

Ten Fantastic Facts and Legends of Edinburgh Castle, Scotland

Level: Intermediate

Topic: Customs and Culture.

Key vocabulary: Bilingual lists in PDF and boxes (Teachers can download this material from the online version of the magazine.)

Preparation: You will need a copy of the article for each student as well as internet access, pictures and photographs of Edinburgh Castle, and a map of the UK.

Objective: Students read and learn about the legends of the mysterious Edinburgh Castle in Scotland. They compare this castle to mysterious places in their own countries.

Warm up

Use the pictures of Edinburgh Castle to ask a few questions about it.

- What can you see in this picture?
- Are castles modern or ancient buildings?
- Where can we find castles?
- Are there any castles in your country?

If there aren't any castles in the country where students live, allow some time to talk about ancient buildings that might be interesting for them, the Palace of Government, for example.

Ask students if they know where Edinburgh is located. Show them the map of the UK and ask if they know which country it is. You can use the map to review **prepositions of place and direction**.

Ask one student to come to the board and give him or her clues to help find Edinburgh. (You can use simple sentences like: 'Edinburgh is near Glasgow, above Manchester, very far from Ireland, and so on.)

Main Activity

1. Give each student a photocopy of the article.
2. Use the title of the article: How much can students tell about the article by reading the title?
3. Allow the students to read in pairs and do cooperative work like helping each other with vocabulary they don't know. Encourage them to guess meaning from context clues before using a dictionary or asking you.
4. You can always prepare comprehension activities and hand them out to students while they are reading.
5. With this article, it is very easy to get students to write and be creative by giving them some phrases from the text and asking them to complete the sentence with an idea of their own. For example an original sentence from the article is:
 - Through the ages the castle has been used as a royal residence, a prison, and an army garrison.
For the activity, just give them the beginning of the sentence:
 - Through the ages the castle has been used as.....

Follow up

1. Ask questions to get feedback from your students:

- Did you like the article?
- What bit of the article did you like the most?
- Would you like to visit Edinburgh Castle?
- What was really scary about it?

2. Explain to the students that they are going to do some research in groups. (This should be done at the end of the class so you have the time to explain the aim of the activity and the methodology, give them deadlines, etc.)

- Students get together in groups of three or four.
- They choose a place in their country or around the world that they consider mysterious, or where they have heard that strange things happen.
- They do research at home or at school and bring materials to the next class.
- Allow time to prepare a poster and a written report.
- Students share their work with the class as an oral presentation.