Exercise 4

12 Read the article about some of the oldest trees on our planet, known as ‘ancient trees’.

Write a summary about what can cause damage to ancient trees.

Your summary should be about 100 words long (and no more than 120 words long). You should use your own words as far as possible.

You will receive up to 8 marks for the content of your summary, and up to 8 marks for the style and accuracy of your language.

Looking after our elderly neighbours

Our planet is home to some amazing elderly residents – old trees that have been standing tall for hundreds of years. Many have witnessed important historic events, and are a valuable part of our history and landscape. They are known as ancient trees, and they need our help, especially at a time when new diseases are spreading across continents. There is no particular age at which a tree is defined as ancient, as different tree species grow at different speeds, but an ancient tree is generally one that is much older than others of the same species. For example, oak trees can live to 400 years old, but Denmark’s Kongeegen (or King Oak) is thought to be almost 2000 years old.

Ancient trees typically have a short, fat shape; the top often reduces in size and the lower trunk becomes wider with age. This shape makes them strong and solid, although even ancient trees are struggling to cope with the extreme weather events that are now becoming more common. And even if they survive these events, they can still be at risk from a sudden increase in strong sunlight if a large neighbouring tree blows down.

Ancient trees are most frequently located in forests and woodland, but can also be found in parks and even urban areas. Whatever the landscape, they are often all that remains of the past. Unfortunately, ancient trees are sometimes removed to make space for new construction projects. However, when they are allowed to remain as part of the new development, they can provide valuable clues to understanding the area’s history. A tree with roots that have been squashed or destroyed, for example, might be a sign of previous heavy pedestrian use of an old footpath. Sometimes, the scars on a tree can provide clues to the things it has experienced. An unhealthy tree can be evidence of where chemicals have been used on a nearby farm. Just like the lines on an old person’s face, an ancient tree’s appearance can tell the story of its life.

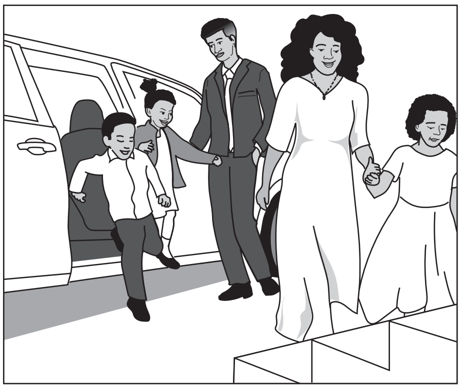
No matter where they are located, ancient trees are incredibly rich in wildlife. A huge range of creatures live in and around them, from small insects and birds to bats and foxes. However, if the tree isn’t protected from larger animals such as deer taking shelter underneath, the harm these animals can do over time can be fatal to the tree.

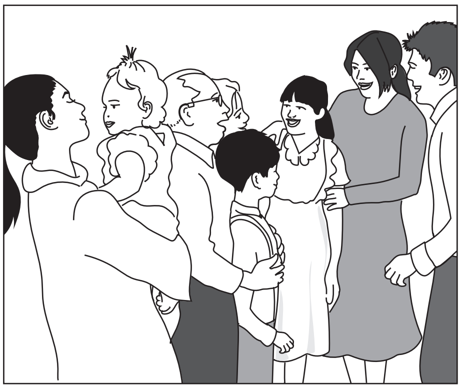
The first step in protecting our ancient trees is to know where they are. There is now an online database, where members of the public can search for the locations of these trees and add new ones to the existing list. What is also needed is better information on how to care for ancient trees. In the past, a lack of good forest management has proved deadly. And even today, one of the most common threats to ancient trees is when the amount of available light is limited by new trees starting to grow too close to them.

Ancient trees are spectacular and can teach us so much. It would be a great shame if they were not around for future generations to learn about and enjoy their beauty.

There are several things that can harm ancient trees. Firstly, damage can be caused by hazardous weather conditions and emerging pathogens. In addition, the use of chemicals on an adjacent farm and excessive foot traffic on an old walkway can both be fatal. Moreover, direct damage can be done by human actions such as poor forest management and uprooting ancient trees to make room for new construction projects. Not only sudden exposure to intense sunlight but also inadequate sunlight due to overcrowding of new trees can be harmful to these old trees. Finally, bigger animals such as deer that seek cover underneath can be detrimental to the ancient trees.

Exercise 5





13 You recently organised an event for your family to celebrate a special occasion.

Write an email to a friend telling them about this event.

In your email, you should:

- say what the special occasion was
- explain what you did to make the event memorable
- describe your family's reactions.

The pictures above may give you some ideas, and you can also use some ideas of your own.

Your email should be between 150 and 200 words long.

You will receive up to 8 marks for the content of your email, and up to 8 marks for the language used.

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Dear Yara,

I’m sorry I haven’t been in touch lately; my schedule was quite hectic. Anyways, buckle up because I’ve got some gripping news!

Do you remember Aunt Mai? She had a baby girl last week! She decided to hit two birds with one stone and combine a baby shower with a gender reveal party. And guess what! She’d put me in charge of organizing it! Never in a thousand years would I’ve thought that I’d be capable enough to throw an entire party!

I planned everything meticulously, so the party went as smoothly as possible. I decorated the place with lots of vibrant pink balloons and lots of colorful confetti. The buffet had everything from scrumptious cakes to mouthwatering pastry. I wanted the party to be even more indelible, so I decided to make guests compete and play games like tug of wars and water gun fights. I wish you were there!

Everyone was flabbergasted to see the decorations and food; the place was boisterous, full of energy and contentment. Aunt Mai was exceptionally ecstatic and had a wide grin on her face throughout the party. The guests were astounded when they found out that there were games to play too. Up until this day, Aunt Mai keeps thanking me and is very grateful. I’d say it was a huge success; everyone had the time of their life!

Anyways, I’ve got to hit the hay. Update me with any recent events happening in your life!

Lots of love,
your name

Exercise 6

14 You and your friends recently visited an amusement park where people can do lots of different outdoor activities.

You have decided to write a review about it for your school magazine.

Here are two comments from your friends:

It was really good value for money.

We couldn't find the amusement park at first.

Write a review for your school magazine, giving your views.

The comments above may give you some ideas, and you can also use some ideas of your own.

Your review should be between 150 and 200 words long.

You will receive up to 8 marks for the content of your review, and up to 8 marks for the language used.

Sky Zone Amusement Park

Do you love superfast rollercoasters and other exhilarating rides that make your hair stand on end? If so, then Sky Zone is a must-see. My friends and I visited it recently, and we were blown away!

Located in the bustling streets of Cairo, it is easily accessible from the city center. The first thing that will grab your attention is its enormous size! As you enter, you'll be warmly welcomed by the amiable staff, who will guide you to the front desk and provide you with the pricing details. From my experience, they are very polite and informative; they'll make you fall in love with the place immediately.

My friends and I were especially fascinated by the wide variety of rides this park offers: from more common ones such as rollercoasters and carousels to bizarre ones such as infinity falls, there is a ride for everyone. All the rides (including the adrenaline-inducing ones) have the highest safety standards and are well-maintained. In addition, cafes, restaurants and food stalls are all over the place, so you can enjoy mouth-watering food after a tiring day.

However, I must warn you: the place is absolutely a hive of commotion! It's extremely bustling, especially at the weekends.

I strongly recommend Sky Zone Park to anyone who wants to have an unforgettable experience whether alone, with friends or family. It's absolutely worth a visit.