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A lost world discovered in Papua New Guinea

English lesson plan = 2 x 90 mins, 2 x 60 min

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Answers	
Ideas and Articles by David Robinson	

28th September 2009

Category: Lifestyle / Papua New Guinea / Discovery
Level: Intermediate / Upper intermediate

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THE ARTICLE

A lost world discovered in Papua New Guinea

A lost world of giant woolly rats, fanged frogs, grunting fish and tiny bear like creatures has recently been discovered in Papua New Guinea. The exciting discovery was made by scientists and biologists in a remote volcanic jungle crater on the main island on the Pacific island. The scientists who came from the United States, Britain and Papua New Guinea arrived at their destination by helicopter. Stepping off it they found themselves on a mist shrouded rim of the crater of Mount Bosavi. When they climbed into the kilometre deep crater where few humans have been they soon found more than 40 previously unidentified species. They explored a pristine jungle habitat teeming with life that has evolved in total isolation since the volcano last erupted more than 200,000 years ago. The expedition which lasted five weeks discovered 16 new species of frogs which have never been seen before; at least three new fish species, a new bat breed and a giant rat, which could turn out to be the biggest rat in the world.

The discoveries are being seen as fresh evidence of the richness of the world's rainforests. The explorers hope that their finds will add weight to calls for international action to prevent the demise of similar ecosystems. They said Papua New Guinea's rainforest is being destroyed at the rate of 3.5% a year. Dr George McGavin, Head Scientist of the BBC Natural History Unit, who headed the expedition said, "It was mind blowing to be there and it is clearly time we pulled our finger out and decided these habitats are worth saving." The team of biologists included experts from London Zoo, Oxford University, the Smithsonian Institution and the BBC Natural History Unit. They found the 3km wide crater populated by spectacular birds of paradise and in the absence of big cats and monkeys, which are found in the remote jungles of the Amazon and Sumatra, the main predators are the giant monitor lizards while kangaroos have evolved to live in trees. Awesome!

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New species include a fanged frog, a jungle spider that camouflages as lichen and a buff-faced pigmy parrot. Other new exotic discoveries found include a hairy caterpillar, a camouflaged gecko and black and yellow noctuid caterpillars that when they sit together they resemble a small snake - the scientist's think this is a defence strategy. Also a never before seen Bosavi silky cuscus, which is a marsupial that lives up trees and feed on fruits and leaves. Scientists also discovered a fish they called the Henamo grunter, as it makes grunting noises from its swim bladder. The explorers also unearthed an iridescent beetle in the rainforest and a common-tubed nosed bat. They also came across a striped possum that lets out a strong odour as a defence mechanism and several strange new fish.

The most surprising find however was the Bosavi rat – named after the volcano. It had no fear of humans when it was discovered in the volcanic crater. The vegetarian rat, which is 82cm long, is believed to live only in the crater. Dr George McGavin: "This rat was incredibly tame. It just sat next to me nibbling on a piece of leaf. It won't have seen a human before. The crater of Mount Bosavi really is the lost world." Steve Backshall, a climber and naturalist: "These discoveries are really significant. The world is getting a lot smaller and it is getting very hard to find places that are so far off the beaten track."

The adventure could have come straight out of Arthur Conan Doyle's 'The Lost World' which chronicled the discovery of long lost species including the dinosaur on an Amazonian plateau. Equally strange within the 1,000metre enclosed walls was, it seems, a tree kangaroo, butterflies the size of a paperback book, stick insects the length of a human forearm and a fat-lipped tentacled fish that looked like it had swallowed an octopus. The pristine jungle location was so remote that the expedition team worked with local trackers. They first descended into the volcano in January. The group had to organise the planting of fields of sweet potato and spinach in the jungle six months in advance to provide food. Weeks were spent seeking permissions to cross land owned by local clans. Long discussions, which were held in smoky huts, had to be translated into Kasua, the local language, which is spoken by fewer than 1,000 people.

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Some meanings: Lichen = disguised as fungus; Pigmy = small; Gecko = small tropical lizard; Cuscus = these are 'monkey's' that have large eyes, small ears, a pointed snout and a long prehensile tail; Marsupial = A mammal of the race of kangaroos, wombats, etc; Iridescent = displaying a play of lustrous colours like those of the rainbow; Possum = Australian pouched animal. Tentacled = Tentacles = A narrow, flexible, unjointed part extending from the body of certain animals, such as an octopus, jellyfish, or sea anemone. Tentacles are used for feeling, grasping, or moving. Pristine = An area found in a pure state; uncorrupted by civilization. Noctuid = a type of moth.

Links: http://news.bbc.co.uk/earth/hi/earth_news/newsid_8210000/8210394.stm

<http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/scientists-hail-discovery-of-hundreds-of-new-species-in-remote-new-guinea-465841.html>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/sep/07/discovery-species-papua-new-guinea>

EXERCISES

1. Lost World's: What do you know about 'Lost World's'? Do you know where any are? Are they real? Do you know any fictional ones? Go round the room swapping details.

2. Papua New Guinea: Where is Papua New Guinea? Where is the country near? What three things do you know about it? **Look on Google maps.** Try to find Mount Bosavi. What does it tell you? Go round the room swapping details.

3. Dictation: The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self correct your work from page two - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. 10 is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than 20 - we need to do some work!

4. Reading: Get students to read the passage aloud. Swap readers every paragraph.

5. Vocabulary: Students now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

6. The article: Students look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?
- c) Would you like to visit this crater?

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7. Let's tell a story! Think of ten words to do with **Lost World's**. Write them below. Use them to compile a short story (Imagine!) Tell your story to your partner.

1	6
2	7
3	8
4	9
5	10

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their stories in front of the class.

8. Let's do 'The Article Quiz': Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A

- 1) Name the countries.
- 2) Name the crater.
- 3) When did the volcano last erupt?
- 4) Name two of the new species found.
- 5) How many new species were discovered?
- 6) What percentage of rainforest is being destroyed every year?

Student B

- 1) Name the book.
- 2) Where were the biologists from?
- 3) What were the main predators found in the crater?
- 4) What was the most surprising find?
- 5) Name the local language.
- 6) Who did the expedition team work with?

9. Let's talk! An explorer and a scientist in a pub: In pairs. Imagine you are either an explorer or a scientist. You are both in a pub. Over a beer you get talking about an expedition one of you has just returned from in Papua New Guinea. *5-minutes*.

10. Let's write! Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher: **A lost world**. Your e-mail can be read out in class.

11. Sentence starters: Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- a) A lost world _____
- b) Papua New Guinea _____
- c) The adventure _____
- d) The scientists _____
- e) They discovered _____

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: After reading the article guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. The volcano last erupted 250,000 years ago | T / F |
| b. The rainforest is being destroyed at a rate of 2.5% per year | T / F |
| c. The expedition lasted for seven weeks | T / F |
| d. The expedition discovered 18 new species of frogs | T / F |
| e. The expedition discovered two new fish species, two new bat species & a giant rat | T / F |
| f. The crater is 1km deep | T / F |
| g. Kasua is a local language spoken by only 2,000 people | T / F |
| h. The expedition team worked with local trackers | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| a. giant | confirmation |
| b. fang | Far-off |
| c. grunt | breathtaking |
| d. tiny | stunning |
| e. exciting | breed |
| f. remote | astonishing |
| g. species | tooth |
| h. evidence | small |
| i. mind blowing | huge |
| j. awesome | squawk |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| a. The exciting discovery was made by | rat in the world |
| b. Stepping off it they found themselves on a | habitat teeming with life |
| c. When they climbed into the kilometre deep | discovered 16 new species of frogs |
| d. they soon found more than | than 200,000 years ago. |
| e. They explored a pristine jungle | to be there |
| f. the volcano last erupted more | is being destroyed |
| g. The expedition that lasted five weeks | mist shrouded rim of the crater |
| h. the biggest | 40 previously unidentified species |
| i. They said Papua New Guinea's rainforest | scientists and biologists |
| j. It was mind blowing | crater where few humans have been |

GAP FILL: READING

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

A lost world discovered in Papua New Guinea

A lost _____ of giant woolly rats, fanged frogs, grunting fish and tiny bear like creatures has recently been discovered in Papua New Guinea. The exciting discovery was made by scientists and biologists in a _____ volcanic jungle crater on the main island on the Pacific island. The scientists who came from the United States, Britain and Papua New Guinea arrived at their destination by _____. Stepping off it they found themselves on a _____ shrouded _____ of the _____ of Mount Bosavi. When they climbed into the kilometre deep crater where few humans have been they soon found more than 40 previously unidentified species. They explored a _____ jungle habitat teeming with life that has evolved in total _____ since the volcano last erupted more than 200,000 years ago. The expedition which lasted five weeks discovered 16 new species of frogs which have never been seen before; at least three new fish species, a new bat breed and a giant rat, which could turn out to be the biggest rat in the world.

The discoveries are being seen as fresh evidence of the _____ of the world's _____. The explorers hope that their finds will add weight to calls for international action to prevent the demise of similar ecosystems. They said Papua New Guinea's rainforest is being destroyed at the rate of 3.5% a year. Dr George McGavin, Head Scientist of the BBC Natural History Unit, who headed the expedition said, "It was mind blowing to be there and it is clearly time we pulled our finger out and decided these _____ are worth saving." The team of biologists included experts from London Zoo, Oxford University, the Smithsonian Institution and the BBC Natural History Unit. They found the 3km wide crater populated by _____ birds of paradise and in the _____ of big cats and monkeys, which are found in the remote _____ of the Amazon and Sumatra, the main _____ are the giant monitor lizards while _____ have evolved to live in trees!

helicopter

pristine

isolation

crater

remote

rim

mist

world

richness

rainforests

absence

jungles

habitats

kangaroos

spectacular

predators

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. Would you like to go to Papua New Guinea? Why? Why not?
- c. When did you first hear about this new lost world?
- d. Do you watching nature programmes on TV?
- e. Do you think its right that the jungle in Papua New Guinea is being destroyed at a rate of 3.5% each year?
- f. Are you into conservation? How?
- g. What is the most spectacular place you have ever visited?
- h. Do you think it was right for man to discover this lost world?
- i. Would you liked to have been in the expedition? Why? Why not?
- j. Do you know anyone who has ever been to Papua New Guinea? If yes, when? How was it?



STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. What vegetables have you planted recently?
- b. What is the most unusual animal you have seen?
- c. Have you read Arthur Conan Doyle's 'The Lost World'?
- d. Would you like to go on an expedition? If yes, where?
- e. Do you like discovering new things in life? If yes, what?
- f. What is the biggest animal you know?
- g. What is the smallest animal you know?
- h. What is the most unusual animal you have seen?
- i. Did you like this discussion?
- j. Do you think there are any crocodiles or other dangerous reptiles in Papua New Guinea?

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SPEAKING

Let's play a game! Animals:

Allow 10 minutes

Form a circle or go round the room in a clockwise direction.

"I went to London Zoo and I saw a ...

The idea of the game is that each person has to remember what was previously said. Then add one more animal/bird of your own. The list will therefore get longer and longer.

When a student cannot remember the order or cannot think of an animal/bird they are 'eliminated'!

The winner is the one at the end not eliminated!

The teacher can moderate the session.

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LANGUAGE: Choose the correct words from a–d below and write them in the article.

A (1)___ world of giant woolly rats, fanged frogs, grunting fish and tiny bear like creatures has recently been discovered in Papua New Guinea. The (2)___ discovery was made by scientists and biologists in a (3)___ volcanic jungle crater on the main island on the Pacific island. The (4)___ who came from the United States, Britain and Papua New Guinea arrived at their destination by (5)___. Stepping off it they found themselves on a (6)___ shrouded (7)___ of the crater of Mount Bosavi. When they climbed into the kilometre deep crater where few humans have been they soon found more than 40 previously unidentified species. They explored a pristine jungle habitat teeming with life that has evolved in total isolation since the volcano last erupted more than 200,000 years ago. The expedition which lasted five weeks discovered 16 new species of frogs which have never been seen before; at least three new fish species, a new bat breed and a giant rat, which could turn out to be the biggest rat in the world.

The discoveries are being seen as fresh evidence of the richness of the world’s rainforests. The explorers hope that their finds will add weight to calls for international action to prevent the demise of similar ecosystems. They said Papua New Guinea’s rainforest is being destroyed at the rate of 3.5% a year. Dr George McGavin, Head Scientist of the BBC Natural History Unit, who headed the expedition said, “It was mind blowing to be there and it is clearly time we pulled our finger out and decided these habitats are worth saving.” The team of biologists included experts from London Zoo, Oxford University, the Smithsonian Institution and the BBC Natural History Unit. They found the 3km wide (8)___ populated by spectacular birds of paradise and in the absence of big (9)___ and (10)___, which are found in the remote (11)___ of the Amazon and Sumatra, the main predators are the giant monitor lizards while kangaroos have evolved to live in (12)___!

1.	(a)	closed	(b)	lost	(c)	new	(d)	found
2.	(a)	excite	(b)	excited	(c)	excites	(d)	exciting
3.	(a)	remoter	(b)	remotest	(c)	remotely	(d)	remote
4.	(a)	miners	(b)	bankers	(c)	footballers	(d)	scientists
5.	(a)	helicopter	(b)	foot	(c)	car	(d)	boat
6.	(a)	mist	(b)	must	(c)	most	(d)	mast
7.	(a)	rum	(b)	rim	(c)	grim	(d)	trim
8.	(a)	baiter	(b)	crater	(c)	grater	(d)	traitor
9.	(a)	dogs	(b)	lions	(c)	cats	(d)	fish
10.	(a)	apes	(b)	humans	(c)	monkeys	(d)	gorillas
11.	(a)	juggles	(b)	jungles	(c)	jangles	(d)	jiggles
12.	(a)	skyscrapers	(b)	cars	(c)	trees	(d)	water

GRAMMAR:

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

A lost world discovered in Papua New Guinea

A lost world of giant woolly rats, fanged frogs, grunting fish and tiny bear like creatures has recently been discovered in Papua New Guinea. The exciting discovery was made by scientists and biologists in a remote volcanic jungle crater on the main island on the Pacific island. The scientists who came (1)___ the United States, Britain and Papua New Guinea arrived at (2)___ destination by helicopter. Stepping off it they found themselves on a mist shrouded rim of the crater of Mount Bosavi. (3)___ they climbed into the kilometre deep crater (4)___ few humans have been (5)___ soon found (6)___ than 40 previously unidentified species. They explored a pristine jungle habitat teeming with life that has evolved in total isolation since the volcano last erupted more than 200,000 years ago. The expedition which lasted five weeks discovered 16 new species of frogs which have never been seen before; at least three new fish species, a new bat breed and a giant rat, (7)___ (8)___ turn out to be the biggest rat in the world.

they

could

which

where

their

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from

The discoveries are being seen as fresh evidence of the richness of the world's rainforests. The explorers hope (1)___ their finds will add weight to calls for international action to prevent the demise of similar ecosystems. They said Papua New Guinea's rainforest is being destroyed at the rate of 3.5% a year. Dr George McGavin, Head Scientist of the BBC Natural History Unit, who headed the expedition said, "It was mind blowing to be (2)___ and it is clearly time we pulled (3)___ finger out and decided (4)___ habitats are worth saving." The team of biologists included experts (5)___ London Zoo, Oxford University, the Smithsonian Institution and the BBC Natural History Unit. (6)___ found the 3km wide crater populated by spectacular birds of paradise and in the absence of big cats and monkeys, (7)___ are found in the remote jungles of the Amazon and Sumatra, the main predators are the giant monitor lizards (8)___ kangaroos have evolved to live in trees!

they

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from

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F b. F c. F d. F e. F f. T g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| a. giant | huge |
| b. fang | tooth |
| c. grunt | squawk |
| d. tiny | small |
| e. exciting | breathtaking |
| f. remote | Far-off |
| g. species | breed |
| h. evidence | confirmation |
| i. mind blowing | stunning |
| j. awesome | astounding |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| a. The exciting discovery was made by | scientists and biologists |
| b. Stepping off it they found themselves on a | mist shrouded rim of the crater |
| c. When they climbed into the kilometre deep | crater where few humans have been |
| d. they soon found more than | 40 previously unidentified species |
| e. They explored a pristine jungle | habitat teeming with life |
| f. the volcano last erupted more | than 200,000 years ago. |
| g. The expedition that lasted five weeks | discovered 16 species of new frogs |
| h. the biggest | rat in the world |
| i. They said Papua New Guinea's rainforest | is being destroyed |
| j. It was mind blowing | to be there |

GAP FILL: A lost world discovered in Papua New Guinea: A lost **world** of giant woolly rats, fanged frogs, grunting fish and tiny bear like creatures has recently been discovered in Papua New Guinea. The exciting discovery was made by scientists and biologists in a **remote** volcanic jungle crater on the main island on the Pacific island. The scientists who came from the United States, Britain and Papua New Guinea arrived at their destination by **helicopter**. Stepping off it they found themselves on a **mist** shrouded **rim** of the **crater** of Mount Bosavi. When they climbed into the kilometre deep crater where few humans have been they soon found more than 40 previously unidentified species. They explored a **pristine** jungle habitat teeming with life that has evolved in total **isolation** since the volcano last erupted more than 200,000 years ago. The expedition which lasted five weeks discovered 16 new species of frogs which have never been seen before; at least three new fish species, a new bat breed and a giant rat, which could turn out to be the biggest rat in the world.

The discoveries are being seen as fresh evidence of the **richness** of the world's **rainforests**. The explorers hope that their finds will add weight to calls for international action to prevent the demise of similar ecosystems. They said Papua New Guinea's rainforest is being destroyed at the rate of 3.5% a year. Dr George McGavin, Head Scientist of the BBC Natural History Unit, who headed the expedition said, "It was mind blowing to be there and it is clearly time we pulled our finger out and decided these **habitats** are worth saving." The team of biologists included experts from London Zoo, Oxford University, the Smithsonian Institution and the BBC Natural History Unit. They found the 3km wide crater populated by **spectacular** birds of paradise and in the **absence** of big cats and monkeys, which are found in the remote **jungles** of the Amazon and Sumatra, the main **predators** are the giant monitor lizards while **kangaroos** have evolved to live in trees!

LANGUAGE WORK:

- 1 - b 2 - d 3 - d 4 - d 5 - a 6 - a 7 - b 8 - b 9 - c 10 - c 11 - b 12 - c

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