

# Unit 8 Weird news

## 8a News

### Reading nature news review

#### The fish with hands

Everyone knows that fish live in water, they move by swimming, and they use their fins and tail to help them move. But there's an exception to every rule and this is it. Named, appropriately, the handfish, these odd fish have fins that look like hands, and they use them to walk on the ocean floor. Four specimens of this four-inch-long marine species were seen near Tasmania, Australia. Handfish walk along the seabed eating small worms and other creatures. They move slowly and so must be an easy target for predators. However, researchers think they may have a secret weapon: a toxic skin that kills most attackers.



1 Read the article again. Then read this information about the animal. What is speculation (S) and what is certain (C)?

- 1 The handfish
  - a walks on the seabed.
  - b eats worms.
  - c has toxic skin.

2 Find these words in the article.

- 1 two terms for the bottom of the ocean  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2 a word that means "samples or representative things"  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3 a scientific term that means "a group of individuals that can't be subdivided into smaller groups"  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4 a word for animals that kill and eat other animals  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5 a word that means "poisonous"  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 6 an adjective that means "from/in/of the sea"  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### Grammar speculation and deduction about the present

3 Read the clues and decide which of these things they describe. Write sentences using *might/could* and *must*. Use the plural form of one of the words.

ants	bird	butterfly	lake	leaf
ocean	shark	spiders	stem	whale

- 1 It has two legs, two wings, and a tail. It can fly.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2 It's part of a plant. It's green.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3 It's a body of water. It's not salty. It's surrounded by land.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4 They are quite small and eat insects. They have eight legs. Some make webs.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5 It lives in water. It has fins and a tail. It's pretty big.  
\_\_\_\_\_

# 8b Reasons why

## Grammar speculation and deduction about the past

1 Read the sentences about the Easter Island statues. Choose the most logical option.

- 1 The Easter Islanders *can't have / must have* respected their ancestors.
- 2 It *might have / must have* taken months to carve a statue.
- 3 The Easter Islanders *can't have / may have* carved other objects as well.
- 4 They *couldn't have / must have* used dozens of men to move the statues.
- 5 The first Europeans to see the statues *might have / must have* been amazed.

2 Complete the conversations with the words.

can't have been	must have seen
may have seen	

A: This looks interesting. I like wildlife movies.

B: Yes, it's just started. It looks really familiar, though. I <sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ it before, I think.

A: Really? It says in the paper that it's a brand new series, so it <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ on before.

B: Oh? Well, I <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ a trailer, then. I know it was advertised a lot.

can't have been	might have been
could have phoned	must have been
might have been	must have had

A: That's weird. I've got four missed calls on my phone.

B: Same number each time? It <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ important if they called four times.

A: No, different numbers. But they didn't leave any messages, so it <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ that important. I wonder how I missed them?

B: You <sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ your phone switched off.

A: No, I didn't.

B: Well, you <sup>7</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ busy or the volume <sup>8</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ down low or something.

A: Yes, Maybe. Well, I don't recognize the numbers, so I suppose they <sup>9</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ by mistake.

## Vocabulary history

3 How many ways can you complete these sentences? Use these words.

ancestors	ancient	beliefs	century
fragments	period	pieces	prehistoric
sacred	society	traditions	

1 That was an exciting...in history.

2 The Polynesians had strong....

3 It's an interesting...monument.

4 The archaeologists found...of pottery.

5 We think these objects are from Polynesian....

## 4 Writing speculating

Read the situations and write your speculation as to the logical reason.

1 You can't get through to your friend's cell phone.

2 Your friends haven't arrived for your birthday party.

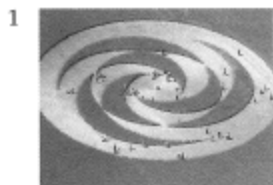
3 Your sister's gone out. Her keys are on the table.

4 The TV show you are watching seems familiar.

5 Your boss is very late for a meeting.

# 8c Crop circles

## Reading crop circles



a crop circle



a wallaby



a poppy



poppy seed capsules

- 1 Read the news story from Australia. What's the connection between the photos?
- 2 Read the story again. Complete the article with these words. You can use the words as many times as you think necessary.

extraterrestrial	hoaxers	humans	patterns
physical	poppies	tools	wallabies

- 3 Read these comments that people made after hearing this news story. Which comments are supported by the information given in the story?
  - a "Crop circles must be hoaxes because there is no other rational explanation."
  - b "Wallabies live in Australia, so they can't have made the UK crop circles."
  - c "I think the crop circles might have been the result of animal activity."
- 4 All these words are in the news story. Which groups of words (a-c) can replace the words in bold in these sentences?

<b>a</b> circular complex geometric	<b>b</b> explanation suggestion view	<b>c</b> bizarre odd weird
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- 1 That's an interesting **theory**.
- 2 I've read about this **strange** phenomenon.
- 3 The building has an **intricate** shape.

## A bizarre theory

The strange and fascinating phenomenon of crop circles—which actually aren't simply circular but form intricate geometric <sup>1</sup> *patterns* in farm fields—has inspired many possible explanations over the years. Crop-circle enthusiasts who prefer paranormal explanations for the circles believe that they must be messages left behind by <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ visitors, while more conventionally scientific-minded people have theorized that they might have resulted from natural <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ forces, such as wind or heat. But now, there's another, even more bizarre explanation: <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_.

As the BBC News and many other news outlets are reporting, Lara Giddings, Attorney General for the Australian state of Tasmania, told a Parliamentary hearing that <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ have been eating <sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ in fields that provide legal opium for morphine and other painkillers. Apparently, according to Giddings, the <sup>7</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ are eating the <sup>8</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ and then becoming so disoriented that they run around in the fields erratically, creating paths that resemble crop circles.

An official with an Australian poppy-cultivation company told ABC News that in the process of consuming the poppy-seed capsules, the <sup>9</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ often also eat some of the substances that cause opium's hallucinogenic effect in <sup>10</sup> \_\_\_\_\_. The weird suggestion that animals may have been the cause of Australian crop circles, however, doesn't really explain the crop-circle phenomenon. Are they capable of creating the sort of intricate geometric <sup>11</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ seen in most crop circles? What about the crop circles found thousands of miles away from Australia, in the UK?

This odd explanation also doesn't account for the alternative view that crop circles are nothing more than elaborate jokes. A University of Oregon physicist, Richard Taylor, speculates that crop-circle <sup>12</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ may now be using increasingly sophisticated <sup>13</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ such as GPS devices and laser pointers to burn complex <sup>14</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ into fields.

# 8d You must be joking!

## Real life reacting to surprising news

1 Read the news stories. Do you think they are true or false?

1 More than a dozen scientists and yeti enthusiasts from Canada, Estonia, Sweden, and the US flew to Siberia yesterday to exchange findings with their Russian counterparts at a day-long yeti conference.

2 One of the US's most famous poets has written a book of poems about bees.



3 Representatives of the fishing industry warn that tuna is almost extinct.

4 The government has announced a new initiative to use decimal measures. As of April 1 there will be ten hours in each day.



2 Complete the expressions for showing surprise with these words.

putting joking mistake off on right  
sure

- 1 Come \_\_\_\_\_ it!
- 2 That can't be \_\_\_\_\_!
- 3 They must have made a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 You must be \_\_\_\_\_!
- 5 You're \_\_\_\_\_ me  
\_\_\_\_\_?
- 6 Are you \_\_\_\_\_?

3 Read and respond reacting to surprising news

Read the statements. Imagine a friend of yours is speaking. Write a response in your own words.

- 1 Look! It's snowing outside.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2 I'm getting married.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Someone in Siberia has seen a yeti.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4 I read in the paper that there are no fish left in the ocean.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5 The date on today's newspaper is 2025.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 6 As of next year, the clocks change to ten-hour days.  
\_\_\_\_\_

# 8e In the news

## Writing skill structuring a news story

1 Read the mixed-up notes (a–d) of a news story. Which section is the introductory sentence?

- a The area \_\_\_\_\_ (be) temporarily affected as the lightning \_\_\_\_\_ (cut off) electricity supplies. Later, the fire fighters \_\_\_\_\_ (say) the man was incredibly lucky.
- b The fire service \_\_\_\_\_ (respond) immediately to the call. According to the owner of the house, it all \_\_\_\_\_ (happen) extremely quickly.
- c An unbelievable *three* bolts of lightning \_\_\_\_\_ (strike) a house last night, but fortunately, nobody was hurt.
- d Neighbors \_\_\_\_\_ (call) the police and fire departments after the first bolt of lightning \_\_\_\_\_ (start) a small fire.

2 Write the story in the correct sequence and with the correct verb forms in your notebook.

## Vocabulary -ly adverbs in stories

3 Write the six -ly adverbs in the story next to the adverbs with similar meanings.

- 1 briefly: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 instantly: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 luckily: \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 really: \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 rapidly: \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 unbelievably: \_\_\_\_\_

4 Complete the sentences using adverbs from Exercise 2.

- 1 She spoke \_\_\_\_\_ slowly, but I still didn't understand.
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_, it wasn't a serious accident.
- 3 I only saw them \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 It was \_\_\_\_\_ dangerous.
- 5 She replied to my email \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6 The fire was \_\_\_\_\_ put out.

## 5 Grammar extra -ly adverbs

### ► -LY ADVERBS

We use -ly adverbs with:

#### 1 main verbs

*The fire department responded immediately to the call.*

#### 2 whole sentences or clauses

*Fortunately, nobody was hurt.*

#### 3 adjectives

*The man was incredibly lucky.*

#### 4 past participles of verbs

*The area was temporarily affected.*

#### 5 other adverbs

*It all happened extremely quickly.*

Rewrite the sentences with the adverbs in parentheses in the correct position. Make changes to punctuation as necessary.

- 1 nobody knows what happened (incredibly)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2 this is not the first time this has happened (sadly)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3 the car was damaged (deliberately)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4 the man spoke about the incident (sadly)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5 things are returning to normal (gradually)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 6 we were shocked by the news (incredibly)  
\_\_\_\_\_