

# 7 Wild places

National Geographic Explorer  
Andrés Ruzo studies the Boiling  
River of the Amazon, Peru

## WARM UP

Look at the photo and read the caption. Discuss the questions.

- 1 What do you think the explorer in this photo hopes to learn?
- 2 Do you think it's important to protect wild places?
- 3 Would you like to travel somewhere wild like this? Where?

In this unit you:

- talk about the natural world
- make comparisons
- watch a TED Talk by

**KAREN BASS**







Patagonia's Paine massif mountains rise beyond Lake Pehoe, Chile

## 7.1 The natural world

### VOCABULARY Natural features

1 Look at these words. Which of these natural features can you see in the photo above? Which do you have in your country? Discuss with a partner.

beach	desert	lake	sea
canyon	island	mountain	waterfall

2 ▶ 7.1 Complete the sentences with these words. One word is extra. Listen and check your answers.

deep	dry	high	long	wide
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- 1 China's Yangtze River is very \_\_\_\_\_. It flows for 6,300 kilometres.
  - 2 Mont Blanc is a very \_\_\_\_\_ mountain in Europe. It's 4,809 metres above sea level.
  - 3 Russia's Lake Baikal is extremely \_\_\_\_\_. Its bottom is 1,285 metres below sea level.
  - 4 The Mississippi River in the United States is so \_\_\_\_\_ that you can't see across it in some places.
- 3 Look at the natural features in Exercise 1. Can you name any other examples? Why are they famous? Discuss with a partner.

There's Ninety Mile Beach in Australia. It's really long.

Yes, and there's the Grand Canyon in the United States. It's very deep.



**LISTENING** An amazing place**Listening for content words**

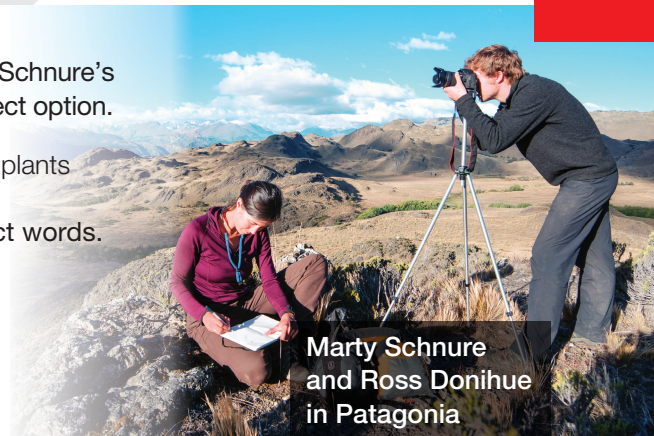
Content words – such as main verbs, nouns and adjectives – carry the main meaning of a sentence. In spoken English, these words are usually stressed. Focusing on content words can help you understand the speaker's main message.

- 4** ▶ **7.2** Listen to the information about Ross Donihue and Marty Schnure's work in Patagonia. What did their work involve? Tick (✓) the correct option.

**a** studying wildlife      **b** making a map      **c** collecting plants

- 5** ▶ **7.2** Listen again. Complete the sentences. Circle the correct words.

- Patagonia is an area shared by *two* / *three* countries.
- Patagonia is usually a very cool and *wet* / *dry* place.
- Ross Donihue's favourite thing about Patagonia is *the changing conditions* / *the wildlife*.



Marty Schnure and Ross Donihue in Patagonia

**Pronunciation** Weak forms (2): The schwa /ə/ sound

- 6a** ▶ **7.3** Listen to the weak forms in these sentences.

- Patagonia is an area at the southern end of South America.
- It's a big place but only about two million people live there.

- 6b** ▶ **7.3** Listen again. Practise saying the sentences.

**SPEAKING** Talking about places

- 7** ▶ **7.4** Listen to the conversation. What is speaker A's favourite island?

A: So where are you going on holiday this summer?

B: Hawaii. **I'm really looking forward to it!** **I can't wait / I'm really excited**

A: That's great! I know it well.

B: Really? I can't decide which island to visit – Oahu or Maui. I hear that Maui is **more relaxing.**

**quieter / more peaceful**

A: Yeah, maybe. But Oahu is more exciting. That's where Honolulu and Waikiki Beach are.

B: So would you say Oahu is the **best** place in Hawaii?

**nicest / most interesting**

A: No. Actually, my favourite island is Kauai. It's definitely the **most beautiful.** It has mountains, canyons, waterfalls and beaches. I love it there.

**prettiest / most scenic**

- 8** Practise the conversation with a partner. Practise again using the words on the right.

- 9** List three places in the world you'd like to visit. Explain your ideas to a partner.

I'd love to go to the Grand Canyon. I'd like to hike to the bottom.

Yeah, that sounds great. Me too.

## 7.2 It's the highest in the world

### SEVEN WONDERS of the NATURAL WORLD

Our planet is home to some incredible natural wonders. Here are seven of the most amazing.



**Rio de Janeiro's harbour** is one of the most beautiful harbours in the world.

The best place to see the **Aurora Borealis** is northwest Canada.



Mexico's **Copper Canyon** is deeper and longer than the Grand Canyon.



Other volcanoes may be larger than Mexico's **Paricutin Volcano**, but few are more beautiful.



**Mount Everest** is the highest mountain in the world.

Africa's **Victoria Falls** is the world's largest waterfall.



**The Great Barrier Reef** is the world's largest coral reef system.

### GRAMMAR Comparatives and superlatives

1 ▶ 7.5 Look at the infographic. Do you agree with the list of wonders?

2 ▶ 7.6 Listen to two people talking about the natural wonders. Complete the sentences.

- 1 The man thinks Paricutin Volcano is the \_\_\_\_\_ volcano in the world.
- 2 The woman says Copper Canyon is \_\_\_\_\_ than the Grand Canyon.

3 Read the sentences in the Grammar box. Choose the correct options to complete a–e.

4 Complete the sentences with the comparative or superlative forms of the adjectives.

- 1 Almeria in the south of Spain is the \_\_\_\_\_ city in Europe. (dry)
- 2 The Nile is \_\_\_\_\_ than the Amazon but the Amazon is \_\_\_\_\_ river in the world. (long, wide)
- 3 Some people say Mauna Kea in Hawaii is \_\_\_\_\_ than Mount Everest, but nearly 6,000 metres are under water. (high)
- 4 The mosquito is probably the \_\_\_\_\_ animal in the world. (dangerous)
- 5 I think the landscape near where I live is \_\_\_\_\_ than any other place I know! (beautiful)

### COMPARATIVES AND SUPERLATIVES

#### Comparatives

I heard the Copper Canyon in Mexico is **more beautiful than** the Grand Canyon.  
And here it says that it's **longer** and **deeper** too.

- a Add *-er* / *-est* to short adjectives to make a comparative.
- b Use *more* / *the most* before longer adjectives to make a comparative.
- c Use *that* / *than* in comparatives that talk about two things.

#### Superlatives

They say it's **the most dangerous** mountain to climb.  
That would be **the coolest** trip.

- d Use *the* + *-er* / *-est* with short adjectives to make a superlative.
- e Use *more* / *the most* before longer adjectives to make a superlative.

Check your answers on page 143 and do Exercises 1–2.



LANGUAGE FOCUS Making comparisons

5 ▶ 7.7 Study the examples in the Language focus box.

MAKING COMPARISONS

Comparing two things	Comparing three or more things
Spring is a <b>better</b> time to visit <b>than</b> summer. The problem with mosquitoes is <b>worse than</b> a few years ago. It's <b>further</b> to the sea <b>than</b> to the mountains from here.	April is <b>the best</b> time to go there. The mosquitoes here are <b>the worst</b> in the world. Where I live is <b>the furthest</b> you can be from the sea.
Is the Amazon <b>longer than</b> the Nile? No, it isn't. Which is <b>wider</b> – the Nile or the Amazon? The Amazon (is <b>wider</b> ).	Is the Nile <b>the longest</b> river in the world? Yes, it is. What's <b>the widest</b> river in the world? The Amazon (is <b>the widest</b> ).

For more information and practice, go to page 143.

6 Complete the sentences. Circle the correct words.

- 1 Let's go to Sydney in December. The weather is *better than* / *the best* in June.
- 2 To me, summer is *worse than* / *the worst* time to visit Jeju Island because of the crowds.
- 3 I would love to see Iguazu Falls in South America one day. They look *really* / *more* beautiful.
- 4 Aconcagua is the second highest mountain *of* / *in* the world.
- 5 The Thai islands all look interesting to me, but Phuket sounds *better* / *the best*.

7 ▶ 7.8 Complete the text with the correct form of the adjectives. Remember you may have to add words. Listen and check your answers.

Mount Fuji is a symbol of Japan. At 3,776 metres, it is <sup>1</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ (high) mountain in Japan. It is only 100 kilometres from Tokyo, <sup>2</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ (large) city in the country.

Mount Fuji is <sup>3</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ (popular) tourist attraction in Japan. More than 200,000 people climb to the top every year. Climbing in the summer is <sup>4</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ (easy) than in the winter. Few climb during the winter as the conditions make it <sup>5</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ (dangerous) than usual.

Many people start to climb Mount Fuji at night. <sup>6</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ (good) place to experience sunrise is from the top. Japan, after all, is nicknamed the 'Land of the Rising Sun'.

Pronunciation Stressed and weak syllables

8a ▶ 7.9 Listen to the stressed and *weak* syllables in this sentence. Then listen again and repeat.

Is Canada bigger than the States?

8b ▶ 7.10 Listen to these sentences. Underline the stressed syllables. Listen again and circle the weak syllables. Practise saying the sentences.

- 1 Spring is a better time to visit than summer.
- 2 Is the Amazon longer than the Nile?
- 3 Mount Everest is higher than K2.

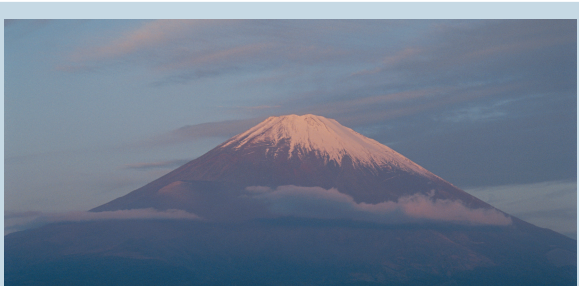
SPEAKING What do you know?

9 What do you know about some of the world's natural wonders? Student A: Turn to page 153. Student B: Turn to page 150. Do the quiz.

10 Work in pairs. Write three quiz questions of your own. Then ask another pair your questions. (Be sure you know the answers!)

What's the largest continent in the world?

Is it Asia?





## 7.3 An otherworldly place

### READING Life in the Altiplano

1 Look at the photo and read the first paragraph of the article. Do you think the statements below are true (T) or false (F)? Discuss with a partner.

- 1 The Altiplano is a very high place.      T    F
- 2 The Altiplano is in Africa.                    T    F
- 3 Very few people live in the Altiplano.    T    F

2 Read the article quickly to check your guesses.



In the high Andes of South America lies one of the most incredible landscapes in the world. The Altiplano, or 'high plain', is a place of 'extremes.

It is the second-largest mountain **plateau** in the world. It holds the world's largest high-altitude lake, Lake Titicaca, and the largest <sup>2</sup>salt flat, Salar de Uyuni. At 4,500 metres, it is also higher than many of the world's mountains.

Most of the Altiplano lies within Bolivia and Peru, while its southern parts lie in Chile and Argentina. The Atacama Desert – one of the driest areas on the planet – lies to the south-west. The Amazon rainforest lies to the west.

It is an <sup>3</sup>otherworldly **landscape** that looks more like Mars than Earth. High volcanoes **contrast** with deep valleys. Temperatures can change from boiling hot to freezing cold in a single day. Few trees can survive the dry conditions.

But suprisingly, animal life <sup>4</sup>thrives here. There are mammals, such as llamas, foxes and alpacas. There are also birds like the high-flying condors and three **species** of South American flamingos. Millions of people live in the Altiplano, too; most live in the area between Lake Titicaca and Salar de Uyuni. In fact, this is where Bolivia's most **populated** city, La Paz, is.

<sup>1</sup> **extremes (n)** conditions much colder, hotter, drier, etc., than the usual

<sup>2</sup> **salt flat (n)** a level area of land covered in salt

<sup>3</sup> **otherworldly (adj)** strange, as if from another planet

<sup>4</sup> **thrive (v)** to do well and be successful



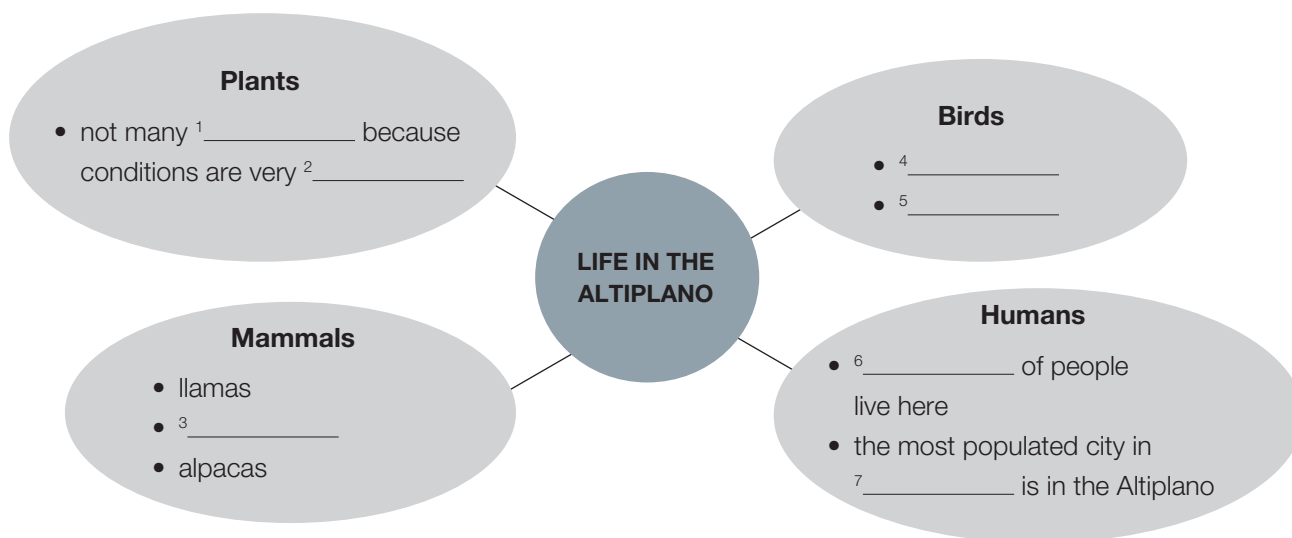
## Understanding main ideas

3  7.11 Read the article. Choose the best alternative title.

- a South America's natural wonders
- b Land of extremes
- c Animals at high altitude
- d The highest city in the world

## Understanding details

4 Read the article again. Complete the notes.



5 Match each place (1–4) to the phrase that describes it.

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 1 La Paz             | a the largest high-altitude lake in the world |
| 2 The Atacama Desert | b the largest salt flat in the world          |
| 3 Lake Titicaca      | c one of the driest areas in the world        |
| 4 Salar de Uyuni     | d the most populated city in the Altiplano    |

## Understanding vocabulary

6 Complete the definitions with a **bold** word from the article.

- 1 A \_\_\_\_\_ is a large area of high, flat land.
- 2 A \_\_\_\_\_ is everything you see when you look at an area of land.
- 3 A \_\_\_\_\_ is a group of animals or plants with the same characteristics.

7 Choose the correct options to complete the definitions.

- 1 If a place is **populated**, people *live* / *don't live* there.
- 2 If two things **contrast**, they are *the same* / *different*.

8 Are there any incredible landscapes in your country? What kinds of animal species live there? Discuss with a partner.





## 7.4 Unseen footage, untamed nature

### TED TALKS

- 1 Read the paragraph. Choose the correct options to complete the definitions (1–4). You will hear these words in the TED Talk.

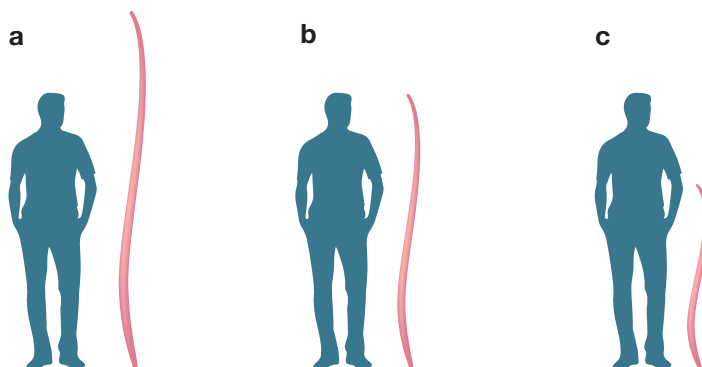
**KAREN BASS**'s idea worth spreading is that world travel and new technology have allowed her to see and **capture** on film some **wonderful** and **brand new** things in nature and share them with millions of people. Karen Bass shows that when you have a job you love, even long hours and **tough**, challenging situations can't affect your passion for your work.

- 1 If you **capture** something on film, you *record* / *erase* it.
- 2 Something that is **wonderful** is *great* / *sad*.
- 3 Something that is **brand new** is *completely* / *often* new.
- 4 A **tough** job is very *easy* / *difficult*.

- 2 ▶ 7.12 Watch Part 1 of the TED Talk. Choose the correct options to complete the sentences.

- 1 New technology helps Karen Bass to \_\_\_\_\_.  
a get new images and talk about new things      b share her videos with many more people
- 2 Karen Bass says she is also excited when \_\_\_\_\_.  
a she travels to a new place      b new animal species are discovered

- 3 ▶ 7.13 Watch Part 2 of the TED Talk. If human, how long would the bat's tongue be? Choose the correct diagram.





4 ▶ 7.14 Watch Part 3 of the TED Talk. Choose the correct options.

- 1 Karen Bass says the Altiplano is:
  - a somewhere she loves to go back to
  - b the most beautiful place in the world
- 2 What does Bass say is an advantage of the Altiplano's thin atmosphere?
  - a Few people live there.
  - b It's easy to see stars.

### CRITICAL THINKING

- 5 Which three of these four things does Karen Bass do to share her passion?
  - a gives reasons for why she loves her job
  - b tells us a story about an experience
  - c shows beautiful images
  - d brings a real example onto the stage
- 6 Work in pairs. Choose two ways from Exercise 5 to share a passion you have.

### VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

- 7 ▶ 7.15 Watch the clips from the TED Talk. Choose the correct meaning of the words.
- 8 Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.
  - 1 Do you have a favourite TV series? Can you describe it?
  - 2 What places do you like going back to? Do you have one favourite place you like visiting?

### PRESENTATION SKILLS Showing enthusiasm

#### TIPS

You can show you are enthusiastic through the language you use. Instead of using words like *good* or *nice*, you can use stronger adjectives such as:

amazing      brilliant      fantastic      wonderful

9 ▶ 7.16 Watch the clips from Karen Bass's TED Talk. Complete the sentences.

- 1 'There are so many \_\_\_\_\_ places. But some locations draw you back time and time again.'
- 2 'But the advantage of that \_\_\_\_\_ thin atmosphere is that it enables you to see the stars in the heavens with \_\_\_\_\_ clarity.'
- 3 'Thank you so much for letting me share some images of our \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ Earth.'

10 Read the extract from a presentation. What words could you add to make the speaker sound more enthusiastic?

India is a nice place. There are so many things to do. You can visit the beaches in Goa, sail down the River Ganges, and of course, you have to see the Taj Mahal.

11 Work in pairs. Take turns reading the extract. Who sounds the most enthusiastic?

The night sky in the Altiplano

# 7.5 Our natural wonders

## COMMUNICATE Choosing tourist attractions

1 Work in a group. Brainstorm a list of your country’s natural attractions. Think about lakes, rivers, forests, parks, etc.

We have some nice national parks. How about one of those?

Good idea. I think Seacoast Park is the most beautiful park.

2 Which attractions would foreign visitors like the most? Agree on three.

EXPRESSING AGREEMENT

I agree.      You’re right.      That’s a good point.      Good idea.

3 Create a poster for your attractions. Think about what you want to include and take notes. Include photos, pictures or diagrams to make it interesting.

- best time to visit
- what’s special about it
- interesting facts
- how to get there
- what to see there
- what to do there

4 Hold a class poster session. Look at your classmates’ posters and present your own. Remember to sound enthusiastic when you give your presentation.

## WRITING Making a recommendation

5 Make notes on a place you know that you would like to recommend to others.

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Best time to go: \_\_\_\_\_

Why visit?: \_\_\_\_\_

6 Write about the place. Make it sound as interesting as possible.

I recommend visiting Whistler Mountain in British Columbia, Canada. You can visit any time, but for me the best time to visit is the winter. I love skiing and Whistler has really amazing skiing. It's a fantastic place!

