

ENGLISH 8

AUDIO SCRIPTS

UNIT 8

Listening, task 2b

Geography

Australia is the world's largest 'island'. It is also the world's smallest continent. In fact, it is the only country that is a continent. Because of its geographical position, it is often called Down Under. Australia is also the hottest, the driest and the flattest continent. It is the same size as the USA (without Alaska and Hawaii).

People

The first inhabitants of Australia, the Aborigines, came from the north by boat. Scientists believe that it happened about 40 000 years ago. Aborigines were nomads. They moved from place to place looking for food, but they always tried to live in harmony with the land. They believed that, once in the past, powerful spirits created the land and the people. This time of creation is called the Dreamtime. In their songs, dances, paintings and legends, Aborigines told stories about the Dreamtime.

When white settlers arrived, they took away the land from the Aborigines and destroyed their way of life. Whites have been living in Australia since the 18th century. In 1787 the English government sent the first settlers to Australia. Most of them were convicts. They started the first colony on the 'new' continent. It was called Sydney.

Today Australia has immigrants from all over the world. There are a lot of Italians, Greeks, Chinese and Vietnamese living there. Many Croatians as well.

Towns and Cities

Most Australians live in the big cities on the south-east and east coast. Only about one in seven people live in the country (outside the cities). The capital of Australia is Canberra, but the two largest cities are Sydney and Melbourne.

Lifestyle

Australians are very friendly people. They love sport. Surfing, swimming, sailing, tennis, golf, horse riding and other sports are very popular. Birdwatching is another popular activity. There are about 400 birds which live only in Australia. This is no surprise because the continent of Australia was isolated from the rest of the world for millions of years. Its animals and plants developed differently. Just remember kangaroos and koala bears.

Speaking, task 1a

Americans and Brits speak the same language, but there are big cultural differences. For example, in Great Britain, manners play a very important role. The British always shake hands when they meet someone new, look people in the eye while speaking, say ‘excuse me’ when bumping into someone and so on. Some may say that they are not only very polite but also quite formal. They follow many traditions, even such as having a king/queen, although the Royal Family is more of an icon now.

Americans, on the other hand, are more open-minded and outspoken. They never hold in what they want to say but express their opinions in a kind way. They are not so formal, either. For example, they usually call each other by the first name, even if they have only met. They may shake hands, but it is okay to look somewhere else while talking. After all, Americans are often very active and busy; they are always in a hurry, whereas Brits are more reserved.

Finally, there is a thought that the British are a bit cocky. In other words, they put themselves higher than others. It may be true or just a stereotype, though. By contrast, Americans are considered very tolerant people who respect everyone no matter who they are or where they are from.

Speaking, task 3

Kristen (American): Hey, Jane! What’s up?

Jane (British): Hello, Kristen! I’m planning my visit to you in Texas.

Kristen: You definitely need a hat and sunscreen — it’s really hot these days.

Jane: Yes, I know. The climate is subtropical there, isn’t it?

Kristen: Yes. And that’s why nature is so beautiful: lots of palms, flowers...

Jane: What about the canyon? I heard there are some awesome caves there.

Kristen: Sure! And I will take you to Palo Duro Canyon State Park! We will also see Capote Falls!

Jane: Capote what?

Kristen: It’s the highest waterfall in Texas – 175 feet tall!

Jane: Amazing! Well, I should probably get back to planning. After I have my tea with milk, of course.

Kristen: Oh, Jane! Don’t you, Brits, ever drink anything else?

Jane: Like what? Cola? I’m not as fond of it as you, Americans, are.

Kristen: I know. Don’t worry. I prefer orange juice myself.