi-aquatic lifestyle. They have **webbed** feet help which helps them move in water. They have their **facial features** on the top of their heads, which means they can see and breathe when they are swimming. Capybaras can stay under water for 5 minutes. When they come out of the water, their **coarse** hair is quick to dry.

These huge rodents are herbivores and eat aquatic plants and grasses. An adult capybara can eat between 2.7 to 3.6 kilograms of fresh grass a day. They also eat their own faeces, which contains bacteria that help their stomach to digest the grass. When the weather is very dry or if there is a **drought**, capybaras will also eat melons, reeds, grains and squashes.

Capybaras **mate** in the water. A capybara’s gestation period lasts five months. Female capybaras will give birth to four or five babies. All the females in the group will feed the new **offspring**.

At first, baby capybaras are not good swimmers, so they stay on land, hiding under plants. Because they cannot swim and they are small, they make an easy meal for predators such as, vultures, **feral** dogs, foxes and piranhas.

Capybaras are very social animals and they live in small family groups of about 10 to 20. A group usually includes one male, some females and their babies (there will also be some young, subordinate males).

We normally think of rodents as being smaller animals such as rats, mice and hamsters. It can seem bizarre to see these amazing creatures in the wild, where they look more like small buffalo!

[Click here to watch a short video on the capybara.](#)

## **Glossary**

rodent - a mammal of the order *Rodentia* that includes rats, mice, squirrels, etc.

inhabit – ‘to inhabit’, to live in.

savannah – a grassland almost without trees.

divers – things which dive, ‘to dive’ to go under the water.

murky – dirty, not clear.

threat – a possible danger.

webbed - having the toes connected by skin.

facial features – eyes, nose and mouth.

coarse – not soft, thick.

drought – a time when there is no rain.

mate – ‘to mate’, the act of reproduction.

offspring – babies.

feral – having gone wild.

## **Questions about the text**

1. Why are baby capybaras easy to kill?
2. What do capybaras do to help digest their food?
3. How long can a capybara stay submerged?
4. When would a capybara eat melons?
5. How long does a capybara pregnancy last?
6. Why do humans hunt capybaras?
7. Why do capybaras need to live near water?

8. The text mentions some animals which hunt capybaras. How many are there?
9. What would a capybara do if it was frightened?
10. True or false? – Capybaras are solitary creatures.

~~~~~ **End of Free Sample** ~~~~~

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About the author

After graduating with a first class degree in Linguistics in 2001, Stephen moved to Spain where he taught English and learned Spanish. He has since taught adults and children as well as training other teachers. Stephen currently lives in Manchester, in the UK.

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Answers

The Komodo Dragon

1. Why is the bite of a Komodo dragon dangerous?

Dragon saliva has more than 50 types of bacteria. If a prey animal is bitten and escapes, it usually dies quickly of blood poisoning. Komodo dragons also have razor sharp teeth.

2. Why might a Komodo dragon vomit?

A Komodo dragon might vomit to become lighter so it can escape.

3. How do Komodo dragons hunt?

Komodo dragons hunt using camouflage and patience. They lie in wait and attack passing prey.

4. How are Komodo dragons different from other large carnivores?

Komodo dragons are different from other large carnivores because they eat most of their prey (they leave only 12 per cent).

5. What happened in 1926?

The existence of the Komodo dragon was confirmed in 1926. It is the year that the explorer W. Douglas Burden led an expedition to Komodo.

6. Name three factors that have made Komodo dragons endangered.

Three from: natural disasters (e.g. volcanic eruptions), hunting, human expansion and forest fires.

7. How do Komodo dragons find prey which they have bitten, but which has escaped?

They locate animals they have bitten using their excellent sense of smell.

8. There are not many Komodo dragons in captivity. Why is this?

There are not many Komodo dragons in captivity because they are vulnerable to diseases and parasitic infection.

9. How many Komodo dragons did W. Douglas Burden take back to America?

He took fourteen back in total – twelve dead and two live specimens.

10. True or false? - Komodo dragons can run quickly for long periods of time.

False – Komodo dragons can run briefly at 20 km an hour. 'Briefly' means only for a short time.

[Back to The Komodo Dragon](#)

Jainism

1. What is the most important belief of Jains?

Non-violence.

2. Why do Jains not eat meat?

Jains believe that animals and plants and human beings, have souls. They believe each of these souls is equal and that they should be treated with compassion, love and respect.

3. What is one of the differences between the Digambara and Svetambara sects?

They disagree on the spiritual status of women. Svetambara Jains believe that tirthankaras can be men or women but Digambra Jains believe that women can't be tirthankaras.

4. Who changed Jainism into its current form?

Mahavira, the most recent of the twenty-four tirthankaras.

5. Which belief do Jains have in common with scientists?

That the universe is regulated by cosmic laws and kept going by its own energy processes.

6. How have Jains changed Indian society?

They have changed it with their political ideas and good actions.

7. What are the five great vows of Jainism?

Non-violence, non-attachment to belongings, honesty, not stealing, and sexual restraint (or celibacy).

8. Who was the founder of Jainism?

There was no founder.

9. According to the text, was Mali male or female?

We don't know. Svetambara Jains believe Mali was a woman but Digambara Jains say Mali was a man.

10. True or false? – Most Jains cannot read.

False – Jains are the religious community with the highest degree of literacy in India.

[Back to Jainism](#)

Vampires

1. In ancient Chinese myths, why did vampires jump forwards instead of running?

Because they had stiff limbs.

2. Who buried dead bodies upside down to prevent them turning into vampires?

The Celtic people.

3. Where did people believe vampires had one nostril?

In Bulgaria and Poland.

4. Which two authors are mentioned in the text?

Stephenie Meyer and Bram Stoker.

5. Where did people place a citrus fruit in the mouth of a corpse?

Saxon Germany (it was a lemon).

6. Name one place where vampires were said to have blood coming from their mouths.

One from: a Slavic country, Greece and parts of Eastern Europe.

7. Where was the novel 'Dracula' set?

In England and Transylvania (now Romania).

8. Where did people place a wax cross in the mouth of a dead person?

In Rhodes and some Greek islands.

9. Who used to cut off the arms and legs of dead people before burying them?

The Thracians and ancient Bulgarians used to amputate limbs and cut the feet or other parts of body before burying it.

10. True or false? – Vampires in ancient China hunted by sight.

False – The ancient Chinese thought vampires were blind.

[Back to Vampires](#)

Big Ben

1. Which boxer is mentioned in the text?

Benjamin Caunt

2. Can foreign tourists go inside Big Ben?

No, only UK residents.

3. In which TV programme was the tower of Big Ben partly damaged?

In the Dr Who episode 'Aliens of London'.

4. Who designed the clock tower?

Augustus Pugin

5. Why would a person need to be healthy to go to the top of Big Ben?

The tower has no lift ('elevator' in the US), so they must climb the 334 stairs to the top.

6. When did a fire destroy part of the old palace of Westminster?

October 16, 1834

7. What did Sir Benjamin Hall do?

He installed the bell.

8. In which film is a bomb linked to the hands of Big Ben?

'The Thirty-Nine Steps'

9. How can a UK resident go inside Big Ben?

They must organise it with their MP.

10. Who was Charles Barry?

He was one of the architects responsible for rebuilding the tower.

[Back to Big Ben](#)

The Mayas

1. Why did the Mayas think it was important to worship their gods?

The Mayas believed that without the help of these important gods, there would be no crops and everyone would starve.

2. Why is Maya writing called hieroglyphics?

It is often referred to as hieroglyphics because it looks like Ancient Egyptian writing.

3. Who carried out human sacrifices in Maya culture?

The priests.

4. Why did the Spanish priests burn the Maya books?

Because the pictures looked like devils and demons.

5. How many Maya texts have been found up to now?

About 10,000.

6. Name two things that could be found in a codex.

Two from: Their gods, their leaders, their daily life or special occasions.

7. During human sacrifice, how was a person killed?

By cutting out their heart.

8. In what area did the Maya live?

In modern day Mexico.

9. Why did you have to be brave to look into a mirror in the Maya culture?

Because the Mayas thought a monster could pull you through the mirror.

10. True or false? – The Spanish killed the Mayas.

False – the Mayas had already disappeared 600 years before the Spanish arrived.

[Back to The Mayas](#)

Cloning

1. How did scientists clone Dolly the sheep? Using artificial twinning or somatic cell nuclear transfer?

Somatic cell nuclear transfer.

2. Which of the two cloning method is the most technologically advanced?

Somatic cell nuclear transfer.

3. Apart from a sheep, which other two animals are mentioned in the text?

Cows and mice.

4. Why are clones which are created using artificial twinning ‘genetically identical’?

Because they come from the same egg.

5. Which three groups find human cloning controversial?

Scientists, politicians and the public.

6. Which two types of cell are not examples of somatic cells?

The sperm and egg cells, these are reproductive cells.

7. Was Dolly the sheep the first animal clone experiment?

No, scientists had been experimenting with animal cloning for years.

8. Give an example of when a gardener would use cloning?

When a gardener grows a plant from a cutting.

9. According to the text, if scientists clone humans, which method would they use?

If scientists clone humans, they will probably use the somatic cell nuclear transfer method (SCNT).

10. True or false? – Dolly was grown in a tank.

False – The embryo which became Dolly was implanted into a surrogate mother.

[Back to Cloning](#)

Language Death

1. Where were schools stopped from teaching a language?

In Hawaii.

2. What are the two examples of language revival?

Hawaiian and Hebrew.

3. According to the text, how could we avoid more wars?

By having one global language.

4. Where are 16% of the world's languages spoken?

New Guinea.

5. Which three factors can kill language speakers?

Genocide, disease and natural disaster.

6. How many languages are spoken in the world today?

Between 6000 and 7000.

7. Name three languages mentioned in the text.

Three from - English, Hebrew, Hawaiian and Kutchi.

8. What happened to reduce the number of people who speak Kutchi?

There was an earthquake which killed approximately 30,000 speakers of Kutchi.

9. When did Hawaii become part of the US?

1898

10. True or false? – The American government banned people from speaking Hawaiian.

False – the American government banned schools from teaching Hawaiian.

[Back to Language Death](#)

British Cuisine

1. What made people use eels in pies?

The price. At the time eels were cheaper than beef.

2. What do most British people have for breakfast?

Toast or cereal and a cup of tea.

3. Why does Britain have so much international food?

Because it was brought by immigrants in the 1950s.

4. Why is stir-fry a popular meal?

It is quick and easy to prepare.

5. How many vegetables are served with a traditional Sunday lunch?

Three - two different kinds of vegetables and also potatoes.

6. What is Britain's most popular meal?

Stir-fry.

7. What are the usual meats served with a traditional Sunday lunch?

The most common meats served for Sunday lunch are beef, lamb, pork or chicken.

8. Where does chicken tikka masala come from?

India.

9. Which three examples of Asian food are mentioned in the text?

Chinese, Thai and Indian.

10. True or false – Each week the average British person spends over £10 on food and drink outside the home.

True - The average person spends £11.54 a week on food and drink outside the home.

[Back to British Cuisine](#)

Cosmetic Surgery

1. Who was the first person to do a nose job?

The ancient Indian physician Sushruta.

2. Why might a cosmetic surgeon refuse to operate on someone?

They person might not need the operation or there could be a medical risk.

3. Which cosmetic procedure would you have to remove fat?

Liposuction.

4. Other than appearance, why might someone have a nose job?

To correct breathing issues and to help alleviate the symptoms of snoring.

5. Other than surgery, what two ways of losing weight are mentioned?

Healthy eating and regular exercise.

6. In ancient India, why did they amputate people's noses and earlobes?

For religious, criminal or military punishment.

7. Apart from death, what are the risks of breast enlargement?

Scarring or different sized breasts.

8. Which type of surgery might leave a patient unable to close their mouth?

A face lift (rhytidectomy).

9. Name three signs of getting older which are mentioned in the text.

Three from: lines, wrinkles, loose skin, crow's feet and brown spots.

10. True or false? – The number of people having cosmetic surgery is rising each year?

True – The number of people using surgery to improve their appearance is growing every year.

[Back to Cosmetic Surgery](#)

Stockholm

1. What are 'T-bana'?

Underground trains.

2. What is the most popular museum in Stockholm?

The Vasa Museum.

3. What do some people call Stockholm?

The Venice of the north.

4. Which part of Stockholm has old-fashioned buildings?

Gamla Stan (Old Town).

5. What four types of transport are mentioned in the text?

Trains, trams, underground trains (T-bana) and buses.

6. When do trams travel to Djurgården Island?

In the summer.

7. What is a popular Swedish leisure activity?

Having a coffee at a café.

8. What does the Vasa Museum have?

The Vasa warship.

9. Who has their headquarters in Stockholm?

Many major Swedish banks and companies with over 200 employees.

10. True or false? – Many people live on the Stockholm archipelago.

False - only 150 of the islands are inhabited.

[Back to Stockholm](#)

Papua New Guinea

1. Which language in Papua New Guinea has the most speakers?

Enga

2. With which other country does Papua New Guinea have a close relationship?

Australia

3. Papua New Guinea was ruled by three different countries. What were they?

Germany, Britain and Australia.

4. Other than farming, how do people get extra food?

Hunting and collecting wild plants.

5. What three natural disasters are mentioned in the text?

Volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and tsunamis.

6. What is the capital city of Papua New Guinea?

The capital is Port Moresby.

7. What are the official languages of the country?

Hiri Motu, Tok Pisin and English.

8. Why is an airplane often the easiest way to travel around the country?

Because the landscape is difficult to travel around and there are few roads.

9. What did the Austronesian speaking peoples bring when they migrated 2500 years ago? Name two things.

Two from - Pigs, pottery and certain fishing techniques.

10. True or false? – The highlands of Papua New Guinea are uninhabited.

False - there is a populous highlands region.

[Back to Papua New Guinea](#)

The Paleo Diet

1. Why are people from the Amazon rainforest mentioned?

Because they eat a diet similar to our Palaeolithic ancestors.

2. Why do supporters of the diet believe that dairy and grains are bad for us?

Because they are new to humans and we haven't had time to adapt to them.

3. Other than the Paleo diet, which two diets are mentioned?

The Atkins diet and the South Beach diet.

4. Which ancient people did not farm?

The Unungans of Alaska, who were hunter-gatherers.

5. Name four foods not allowed in the Paleo diet.

Any four from - grains, legumes, dairy products, potatoes, refined salt, refined sugar, and processed oils.

6. Which has less protein – the Paleo diet or the average western diet?

The western diet.

7. What is a suggested breakfast with the Paleo diet?

An omelette.

8. Is bread allowed with the Paleo diet?

No, it is made from grain.

9. Which two diseases are mentioned in the text?

Atherosclerosis (the hardening of the arteries) and cancer.

10. True or false? – fish is banned with the Paleo diet.

False.

[Back to The Paleo Diet](#)

Invasive Species

1. Why were cane toads introduced to new places?

To eat insects that were feeding on sugar cane.

2. Name an invasive species that has been introduced to Great Britain.

One from - parrots and mink.

3. Which birds do mink hunt and kill?

Kingfishers.

4. Which animals do Burmese pythons feed on?

Racoons, alligators and deer.

5. Why are cane toads dangerous to other animals?

They might kill other animals and they are poisonous if they are eaten by other animals.

6. Before they escaped, why were Burmese pythons in Florida?

People kept them as pets.

7. Which three continents has the green crab colonised?

South America, North America and Oceania (Australia).

8. Why did people farm mink?

Mink were farmed for their fur.

9. Where are camels found as an invasive species?

Australia.

10. True or false – Mink are brown.

True – although they can appear black in some light.

[Back to Invasive Species](#)

Cleopatra

1. How many children did Cleopatra have?

Four – a son with Caesar and two sons and a daughter with Mark Antony.

2. How did Caesar die?

He was assassinated (killed).

3. What two ways of killing herself might Cleopatra have used?

She might have drunk poison or used a snake to bite her.

4. What problems did Egypt have when Cleopatra became queen?

There was a civil war and the country was bankrupt.

5. Where was Actium?

On the east coast of Greece.

6. Who gave the command to kill Pompey?

Ptolemy.

7. What happened to Cleopatra's two brothers?

They both died. Ptolemy XIII was killed in fighting and Ptolemy XIV died mysteriously.

8. What strange Egyptian tradition is mentioned?

That royal brothers and sisters married each other.

9. What two languages does the text say that Cleopatra spoke?

Greek and Egyptian.

10. True or false – Cleopatra was intelligent.

True – she was a highly intelligent woman.

[Back to Cleopatra](#)

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