

EPISODE 47
LEVEL B2

READING COMPREHENSION



THE COUNTRYSIDE

Away from the **urban** (= relating to cities and towns) problems and the **hustle and bustle** of the city that we talked about in the last lesson you can find the peace and quiet of the countryside.

What appeals to many people about country life is the slower pace of life, having time for your family and friends and the feeling that you are not alone in the world; generally speaking, a strong **sense of community**. This, of course, can be at the same time a drawback - it's not that easy to get away from nosy neighbours and village **busybodies** and gossip.

You may also complain about having to travel a long way to the nearest school, shops or restaurants and being **cut off from** the cultural world of theatres, cinemas and museums. One thing cannot be denied, though. Living in the country, you breathe the air which is much more likely to be clear and unpolluted. You can enjoy looking at beautiful **scenery** of forests, meadows, fields and streams with its **wildlife**. And if you are keen on a healthy lifestyle, you can eat **home-grown** fruit and vegetables.

Country life may seem blissful, yet it may not be everyone's cup of tea or even may become a hell for a city animal.



More contexts for the new words:

- His **sense of duty** is admirable. He will do everything he has to and that's a priority. (= a strong feeling of / belief in the importance of duty)
- Before you get to the centre, you'll have to drive through a few miles of **urban sprawl**. (= a very large area of buildings, industries etc that has spread from a city into the countryside surrounding it, in an unattractive way)



EXERCISE 1

Write words and expressions next to their definitions.

1. = animals in their natural environment
2. = noisy activity
3. = feeling of being together
4. = view, landscape around you
5. = separated
6. = planted in the home garden
7. = a very inquisitive person
8. = connected with cities



EXERCISE 2

Match the question halves, then answer them.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. How do you get away from the hustle | a. from civilization? Why (not)? |
| 2. Is there a strong sense of (not)? | b. community in your neighborhood? Why |
| 3. Would you be able to live cut off | c. and bustle of the city? |

ENGLISH IN USE



Today I'd like to show you a very useful and common word, which is popular in spoken English. This word was used in the following sentence from the lesson:

*You may complain about having to travel a long way to the nearest school, shops or restaurants and being cut off from the cultural world of theatres, cinemas and museums. One thing cannot be denied, **though**.*

The word '**though**' in this context means more or less the same as 'but', yet it's always put at the end of a sentence while 'but' would link two sentences. Look at these examples:

*Economics is a difficult subject **but** it's interesting.
Economics is a difficult subject. It's interesting, **though**.*

'**Though**' can also be used as a conjunction, connecting two clauses or phrases, e.g.:

***Though** she was sleepy, she had difficulty falling asleep.*

In the sentence above, '**though**' could be substituted with 'although' or 'even though'.



IDIOM CLOSE-UP

- A/ Where would you like to spend your holiday?
- B/ In a quaint little village **OFF THE BEATEN TRACK**.

A place that is **off the beaten track** (or **path**) is far away from the places that people usually visit.

PHRASAL VERBS CLOSE-UP



1. When you **PLOUGH** something **INTO** something, you invest a lot of money in something in order to improve it or make it successful. A **plough** is a large farming tool with blades that digs the earth in fields so that seeds can be planted.

*Last year the government **ploughed** more than \$50 million **into** road repairs.
Stop **ploughing** your savings **into** renovating that old house!*

2. When you **RAKE** something **IN**, you earn or get a lot of money. A **rake** is a garden tool with a long handle and long pointed metal parts in a row at the bottom, used for collecting leaves, etc.

*He **rakes in** over \$200 000 a year.
Sue's really **raking it in** (= she's making a lot of money).*



EXERCISE 3

Use the pictures to complete the mini-story.

George is an IT specialist in a really big company, so he's really
(1)..... it in. But he's never wanted to live in the city centre.
So last year he bought a little cottage off the beaten (2)
..... Now he's
(3)..... all his money into making it liveable.

NEWS



FARMING SUBSIDIES

The government has finally announced a cut in the subsidies for farmers. For decades, farmers have enjoyed numerous privileges, such as ridiculously low social security **premiums**, early retirement **schemes**, or having their **produce** bought at prices greatly exceeding the market ones. Now the government has finally **bowed to popular pressure** and announced an end to this preferential treatment. Farmers will have to learn to function independently in a free market economy, and those who fail can no longer count on the tax payers to **bail them out**.

GLOSSARY

- **premium** - an amount of money that you pay regularly for an insurance policy
- **schemes** – programmes
- **produce** – fruit, vegetables, and other things that farmers grow
- **bow to popular pressure** – respond to people’s demands
- **to bail sb out** – to help sb with problems

KEY TO EXERCISES

Ex.1

1. wildlife
2. hustle and bustle
3. sense of community
4. scenery
5. cut off
6. home-grown
7. a busybody
8. urban

Ex.2

1. c
2. b
3. a

Ex.3

1. raking
2. track
3. ploughing