

# Unit 4: Return to nature

**The story: Alex and Sam, who both run ‘green’ projects in their communities, enter for the Green Hero Award.**

## 1 I enjoy living here

Aim:	Students are able to describe the area in which they live.
Grammar:	revision of verb phrases which take the <i>-ing</i> -form / the <i>to</i> -infinitive
Lexis:	living conditions

**Lead-in:** Draw students’ attention to the two pictures and get them to work in pairs. Give them a few minutes to find and write down as many differences as they can find between the two pictures. Collect feedback as a class.

**a** Put learners in different groups or pairs than in the previous exercise. Some quick ways to create new pairings are:

- If students are sitting in rows, get the students in each alternate row to turn around and work with the person directly behind them.
- If they are sitting in a semi-circle formation or in rows, move a student from one end of the table to the other end and form new pairs.

Give students a few minutes to discuss which words they associate with each picture. Collect answers in plenary – is there any disagreement?

**Language info:** The difference between the words *landscape* and *scenery* is subtle, but it may be helpful to tell students that *scenery* is almost always used in a positive way (e.g. *lovely scenery*, *beautiful scenery*), while *landscape* can be either positive or negative.

**b** Learners work alone to choose words and phrases from 1a to describe their own neighbourhood. Get them to share their answers in small groups while you monitor for common language mistakes. Write these mistakes on the board after the activity and get the class to correct them for you.

- c** These sentence prompts are recycled from Unit 3 and require the use of either the *-ing*-form or the *to*-infinitive. Revise this with your students if necessary before they complete the sentences for their neighbourhood and share their answers in a small group. As always, be sensitive to what you know of your students' living situations.

## 2 I've been doing some research

Aim:	Students are able to talk about activities they have been doing for a certain length of time.
Grammar:	present perfect continuous
Lexis:	–

**Lead-in:** Write the section heading, *I've been doing some research*, on the board and get the class to read it out in chorus. Erase one of the words and get them to read out the full sentence again. Keep removing words and getting the class to say the full sentence until there are no words left on the board.

**Teaching tip:** By learning this phrase off by heart, students will be able to 'chunk' the present perfect continuous structure as one unit, making it more familiar to them and easier to use when they need it.

- a** This unit's storyline introduces some new ideas which learners could struggle with. To support learners, the new concepts are broken down and presented in small steps. Essentially, Sam and Alex have entered their environmental projects into an award scheme organised by their local government. Here, the general concept of 'green' projects is introduced. The following steps will provide more details about the story.

Learners discuss the three questions in 2a in small groups. Alternatively, if you feel that your students may struggle with the concept of a 'green' project, you could discuss the first question in plenary. Invite a selection of students to share their group's answers.

- b** Start this step with books closed.

To introduce learners to the idea of a Green Hero Award, you may wish to write *The Oscars* on the board and ask a student to describe what this means. Encourage students to then work in groups to consider other

award schemes they know in different areas – work, local area, media. Can they describe them in English?

Write the question *What do you think a ‘green hero’ does?* on the board. Give students a minute to write an answer. Then get them to open their books at Page 52 and compare the magazine advert with their ideas.

**Cultural info:** Unlike Germany, where government services are planned on an extremely local level, England and Wales are split into larger administrative areas called counties. The county council is responsible for things such as transport, social care, education and waste management.

**Key:** A green hero is someone who brings nature back to an area in his or her community, e.g. by planting a garden.

- c** The question *What does Robyn do?* in this section can be directly contrasted with the question *What has Robyn been doing?* in 2d, if later required. However, it may be worth checking now that learners understand the use of the present simple to refer to a fact (like a job), as there is often still confusion between the meaning of the present simple and the present continuous at this level. So after introducing the question *What does Robyn do?*, ask a student (who you know to be working): “What do you do?” If necessary, clearly but gently correct: “No, not *what are you doing* but *what do you do? I am a teacher.*” Ask this question to a variety of students, being mindful of any difficult employment situations students may have.

Learners then read the email, answering the two questions on their own before comparing their ideas with a partner.

**Language info:** All three names in this exercise are in theory unisex. Alex can be short for Alexander (m) or Alexandra (f), Sam is the short form of both Samuel (m) and Samantha (f), and Robyn is the female version of Robin.

**Key:** (possible answers) Robyn is a journalist who writes for the magazine *Home@Garden*. She is writing to Alex and Sam because she wants to interview them for an article.

- d** Ask students, “How long has Robyn been writing articles for the magazine?” (The answer is in the email they just read in 2c.) Elicit the correct answer as a full sentence: “She’s been writing articles for the magazine for

six years.” Remind students that this is the same structure as the phrase they memorised at the beginning of this section, and draw their attention to the grammar box below the task. They should complete the exercise on their own. They can then compare their answers with a partner before checking them in plenary.

**Key: 2** She’s been doing research on green projects recently. **3** She’s been planning the award for over two years. **4** She’s been trying to organise an interview since last week.

**Language info:** *She’s* can be the short form for either *she is* or *she has*. Ensure students understand that here, it is short for *she has*.

- e** Before beginning the game, you may wish to clarify the meaning/usage of the present perfect continuous with your students. The present perfect continuous focuses on an action (what you have *been doing* for a continuous period of time), not the result (what you have *done* by the end of a period of time). You can contrast two sentences to show the difference:

“I hate doing my self-employed tax return – it takes so long! When my husband asks how my day has been, I frown and say, ‘Horrible! *I’ve been doing* my tax return since early this morning and it’s still not finished!’ Eventually, he asks another day and I can say, ‘Hallelujah, *I’ve done* my tax return! No more stress for a year! Wine?’”

If there is significant confusion, it may be worth doing the EP exercises on Pages 58–59 before continuing with the game.

This game follows the pattern of the children’s game “Mrs Brown’s Basket” (*Ich packe meinen Koffer*).

Get learners to first complete the sentence *I’ve been ... for about a year* for themselves, writing down their answer. Ask the student nearest to you to say his sentence. Then repeat his sentence in the third person and add your sentence. Motion to a third student: He should say the first student’s sentence and your sentence in the third person and then add his own. How long can the class keep going?

Repeat the game with the second, third and fourth sentence prompts.

**Teaching tip:** There is likely to still be confusion on the difference between the present perfect simple and the present perfect continuous. If a student uses an inappropriate verb in the continuous, use your discretion whether or not to correct, depending on how strong the student's English skills are. There is also immense value in just repeating the structure of this tense, even if the meaning is not yet entirely clear, as this enables the brain to become familiar with and 'chunk' the correct structure.

- f** Learners work together in pairs as per the example to see if they can remember the activities and the length of time their classmates have been doing them. Which pair can correctly remember the most? Encourage students to ask their classmates questions after the activity to check their answers (*Waltraud, how long have you been going skydiving? One year or five years?*).
- g** Learners may wish to prepare this exercise in writing. Give an example from your own life, modelling that in addition to the present perfect continuous (*I've been knitting for about a year*), students will also need to use other tenses, such as the past simple (*I started because I wanted to make a birthday gift for my friend*), the present simple (*I really enjoy it*) or even the present continuous (*At the moment I'm working on a knitted bikini*).

Monitor while students are talking, making a note of any common errors to go over after the activity.

Learners benefit from repeating this type of exercise several times. This gives them an immediate opportunity to correct any errors they have become aware of during their last attempt, and also gives them the chance to improve their spoken expression even further. Repeat the exercise two or three times with new groups or pairs.

**Further practice:** *Go for it! B1 Teacher's Resource Book*, Unit 4, Activity 1

### 3 I moved here for the fresh air

Aim:	Students are able to find the main points in a short article and relay these to someone else.
Grammar:	conjunctions
Lexis:	nature