

2

Away from it all!



Look at the pictures on this page. They show some people's favourite places.

What makes these places attractive?

How would you describe these places to someone else?

What you will do

This unit is about the power of descriptive language. You will practise some of the skills covered in earlier units, e.g. skimming, scanning, using adjectives and planning paragraphs. Below are a list of skills you will cover in this unit. Which are the most useful for you? Tick the boxes.

Listening and speaking

Skill

- ☐ Listening to other people's descriptions
- ☐ Speaking clearly in different situations

Skill code

SLlr/L1.1, 2

SLc/L1.1

Reading and writing

Skill

- ☐ Reading and understanding descriptive texts
- ☐ Planning, drafting and writing a continuous text
- ☐ Writing good complete sentences with correct punctuation
- ☐ Spelling correctly

Skill code

Rt/L1.1, 2, 3; Rs/L1.2; Rw/L1.1, 2, 3

Wt/L1.1, 2, 3, 4, 6

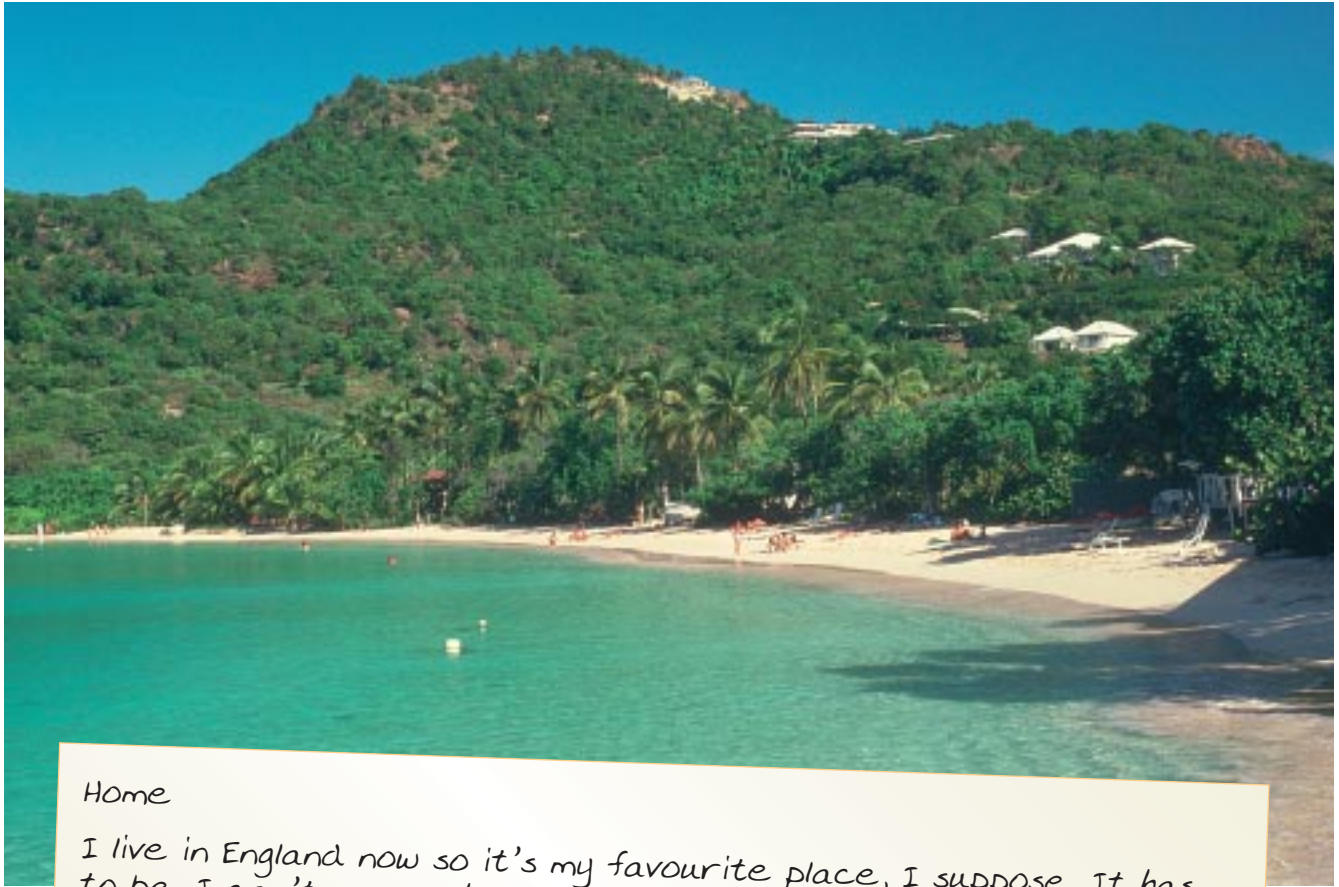
Ws/L1.1, 2, 3; Rs/L1.1, 2

Ww/L1.1

Project work

At the end of this unit you will plan, draft, write your own descriptive text and speak about your favourite place.

Jamaica



Home

I live in England now so it's my favourite place, I suppose. It has to be. I can't go anywhere else.

But sometimes - sometimes at night in the winter - when I'm sitting so close to the gas fire that my knees burn - I remember my home - my first home where the sun shines all the time and where the coconut trees reach to the skies.

Jamaica was where I was born and it was Jamaica that broke my heart when I left...



Activity A • Listening and speaking

You are going to listen to an audio clip and follow the script above about London and Jamaica, called 'Home'.

- 1 What do you think the text will be about? What kind of things do you think the writer will describe?

Discuss in your group.

- 2 Listen to audio clip 1, and follow the text, 'Home'.
- 3 Why do you think the writer wrote the piece? What is the writer telling you?
- 4 The writer uses words and phrases to describe London and Jamaica and to make the text more interesting. Does this make you want to listen and hear her story? Does this help you remember what happened?
Do you need to listen to the whole story to get the full meaning?



Activity B • Writing

Listen to the audio clip 'Home' and follow the script again.

- 1 What do you remember of what you heard? Highlight on the script the key points that help you.
- 2 Look at the following questions and discuss the answers with another person.
- 3 When you have finished your discussion, record your answers using full sentences.

Here is an example of how to answer a question.

Question: What does the speaker feel about Jamaica?

Answer: **The speaker loves Jamaica.**



- 4 Can you recall two main facts about the speaker in the passage?
- 5 What was the speaker told about London before she went there?
- 6 In what way was London different from Jamaica?
- 7 Discuss what you have learnt about **why** the speaker feels as she does about Jamaica?



Activity C • Listening

- 1 Listen to the audio clip 'Home' again and follow the text in the script.
- 2 As you listen to the words and phrases that describe Jamaica, group them under two headings: those that give information about Jamaica and those that reveal the narrator's attitude to Jamaica.
- 3 In what way do they make the text more interesting?
- 4 What words or phrases make you picture Jamaica? Write your favourite descriptive words on a separate sheet of paper.

A place for tourists

Listen to the audio clip and follow the script at the end of this unit.



Activity A • Listening and reading

Listen to audio clip 2 and follow the script, 'Jamaica'. Highlight any unfamiliar words and check their meaning. Some of these words are special to the way English is used in Jamaica and you will not find them in your dictionary. Discuss the meaning of any different words you find in your group.



Answer the following questions as a group:

- 1 Does the title of the text give you a clue about the things the writer describes?
- 2 How does the writer feel about Jamaica?
- 3 Record your comments on the whiteboard. Look at unfamiliar words that may not be in the dictionary.

Activity B • Reading and writing

Paragraphs are used to break up text so that it is easier to understand. Paragraphs group the text into different parts or topics. Look at the text, 'Jamaica', again. Working with another learner, look at the use of paragraphs in the text. Discuss the main points of each paragraph. Write the general theme against the paragraph number.

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| 1 | 4 |
| 2 | 5 |
| 3 | |

Paragraphs

A paragraph is usually made up of two or more sentences. Usually one sentence introduces the topic of the paragraph: this is sometimes called the topic sentence because it tells you what the paragraph is about. The remaining sentences give specific information and examples relating to the topic.

In London I was frozen. I stuffed my gloved hands into my pockets to keep them warm but the soles of my feet were turning to blocks of ice. Nothing I had ever been told in Jamaica had prepared me for this.

The topic sentence tells you how the writer hated the cold weather. The rest of the paragraph builds on this theme by giving examples and further information.

Look at the following paragraph from the text.

Look at the first line of the paragraph: 'For those tourists who like to explore, they will be fascinated and amazed when they venture inland.'

It introduces the paragraph by giving a general statement about the topic – what the island has to offer if you like to explore.

The next sentences give more information about places you can explore: they build on the topic.

Following this pattern, write a paragraph about a place you would like to describe to someone.

For those tourists who like to explore, they will be fascinated and amazed when they venture inland. The centre of the island is mostly mountainous and wooded, with small mining towns and villages here and there. The famous Cockpit Country in the north-west is an unusual place with scattered hills and deep sinkholes, while the central mountain range, dominated by the 7,402 foot Blue Mountain, divides the south coast of the island from the north and extends from Half Moon Bay to Portland.



Activity C • Reading and writing

Read and discuss the structure of the text, 'Jamaica'. Listen to the audio clip again if you want to.

You are going to look at how the content builds up throughout the piece.

In pairs, discuss the following questions and write down the reasons for your answers. Discuss your answers and reasons with the whole group and display comments on the board.

In what way does the first sentence link to the title?	
Does the first paragraph give a good introduction? If yes, what makes it good?	
In the second and third paragraphs: Do the first sentences of each paragraph give a general statement about the paragraph? Do the sentences that follow add information? What kind of information?	
How does the text build to the final paragraph?	
How does the writer finish the text? Is it a good conclusion? Why do you think so?	

Does it really look like this?

Activity A • Reading

Look at the audio scripts of 'Home' and 'Jamaica' again and recall what the writers tell you about Jamaica.

The information given can be placed under the headings 'subjective' and 'objective'.

Here are some examples of each.

Subjective features	<p>In Jamaica, the sun shone into our hearts.</p> <p>The thing about Jamaica was the light. It turned the air gold.</p> <p>It lit us all up somehow as if the whole island were one big fire burning and spraying its sparks up to the stars.</p> <p>The sand would be as smooth again as the carpet of paradise.</p>
Objective features	<p>Jamaica stretches 146 miles from east to west.</p> <p>The centre of the island is mostly mountainous and wooded, with small mining towns and villages here and there. The famous Cockpit Country in the north west is an unusual place with scattered hills and deep sinkholes, while the central mountain range, dominated by the 7,402 foot Blue Mountain, divides the south coast of the island from the north and extends from Half Moon Bay to Portland.</p>

- 1 Discuss these examples with your group and agree what is meant by 'subjective' and 'objective'.
- 2 With another person, look at the texts again and find the phrases that make each text subjective or objective. Give examples of the language the writer has used.
- 3 As a group, write examples under the two headings on a whiteboard.

Activity B • Writing

- 1 Write an objective sentence about where you live.
- 2 Write a subjective sentence about where you live.
- 3 Discuss your sentences with another learner.

Subjective language

Subjective language tells us the writer's personal feelings about something.

e.g. The fronds of coconut trees rustled sadly to me.

You really must come and visit!

Activity A • Speaking

Discuss as a group the two texts 'Home' and 'Jamaica'. Which passage makes Jamaica sound more attractive to you? Discuss the reasons for your choice based on the features of language used in each text.

Activity B • Writing

Descriptive writing

When you write to describe, your aim is to create experiences, sensations and feelings in the reader's mind.

In the passage 'Home', the writer uses descriptive language to paint a picture of Jamaica.

- 1 Highlight the following examples of descriptive language in the text. Find more examples of your own.

Adjectives	'golden light'	'finest clothes'	'big fire'
Figures of speech	'gold as the sun'	'It lit us all up'	

- 2 Write a paragraph in which you describe a place, which might be wonderful or awful.
- 3 Use a range of appropriate adjectives and figures of speech to help your description.

Persuasive writing

In persuasive writing, the aim is to make the reader believe something or do something. For example, a holiday brochure is intended to make you want to go and visit the places featured in it. Read the passage 'Jamaica' again.

In the passage, the writer uses persuasive features to make you want to go to Jamaica.

- 1 Highlight the following examples of persuasive writing in the text. Find more examples of your own.

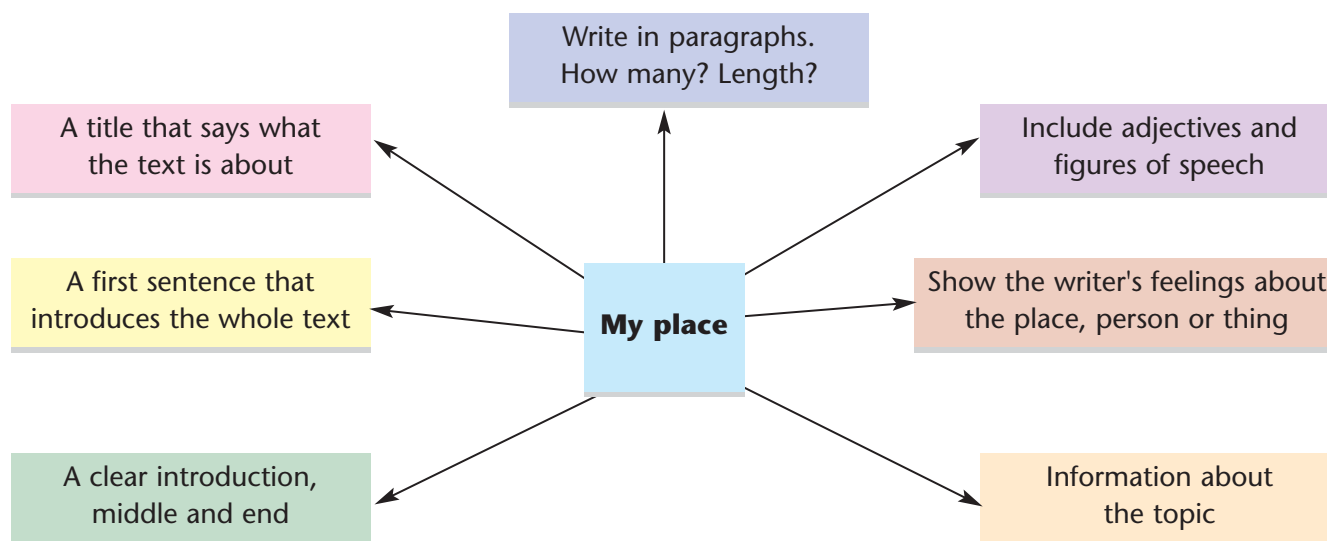
Exaggeration for emphasis	marvellous, perfect
Emotive language – used to convey the writer's feelings	overwhelmed, magical
Rhetorical questions – the question is written as if only one answer is possible; you are not expected to answer	Could you ever consider going anywhere else for the perfect holiday? Would you ever want to visit anywhere else?
Groups of ideas – ideas linked together in groups to give maximum impact	untouched villages, the fresh and natural cuisine and the warm hospitality of local people, the marvellous vistas and sense of space

- 2 Write two or more paragraphs in which you try to persuade a friend to come and join you for a holiday.
- 3 When you have written your paragraphs, give them to another learner to read. Have you managed to describe or persuade in your writing?

Describing places

You are going to build up your own piece of descriptive writing about a place you know well.

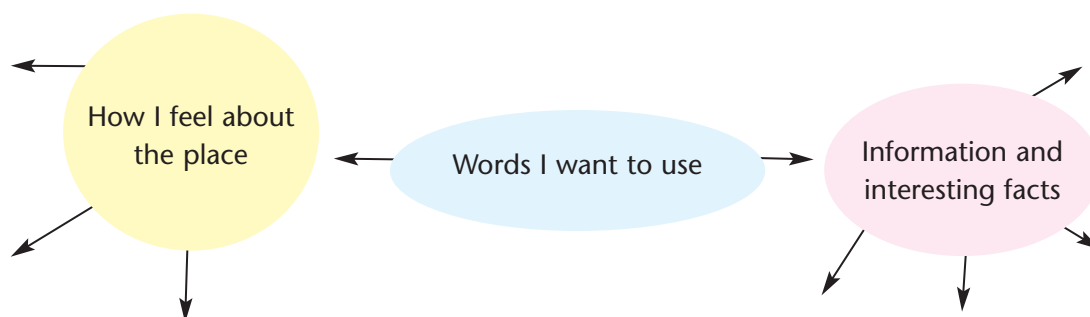
Put into your writing the things you have worked on in the unit so far.



Activity A • Writing

- 1 Plan your ideas for writing each section of the text. Use the guidelines above.
- 2 What will the title be? Will you have any other headings? Will you use bold print?
- 3 How will you introduce the place? Where is it and what is it called?
- 4 What information will you need to give about the place, people and interesting facts?
- 5 How will you build up your writing?

Plan each section of your writing. Use a spidergram for words you want to use.





Activity B • Writing

You now need to think about how many paragraphs you are going to write. You need at least:

Introduction – one paragraph

Middle – at least three paragraphs

Conclusion – one paragraph

- 1 You should have at least five paragraphs.
- 2 What will they be about?

For each paragraph you will need to:

Plan what it is about
Explain
Include examples

- 1 Draft an outline for each of your paragraphs using the model above.
Draft your paragraphs.
Does the first paragraph give a good introduction?
Does the first line link to the title?
Have you thought about the importance of the first sentence?
Do the other sentences in the paragraph give additional information?
Does the final paragraph round off or finish your description?
- 2 Read your paragraphs. Note down any ideas you have to make your writing more powerful. Think about images, sounds, smells or feelings you could include. Listen to the audio clips again and look through leaflets and brochures to give you extra ideas.
- 3 Write your paragraphs.
- 4 Check your spellings, verbs and tenses, capital letters, commas and full stops. Work with another person and read each other's work. Correct and re-draft your work. Then ask the other person to check your work for you a second time or until you are satisfied with the finished piece of writing.



Editing your text

When you speak, you do not have to punctuate what you say because the way in which you pause is intended to help a listener make sense of what you say. When you write, you need to use punctuation to make your meaning clear.



Activity A • Reading

Checking punctuation

- 1 Read the paragraphs with another person.
- 2 Stop at the end of each paragraph. Go back and highlight the full stops.
- 3 Check each of your sentences. Is a full stop the correct punctuation mark in each case?

Activity B • Reading

Checking grammar

When you edit your writing, it is important to check that the text has been written in the same tense throughout.

- 1 Look again at your paragraphs.
- 2 Underline or highlight the main verbs in each.
- 3 Check that the verb agrees with the subject and that you have kept to the same tense.

Sentences

Sentences end with a full stop, a question mark or an exclamation mark.

They do not end with a **comma**.

Sentences express a complete thought.
Write:

It was a shock to come to London. I knew it would be cold.

Do not write:

It was a shock to come to London, I knew it would be cold.

Use a comma only if you use a linking word as well.

It was a shock to come to London, where I knew it would be cold.

Verb and subject agreement

A verb can **change** to show the **tense** or to **agree with the subject**.

The subject can be singular or plural and often 'does the action' of the verb.

The subject of the sentence determines the form of the verb.

The **island** **offers** a feast of contrasts. [singular]

The **islands** **offer** a feast of contrasts. [plural]

Present

George (subject) **sells** (verb) holidays

People **stay** indoors

Past

George (subject) **sold** (verb) holidays

People **stayed** indoors

Descriptive and persuasive writing is often written in the present and past tense.

Stories are usually told in the past tense.

A place you know well

Activity A • Listening and speaking

What do you find difficult about speaking in front of people? How easy would it be for you to read out your work to someone else or to describe where you have been, or what you have done? As a group, write your comments on the board.



Activity B • Listening and speaking

Listen to audio clips 3 and 4. They are subjective and objective descriptions of a home and a house.

Listen to the speakers' voices and hear how they try to make you imagine the scene. The following are features of speech that the speaker used.

As a group, discuss what the following terms mean:

Pause	Stop for a moment to give impact to something funny you have said or to emphasise a picture you have described.
Volume	
Clarity	
Pace	
Varied tone	
Accent	

Are there any other features of speech that the speakers used? Discuss these and add them to the list above.

Activity C • Speaking

You are going to read your descriptive piece to another learner. Read through your descriptive piece and underline or highlight where you might use different features of speech to emphasise what you have written. Practise reading your text clearly at an appropriate pace and volume. Read your piece to another learner. If you feel confident, read your descriptive piece to a small group.

DUE TO THE RESOLUTION
THIS IMAGE CAN ONLY
BE USED AT THIS SIZE



Spelling

Activity A • Reading

- 1 Look at these two paragraphs. One is in the **present tense** and one is in the past tense.
- 2 Underline or highlight the verbs in each.

George sells holidays for a living. He tells everyone who asks that he can fix them up in the best hotels in the country. He thinks that no other tour operator can offer bargains like his. He seeks new accommodation all the time, for which people gladly pay him large sums of money. He finds himself to be a very successful businessperson.



bar gain

George sold holidays for a living. He told everyone who asked that he could fix them up in the best hotels in the country. He thought that no other tour operator could offer bargains like

his. He sought new accommodation all the time, for which people gladly paid him large sums of money. He found himself to be a very successful businessperson.

- 1 Discuss what you understand by a **regular** and **irregular** past tense verb.
- 2 Put some examples on the whiteboard. You may want to keep a note of these to use again.

Activity B • Reading and writing

- 1 Re-read the paragraphs you have written.
- 2 Highlight the verbs you have used that have irregular endings.
- 3 On a separate sheet of paper, write the verbs you would like to be able to spell.

Past tense verbs

- Note that 'asks' in the first passage becomes 'asked' in the second. The word 'asked' is a regular past tense verb.
- The other verbs are irregular. You have to learn how to spell each one.



Activity C • Reading and writing

Look at the spelling of each past tense verb in your chosen words. Talk to another person about what is unusual or difficult about these spellings. As a group, and working with your teacher, use the whiteboard to note the different ways you can remember spellings. They will include:

words within words

patterns of words

exaggerated
pronunciation

mnemonics

p+aid = paid

p+aid s+aid

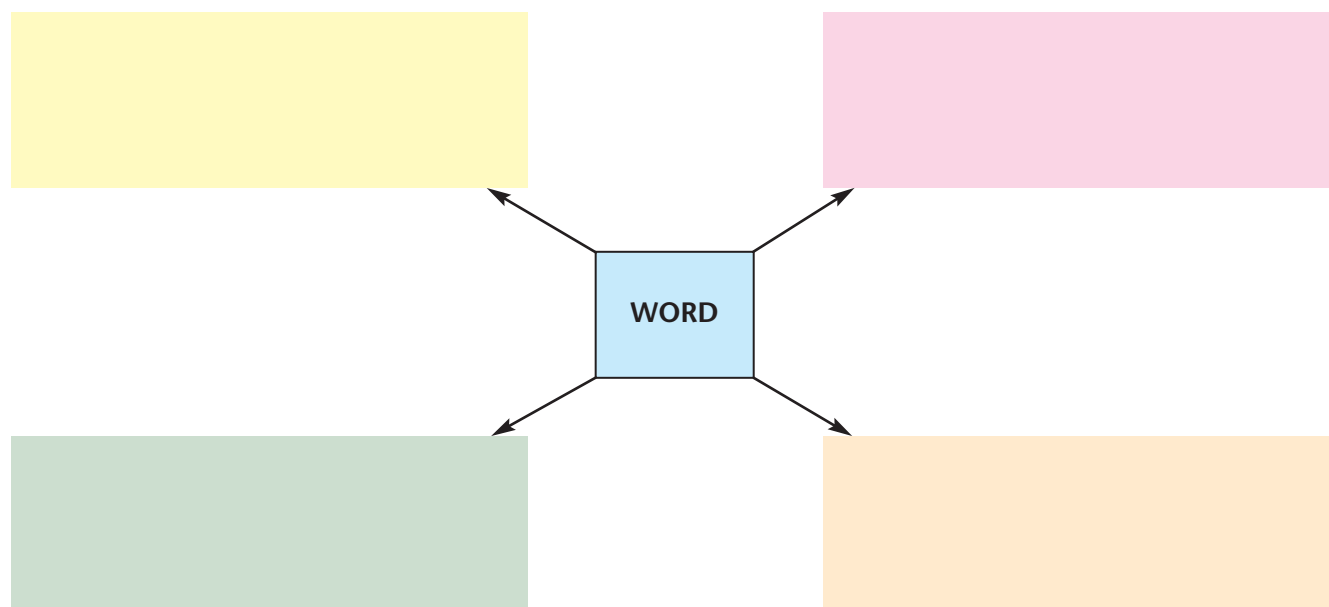
kn+ock

So 'u' go home
tonight → sought

Your teacher will explain what these terms mean and how you can use them in your spelling work.

As a group and with your teacher, find examples of each method and put them on the whiteboard.

Using the spidergram below and the ways of remembering spellings written on the whiteboard, put different ways to remember your chosen word in each box.



Use the look, say, cover, write, check method to see whether you can remember how to spell the word using your preferred way.

For each word

Look at each word – close your eyes and picture the word

Say each word aloud

Cover the word

Write the word and say it as you write it

Check the word letter by letter

Repeat the stages until you can spell the word correctly.



Integrated skills

Away from it all!

- 1 With the help of your teacher, choose any continuous descriptive passage of more than three paragraphs. Read the passage and look up essential words in the dictionary. Summarise the main points.
- 2 Choose a place you would like to write about. You may write in a subjective or objective style. Here are some ideas.
 - the playground or local park from your childhood
 - a letter to a friend in another country telling them about where you live
 - a travel story about a holiday place you have been to or would like to visit after reading about it in a brochure
 - a college newspaper story describing a local festival or event – prepare a Word document and e-mail it to the editor.
- 3 Use the exemplar passage you have summarised to help you plan and draft your written description. Include essential information and plan for a continuous, descriptive text.
- 4 Write the text you have planned. Aim to convey to readers your enjoyment of the place. Use any features of text to help you and illustrate your text with visual images if you wish.

Look for ideas in:

- local newspapers
- a holiday brochure
- a travel story from a magazine
- a holiday programme.

You may find inspiration and ideas for your writing plan from:

- family holiday photographs
- the television
- a library or bookshop
- the Internet
- a travel agent.

- 5 Make a list of all the important things you should look for and check when you are editing a piece of text. Use this as a checklist to edit another learner's descriptive text.
- 6 Give feedback on your editing. Give all the positives first then follow with your constructive comments for improving the text.
- 7 In class divide into pairs. Read your text aloud to another person. As a pair, discuss the place you have described. Talk about how well the description persuaded the listener to share the speaker's enjoyment of the place.



Check it

Using descriptive language

- 1 Read the following piece of text.

How would you expand it using adjectives, figures of speech, and descriptions of sounds and smells?

Woody Glen House looks large and rambling, like an L-shape on its side. From the enormous dining room, French windows open on to a garden, which acts as a grass exercise area. The bedrooms sit at the front of the building. The staff live at the back. As a home for prisoners, the house looks very beautiful. From the upstairs windows, the inmates can glimpse the sea and, in the evenings, the sunset seems magnificent. I felt happy to be there and believed in the end of my prison sentence at last.

- 2 Write a paragraph describing Woody Glen House as if you were a prisoner in the house.

Punctuation

- 1 Highlight the commas in the following text. Punctuate the text by using full stops for the end of sentences and commas where they are needed. Change letters to capitals after full stops.

The bazaar was amazing, there were so many people: turban makers, carpet sellers, silver merchants and leather workers, they shouted all day long, the noise got louder and louder during the day.

Paragraphs

The ten words below are headings for paragraphs. Choose five words you would use to describe a local carnival or fair. Number the words from 1–5 in the order you would write about them.

food farms trains people costumes
music animals shops cars children

- 1 Write a descriptive paragraph using each of the five words as the focus of each paragraph.
- 2 Edit and proof-read your paragraph.



How am I doing?

Now look back at the skills listed on page 1.

Then finish the sentences below.

I am confident with

.....
.....

I need more practice with

.....
.....
.....



Answers

Page 3 Activity B

- 4 Two from: The speaker lives in London. She was born in Jamaica. She left Jamaica when she was fourteen.
- 5 The speaker was told the streets of London were made of gold. She was told London would welcome her with open arms. She was told it would be cold in London.
- 6 London was cold, wet unfriendly and colourless. Jamaica was sunny, warm, friendly and colourful.
- 7 The speaker loves Jamaica because it is her home. She loves the sunshine and the colours. She loves the outdoor life and the friendly people. She also loves the plants and the beach.

Page 4 Activity B

- 1 A brief geography of Jamaica
- 2 Jamaica's coasts
- 3 Inland Jamaica
- 4 Jamaica's fruit and vegetables
- 5 Jamaica's tourism

Page 12 Activity A

George **sells** holidays for a living. He **tells** everyone who **asks** that he **can** fix them up in the best hotels in the country. He **thinks** that no other tour operator **can** offer bargains like his. He **seeks** new accommodation all the time, for which people gladly **pay** him large sums of money. He **finds** himself to be a very successful businessperson.

George **sold** holidays for a living. He **told** everyone who **asked** that he **could** fix them up in the best hotels in the country. He **thought** that no other tour operator **could** offer bargains like his. He **sought** new accommodation all the time, for which people gladly **paid** him large sums of money. He **found** himself to be a very successful businessperson.

Page 15 Activity B

- 1 The bazaar was amazing. There were so many people: turban makers, carpet sellers, silver merchants and leather workers. They shouted all day long. The noise got louder and louder during the day



Audio scripts

Page 2 Activity A Audio script 1

This piece of text is written by a student so there may be punctuation errors.

Home

I live in England now so it's my favourite place, I suppose. It has to be. I can't go nowhere else.

But sometimes – sometimes at night in the winter – when I'm sitting so close to that gas fire that my knees burn – I remember my home – my first home where the sun do shine all the time and where the coconut trees reach to the skies.

Jamaica was where I was born and it was Jamaica broke my heart when I left.

I was fourteen years old when they gave me that ticket to London to make my fortune. London, they said, would welcome me with open arms – a good, clever girl like me. Well I didn't see no open arms. When I crept off that boat on the English shore one dark, wet, evil night, London's arms were tied behind her back and there was no unloosing them. It wasn't like Jamaica. Now I've grown used to the difference and there's nothing like habit to make you feel at home. But the streets of London ain't paved with gold whatever they may say.

The thing about Jamaica was the light. It turned the air gold. And there's nothing like golden light for making you dress up and have a ball. We used to wear our finest clothes in red and green and peacock feathers and that was just to saunter down the road and see what was coming. Colour breeds colour and Jamaica was about as colourful as you can get, what with the sea and the sky and the birds and the people. It lit us all up somehow as if the whole island were one big fire burning and spraying its sparks up to the stars.

Everyone was out all the time. Life was lived in the open air, whether it was tethering the goats and feeding the chickens or just walking between the plantains and the sugar canes enjoying the shade. In my family we went to Church or to each other's houses, anywhere to be out of doors and parading our skins. Everything was warm and open and friendly.

It was a shock to come to London. I knew it would be cold. My Dad had sent me two grey wool jumpers for the journey; I'd never worn a jumper before. They

covered me up and I didn't like it. "Will it really be cold?" I asked. "As cold as mango juice," they said.

That first winter I nearly died. Then came the summer. One day I found myself wearing two jumpers, a coat, two scarves and a pair of mittens. It was June. I couldn't get used to it.

I kept thinking of my hammock slung between the banana trees at the end of our plot, of our little zinc-covered house and the rich smell of palm trees overlaid with ripening fruit. I remembered running with bare feet across the sand, then turning to catch the sneaky Caribbean sea washing away my foot holes as if they had never been. The sand would be as smooth again as the carpet of paradise. I wondered if the fruit Eve gave Adam was after all a mango, not an apple.

It's cold in London. People stay indoors. On the streets they pass each other by without a glance.

In Jamaica, the sun shone into our hearts. It's a pity no-one looks at me in London because if they did they'd see the sun shining from me. It's the gift from Jamaica: the warmth in my heart.

Page 4 Activity A Audio script 2

Jamaica

Jamaica is one of the most beautiful countries in the Caribbean Sea, attracting thousands of visitors throughout the year. It stretches 146 miles from east to west and is 550 miles north of the Panama Canal and 700 miles south of Miami. Its name comes from the Arawak word, 'Xaymaca', meaning 'land of wood and water'. With its waterfalls and springs, rivers and streams flowing from the forests on the mountains to the fertile plains, Jamaica has one of the richest and most varied landscapes in the region.

The island's stunning coastline offers a feast of delights. The north coast, with its popular resorts of Montego Bay, Runaway Bay, Ocho Rios and Port Antonio, has fine coral beaches and rich farmland where sugar cane, coconuts and citrus fruits are grown. On the western tip of the island is Negril, once a remote, boggy outpost but now a beach lover's paradise, and the southern region of the island offer a rugged coastline, where majestic mountains plunge into the sea.

For those tourists who like to explore, they will be fascinated and amazed when they venture inland.



The centre of the island is mostly mountainous and wooded, with small mining towns and villages here and there. The famous Cockpit Country in the north-west is an unusual place with scattered hills and deep sinkholes, while the central mountain range, dominated by the 7,402 foot Blue Mountain, divides the south coast of the island from the north and extends from Half Moon Bay to Portland.

Jamaica's great variety of landscape and sunny climate allow almost anything to grow. Visitors can step into a country market and see a vast array of tropical fruits and vegetables with names such as: callaloo, dasheen, soursop, breadfruit, cho-cho, and ackee otaheiti apple. They can also see – and eat or drink – Jamaica's main exports such as sugar, citrus fruits, bananas, spices, rum and world-famous Blue Mountain coffee.

Jamaica is a perfect holiday destination. Visitors are always overwhelmed by the ever-changing landscape, the untouched villages, the fresh and natural cuisine and the warm hospitality of local people. Would you ever want to visit anywhere else? Most important of all, Jamaica welcomes tourists. Hotels, guesthouses and beachside apartments grow in number by the year but never seem to spoil the marvellous vistas and sense of space. The result is truly magical. Could you ever consider going anywhere else for the perfect holiday?

Page 11 *Activity B* Audio script 3

Home for me was all bricks and concrete. The back yard had the remains of an old outdoor toilet and there was evidence of a half-demolished air raid shelter from the war. A gate from the back yard led out to the lane, which ran behind our houses. We played football there, and cricket in the summer, though it was filled with dog mess and rotting rubbish. We went there every summer night and often in the winter too, when the air smelt of fireworks and chestnuts, and when smoke hung in the air like frozen breath.

My home wasn't posh, or even clean sometimes, but it was warm in winter, when it smelt of hot soup and toast and sausages on the grill. We had one really old sofa and a couple of armchairs with broken springs. The armchairs belonged to our mum and dad. The sofa was for us and there we stayed, making the most of the fire and the warmth of other bodies, until our dad remembered we were there and sent us to bed.

Our bed filled the room to bursting. We slept there – the boys – while the girls were packed into an even smaller room with the baby. There was always a baby! I would sleep, sandwiched between my two older brothers, my nostrils filled with the scent of their hair and the sweet aroma of forbidden bubble gum.

Our home was crowded but cosy and I could imagine no other way of living. Perhaps that was what made it so special: knowing nothing better. When you know nothing else, the place you are in seems like the whole world. I've visited lots of places since but none of them compare with home. It was part of me and I was part of it. That's something you can never replace, don't you think?

Page 11 *Activity B* Audio script 4

Lot 20, ladies and gentlemen, is a small Victorian terraced house in Didsbury. The house has come up for auction because of the previous owner's default on the mortgage.

The house is a beautifully maintained three-bedroom property with bathroom, kitchen, cellar and downstairs toilet. The front door opens into a narrow hallway with tiled floor. From the hallway, a door leads into a neat well-proportioned lounge and dining room, the original dividing wall having been removed. The lounge has the luxury of a fitted carpet, while the dining area has a genuine hard wood floor. A fireplace with marble surround is decorative, though rarely used because the entire house benefits from an excellent gas central heating system.

A fully fitted kitchen, with ample space for all utilities, lies between the hall and the rear exit to the small walled garden. Mature fruit trees and shrubs decorate the exterior.

On the first floor the master bedroom boasts teak-finish fitted wardrobes, while the second bedroom contains its original, neat fireplace. The third bedroom, though small, can house a single bed. A well-equipped, fully tiled bathroom completes the picture.

Finally stairs lead down from the hallway to a clean, dry cellar which is excellent for storage. The house is altogether a bargain!