

A moment that changed me: I had a heart attack at 37 – so I went to live in a cave

Level 3: Advanced – Teacher's notes

Article summary: After a heart attack at 37, a Colorado wilderness guide decides to live on and off in a series of caves to heal and reflect.

Time: 60–90 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Collocations: verb + noun (and antonyms)

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

- amenities
- embrace
- stents
- Wilderness, wilderness
- reawakening
- reflect
- expire
- cardiac
- hide(s)

3. Comprehension check

- Encourage students to skim the text first to get a general sense of the content. Then, ask them to scan the text again to find the information to answer the questions. Have them compare their answers in small groups.

Key:

- He was active, had been in the Marine Corps and was training for a 245 km ultramarathon.*
- He became a wilderness and survival skills guide.*
- a group of 85-year-olds*
- Some were next to springs or near better fishing, hunting, and foraging. The "main cave" had a bed– a big pile of grass and leaves, which was comfortable. It had a bit of a skylight and a place to hang clothes.*
- a notebook, a photo of his sons, something to write with, a steel bottle*
- foraged food – plants, berries, tubers, roots, hunted fish, squirrels, rabbits*
- He would make stone tools, build traps, baskets and clay pots, tan hides and collect firewood.*
- He was woken up one night by a young black bear licking his feet.*
- accepting the pattern of life that exists in the wild*
- He now rents a place, drives a truck, has a TV and shares his skills on YouTube while also spending time in nature.*
- to focus on family, community, and the natural world*

1. Warmer

- Ask students to discuss the questions in small groups. Monitor and note down good examples of language related to the topic. Invite students to share some of their most memorable ideas or opinions with the rest of the class.

2. Key words

- Ask students to complete the task in pairs or individually. Encourage students to share any collocations and synonyms they know.

Key:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. Wilderness | 8. hide |
| 2. stent | 9. tuber |
| 3. Cardiac | 10. reflect |
| 4. Rehab | 11. reawakening |
| 5. Amenities | 12. expire |
| 6. forage | 13. embrace |
| 7. cache | 14. outlier |

- Ask students to complete the task in pairs and compare their answers with another pair.

Key:

- Outliers
- rehab
- tubers
- foraging
- cache

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4. Key language

- a. Ask students to guess the antonyms first. Then, have them scan the text as quickly as possible for the phrases. Check answers with the whole class.

Key:

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. <i>lead</i> | 5. <i>appreciate</i> |
| 2. <i>rushed</i> | 6. <i>reach</i> |
| 3. <i>fit</i> | 7. <i>embrace</i> |
| 4. <i>put into</i> | 8. <i>fuel</i> |

- b. Ask students to write their own questions and elicit some examples from the class. Then, ask students to discuss their questions in small groups. Monitor and make notes of recurring errors and good language use to share with the class at the end of the activity.

5. Discussion

- a. Ask students to discuss the statements in small groups. Encourage them to use newly acquired vocabulary but focus mainly on having them engage with the topic and practise their fluency. If there is time, regroup students and have them share their opinions with different classmates.

6. In your own words

- a. First, give students a few minutes to think about their experience individually and make notes. If students struggle to develop ideas, tell them they can write about someone else's experience or any interaction with nature, like seeing a rare flower, bird, or mushroom or feeding birds at the park.

Then, put students in pairs and get them to tell each other about their experience and ask each other questions to help them brainstorm what they will write. Give them time to write about their experiences and work in pairs again to peer-review their texts before sharing them with the rest of the class. Ask students to share a photo of the experience and their text if possible.