

Nature and Environment

1 Vocabulary building

Work in pairs. Read the phrases and use a dictionary to explain their meaning. Then, name as many places as possible that you have visited, seen or heard of which can be described using these words.

unique natural beauty

unspoilt and tranquil countryside

breathhtaking steep slopes

picturesque open-air museum

emerald valley

freshwater lake

vast open fields

dramatic rugged cliffs

rocky snow-covered mountains

spellbinding views

mysterious dense forest

grassy meadows

fast-flowing meandering rivers

magnificent historic monuments

cascading waterfall

Worksheet 1

Look at the picture and imagine you are there. Write down as many sentences as you can to describe your impressions of the place. Use some of the phrases above.



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2 Reading

Read the article and choose the best heading.

- Where I live
- The history of Bled
- A place to remember

Worksheet 2

It's probably true that we all have places from our past that have special memories for us. Sometimes, this might be because of a special event that took place there, for example our first family holiday, a time when we broke a leg or our first kiss. For some places, it might simply be the unique natural beauty that took our breath away.

One such place for me was Lake Bled in Slovenia. The place is really one of a kind – a beautiful freshwater lake surrounded by grassy meadows and rolling hills. On a clear day you can see the peaks of some rocky, snow-covered mountains to the north, while to the west of the lake is the start of a mysterious dense forest.

The place is renowned for the tiny island in the centre of the lake with its picturesque church. To get to the church you need to take a small boat across the lake and then walk up the 99 steps that lead to the top. Crossing the lake is a beautiful experience in itself as the water is crystal clear and you can see the bottom of the lake beneath you.

Just to the north of the lake perched on dramatic rugged cliffs, overlooking the lake, is Bled Castle. From here there are some breathtaking views across the lake and the surrounding countryside. It is difficult not to fall under the spell of this unspoilt and tranquil place and it is this that makes the place absolutely unforgettable. I get the impression that it is somewhere that people love returning to relax and chill out. If you've never visited Lake Bled before, you really should plan a visit to this beautiful location.



Read the article again. How are the following things described?

- the lake at Bled
- around the lake
- the mountains north of the lake
- the forest to the west of the lake
- the church on the island
- where Bled Castle is situated
- the views from Bled Castle

Nature and Environment

You have seen a competition in a magazine called 'Mother Nature.' Here is the competition information:



Over the last 100 years or so, much of our planet has been spoilt and destroyed by humans. We are trying to find those last few unspoilt places of beauty where people can enjoy the beauty of the natural world. We are looking for articles describing special places and why it's important to protect them. The winning entry will receive a holiday for two to the place they describe and €1,000 spending money.



Practice exam question

In your **article** you should:

- describe the place and suggest why it is unique
- summarize and explain why you find the place so spellbinding
- try to convince the reader why it should be protected

Write around **250-300 words**.