

### **The Mysterious English Crop Circles**

Summertime in South West England sees strange things happening in the farmers' fields. Mysterious crop circles suddenly appear. No one can explain them. Are they a hoax or are aliens leaving their mark on the English countryside? Maybe it is down to Mother Nature creating these crop circles with various wind patterns? Whatever the answer no one has come up with the right one yet! One theory is there are a group of crop-circle makers who like to create these elaborate images in the wheat fields. Either way, the result intrigues most English people who find the subject fascinating to discuss. Of course, if you happen to be a farmer in Wiltshire whose wheat field suddenly has this strange image in it then this can be a problem, as every crop circle costs the farmer money due to flattened wheat. Charging visitors to see them can make up some of the losses.

The crop circle images are best seen from above. Most are magnificent. Every year 50-60 circles materialise in the county of Wiltshire in the rolling chalk downlands of South West England. Oddly, only 40-50 appear around the rest of the world! The result is a booming tourist trade has developed. Crop circle enthusiasts come in their thousands. Each has their own theory. Crop circles are best spotted from the air. Photographers love them! Some look like the feet of an alien spaceship, others are like faces.

Dr Ian Baillie who is a retired physics teacher from Folkestone said recently: "I have been studying crop circles since the late eighties, and making annual visits since 1994. The patterns are all mathematical. There's sacred geometry there. There's ancient history and classical mythology too, and intelligently-guided energy." He added, "Just look at the bloom on the wheat." He points at the thin sheen of dust on the wheat stalks. "That would be wiped off if someone was flattening it, but you can still see it".

Whoever it is doing it they seem to have been a lot busier over the last 20 years. Mind you, crop circles have been reported since 1678. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century occasional circles were reported. The first photograph of them first appeared in 1932. But it wasn't till the nineties that Wiltshire crop circles started multiplying at an extreme rate. Are aliens sending us a message? Whatever the answer these magnificent crop circles remain a mystery.

**Category: Mysteries / England / Crop Circles**

**Level: Intermediate / Upper Intermediate**

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## EXERCISES

**1. Crop circles:** Think of three things you know about crop circles? Go round the room swapping details with others.

**2. 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 one - 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. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - you need to do some work!

**3. Reading:** The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

**4. Vocabulary:** Students should 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.

**5. The article:** Students should 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 see a crop circle in Wiltshire?

**6. Crop circles:** In pairs think things you know about crop circles. Then add five other strange or mysterious things you know about in your country or from around the world. Write them below. Discuss together. What are your conclusions?

Crop circles	Other mysterious things
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

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

**7. Let's print and discuss: *Teachers*** – print out some images of some crop circles then get the class to discuss them. What is the class conclusion?

**8. Let's roleplay 1: Radio Wiltshire:** In pairs/groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the *Radio Wiltshire* studio. Today's interview is about: *Crop circles*.

1	Yourself	3	Dr Ian Baillie
2	A farmer	4	A crop circle enthusiast

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

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9. **Let's think!** In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with **Crop Circles**. *One-two minutes*. Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

10. **Let's roleplay 2:** In pairs. You are in a farmer's field in Wiltshire. One of you is a crop circle enthusiast. The other is a farmer. The farmer wants some money from you as you are on his land. You want to see a crop circle. *5-minutes*.

11. **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 crop.
- 2) Name the county.
- 3) What region of England does all this happen?
- 4) How many crop circles appear in the rest of the world?
- 5) How many crop circles appear in this county?

**Student B**

- 1) When were crop circles first discovered?
- 2) What year was the first photograph of a crop circle published?
- 3) Sum up what Dr Ian Baillie said.
- 4) Who 'loves them'?
- 5) Explain 'one theory'.

12. **Let's think!** Think of three advantages and then three disadvantages of crop circles. Write them below. Discuss together with your partner.

Advantages	Disadvantages
1	1
2	2
3	3

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

13. **Presentation:** In pairs, groups or individually: Prepare in class or at home a two minute presentation on: **Crop Circles**. Stand at the front of the class to give your presentation to the class. The class can vote on the best presentation. Class – After the presentations go through the good and weak points on each presentation. Learn from the results.

14. **Let's write an e-mail:** Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about: **Crop Circles**. Your e-mail can be read out in class.

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

- a) Crop circles \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Aliens \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Farmers \_\_\_\_\_

## DISCUSSION

### Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) What sorts of images are created by these crop circles?
- 3) What is the best evidence that these crop circles are hoaxes?
- 4) What other countries do you know of that have crop circles?
- 5) Surely if these crop circles are found in other countries they can't be hoaxes?
- 6) Why are people interested in these crop circles?
- 7) Are the military interested in these crop circles?
- 8) Has anyone ever seen anyone creating these crop circles?
- 9) Surely these crop circles are made by little green men landing their spaceship at night in Wiltshire?
- 10) What is your opinion on the subject of crop circles?

### Student B questions

- 1) Do these crop circles have a religious meaning?
- 2) Have you ever seen a crop circle? If yes, explain.
- 3) Why do so many crop circles appear in Wiltshire?
- 4) Are these crop circles made by a group of enthusiasts?
- 5) What three bits of advice would you give a Wiltshire farmer who has a crop circle on his land?
- 6) Are crop circles made by Mother Nature?
- 7) If you were a farmer how much would you charge for visitors to see the crop circles?
- 8) Do you think the farmer is covered by insurance for these crop circles?
- 9) Have you ever made a crop circle?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

## SPEAKING

Let's discuss! Crop circles

*Allow 10-15 minutes – As a class / small groups / pairs / 1 to 1*

Are crop circles made by aliens?

(The teacher can moderate the session)

## GAP FILL: READING:

*Put the words into the gaps in the text.*

### The Mysterious English Crop Circles

Summertime in South West England sees strange things happening in the farmers' fields. Mysterious crop (1)\_\_\_\_\_ suddenly appear. No one can explain them. Are they a hoax or are aliens leaving their mark on the English countryside? Maybe it is down to Mother Nature creating these (2)\_\_\_\_\_ circles with various wind patterns? Whatever the answer no one has come up with the right one yet! One theory is there are a group of crop-circle makers who like to create these (3)\_\_\_\_\_ images in the (4)\_\_\_\_\_ fields. Either way, the result (5)\_\_\_\_\_ most English people who find the subject (6)\_\_\_\_\_ to discuss. Of course, if you happen to be a farmer in Wiltshire whose wheat field suddenly has this strange (7)\_\_\_\_\_ in it then this can be a problem, as every crop circle costs the (8)\_\_\_\_\_ money due to flattened wheat. Charging visitors to see them can make up some of the losses.

*wheat*

*image*

*circles*

*farmer*

*intrigues*

*crop*

*fascinating*

*elaborate*

The crop circle images are best seen from above. Most are (1)\_\_\_\_\_. Every year 50-60 circles materialise in the county of Wiltshire in the rolling (2)\_\_\_\_\_ downlands of South West England. Oddly, only 40-50 appear around the rest of the world! The result is a booming tourist trade has developed. Crop circle enthusiasts come in their thousands. Each has their own (3)\_\_\_\_\_. Crop circles are best spotted from the air. Photographers love them! Some look like the feet of an (4)\_\_\_\_\_ spaceship, others are like faces.

*mythology*

*alien*

*theory*

*physics*

*magnificent*

*chalk*

*flattening*

*sacred*

Dr Ian Baillie who is a retired (5)\_\_\_\_\_ teacher from Folkestone said recently: "I have been studying crop circles since the late eighties, and making annual visits since 1994. The patterns are all mathematical. There's (6)\_\_\_\_\_ geometry there. There's ancient history and classical (7)\_\_\_\_\_ too, and intelligently-guided energy." He added, "Just look at the bloom on the wheat." He points at the thin sheen of dust on the wheat stalks. "That would be wiped off if someone was (8)\_\_\_\_\_ it, but you can still see it".

## GAP FILL: LISTENING

*Listen and fill in the spaces.*

### The Mysterious English Crop Circles

Summertime in South West England \_\_\_\_\_ happening in the farmers' fields. Mysterious crop circles suddenly appear. No one can explain them. Are they \_\_\_\_\_ leaving their mark on the English countryside? Maybe it is down \_\_\_\_\_ creating these crop circles with various wind patterns? Whatever the answer no one has come up with the right one yet! One theory is there are a group of crop-circle makers who like to create these elaborate images in the wheat fields. Either way, the result intrigues most English people who find the subject fascinating to discuss. Of course, if you happen to be a farmer in Wiltshire \_\_\_\_\_ suddenly has this strange image in it then this can be a problem, as every crop circle costs \_\_\_\_\_ to flattened wheat. Charging visitors to see them can make up \_\_\_\_\_.

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## GRAMMAR

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

### The Mysterious English Crop Circles

Summertime in South West England sees strange things happening in the farmers' fields. Mysterious crop circles suddenly appear. No one can explain (1)\_\_. Are (2)\_\_ a hoax or are aliens leaving their mark on the English countryside? Maybe it is down to Mother Nature creating (3)\_\_ crop circles with various wind patterns? Whatever the answer no one has come up with the right one yet! One theory is (4)\_\_\_\_\_ are a group of crop-circle makers who like to create these elaborate images in the wheat fields. Either way, the result intrigues most English people who find the subject fascinating to discuss. Of course, if you happen to be a farmer in Wiltshire (5)\_\_ wheat field suddenly has this strange image in it (6)\_\_ this can be a problem, as (7)\_\_ crop circle costs the farmer money due to flattened wheat. Charging visitors to see them can make up (8)\_\_ of the losses.

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The crop circle images are best seen from above. Most are magnificent. Every year 50-60 circles materialise in the county (1)\_\_ Wiltshire in the rolling chalk downlands of South West England. Oddly, only 40-50 appear around the rest of (2)\_\_ world! The result is a booming tourist trade has developed. Crop circle enthusiasts come in their thousands. Each has their own theory. Crop circles are best spotted from the air. Photographers love them! Some look like the feet of an alien spaceship, others are like faces.

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Dr Ian Baillie (3)\_\_ is a retired physics teacher from Folkestone said recently: "(4)\_\_ have been studying crop circles since the late eighties, and making annual visits since 1994. The patterns are all mathematical. There's sacred geometry there. There's ancient history (5)\_\_ classical mythology (6)\_\_, and intelligently-guided energy." He added, "Just look at the bloom on the wheat." He points at the thin sheen of dust on the wheat stalks. "That would be wiped off if someone was flattening it, (7)\_\_ you (8)\_\_ still see it".



## SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings: **Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20**

1	mysterious	11	fascinating
2	fields	12	intrigues
3	geometry	13	wheat
4	mythology	14	elaborate
5	occasional	15	hoax
6	mathematical	16	magnificent
7	physics	17	materialise
8	aliens	18	enthusiasts
9	various	19	photographers
10	theory	20	spaceship

## LINKS

[http://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images?\\_adv\\_prop=image&fr=chr-greentree\\_ff&va=crop+circle+questions](http://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images?_adv_prop=image&fr=chr-greentree_ff&va=crop+circle+questions)

<http://www.cropcircleconnector.com/anasazi/faq98.html>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2020910/Crop-circles-Now-ET-little-help-mircowaves-GPS.html>

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-6223143790883248313>

<http://mountzion144.ning.com/group/cropcirclesinnovation/forum/topics/uk-crop-circle-season-2009-4?commentId=2127676%3AComment%3A225582&groupId=2127676%3AGroup%3A225508>

<http://www.kachina.net/~alunajoy/98july.html>

<http://www.nhne.com/specialreports/srcropcircles/qa.html>

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