

**Topics**

Day trips, unexplained sights.

**Aims**

- To complete a cloze exercise
- To listen for specific information
- To read for detailed information
- To speak about a photograph

**Age group**

14+

**Level**

A2-B1

**Time**

Approximately 40-60 minutes

**Materials**

1. [Audio file](#)
2. [Image](#) (Stairway to nowhere)

**Introduction**

This activity is designed to encourage students to develop their higher-level critical-thinking skills to speak about images. The activity is part of a package of materials, which includes audio to help students develop their listening skills. The focus in this class is on completing a cloze exercise, and on receptive skills practice.

**Procedure**

**Image bank: Stairway to nowhere (higher level)**

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| 1. | <p>Write the following on the board:</p> <p>Stairway to nowhere</p> <p>Explain to students that they are going to listen to a woman talking about a photo called 'Stairway to nowhere'.</p> <p>Ask them to draw a very quick picture of what they think the photo will look like.</p>   |
| 2. | <p>Either make a simple gap-fill exercise using the transcript or part of the transcript with about 12 gaps. For example, here. Alternatively, give students the ready-made gap-fill on the student worksheets.</p> <p><i>I took this photo when I was 1 _____ holiday with my friend Kate. We were in the British Lake District, 2 _____ the north-west of England. We were walking through a village called Hawkshead and we were looking 3 _____ the houses. Hawkshead's a very pretty village and a very famous English poet, William Wordsworth, 4 _____ to school there... We were walking through this village Hawkshead and I saw this funny, little staircase. Do you see it? Look at the stairs! 5 _____ are they going?</i></p> <p><i>And I laughed – my friend and I, we really laughed because, well, look! 6 _____ did they build that? You can see that there's 7 _____ door at the top? Where do they go to? Isn't it funny?</i></p> <p><i>So it started to think 8 _____ all these questions. How 9 _____ has it been there? Why did someone build it? You know, where did it go to, originally? Who built it? 10 _____ you imagine? You build these stairs and suddenly 'Oh! Where's the door? Oops'. I don't know, it's funny, I mean, did they 11 _____ the door? Perhaps there was a door originally, but someone took it away. But if that's true, why did they decide to keep the stairs? You know?</i></p> <p><i>So, yeah, it was a good holiday, I really enjoyed it and Hawkshead was really nice and very typical of the Lake District, so the photo's just a holiday photograph, but 12 _____ it's funny, it's one of those funny things you see on holiday sometimes, and when I look at it, I smile and I remember a great holiday.</i></p> |
| 3. | <p>Play the recording twice for students to listen and check, then check the answers with the whole class.</p>  |
| 4. | <p>Ask students to read the completed text and, working in pairs, work together to change the picture they drew in stage 1, showing what they think is in the photograph.</p>   |
| 5. | <p>Show students the original photograph. Discuss as a class focusing on the differences and similarities between their drawing and the original photograph.</p>  |

**Contributors**

Activity by: Fiona Mauchline  
Photograph by: Sandy Millin

**Transcript**

Sandy

I took this photo when I was on holiday with my friend Kate. We were in the British Lake District, in the north west of England. We were walking through a village called Hawkshead and we were looking at the houses. Hawkshead's a very pretty village and a very famous English poet, William Wordsworth, went to school there... and, um, yeah, we were walking through this village Hawkshead and I saw this (seems to be pointing) A funny, little staircase. Do you see it? Look at the stairs! (pause for effect) Where are they going? (pause again)

And, um, I laughed – my friend and I, we really laughed because, well, look! Why did they build that? You can see that there's no door at the top? Where do they go to?... Isn't it funny?

So it started to think, um, about all these questions. How long has it been there? Why did someone build it? You know, um, where did it go to, originally? Who built it? .... can you imagine? You build these stairs and suddenly 'Oh! Where's the door? Oops'. I don't know, it's funny, I mean, did they forget the door? Perhaps there was a door originally, but someone took it away. But if that's true, why did they decide to keep the stairs? You know?

So, yeah, it was a good holiday, I really enjoyed it and Hawkshead was really nice and very typical of the Lake District, so the photo's just a holiday photograph, but also it's funny, it's one of those funny things you see on holiday sometimes, and when I look at it, I smile and I remember a great holiday.