


4 Town and Country



This is the Supertree Grove in the Gardens by the Bay, a futuristic botanical gardens and park in Marina Bay, Singapore. The tree-like structures provide shade during the day and come alive with a display of light and sound at night time. The tallest of the Supertrees is 16 storeys high and visitors can take a trip to the top. The Supertrees are made of concrete and steel, but they are planted with over 162,900 real plants, including tropical flowering climbing plants.



1 Which words describe the Supertrees?

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| a silent | d unique |
| b spectacular | e ancient |
| c completely natural | |

Lesson 1

Discussion

'Living in the countryside is really boring.' Discuss.

1 Listen. Listen and repeat. 🎧 TR: 4.1

2 Listen and read. 🎧 TR: 4.2

drawback
privilege

lifestyle
remote

picturesque
self-sufficient

Away from it all in Matavenero

Interviewer: Lotte, you live in a busy city – Amsterdam – but you've just spent three months in a community that is very far from city life. Tell us about it.

Lotte: Yes, I've just spent the spring with my family visiting Matavenero. It's a **picturesque** village high up in the Sierra de Ancares mountains in Spain.

Interviewer: Why did your family decide to go there?

Lotte: My mum and dad had been wanting to experience life away from the hustle and bustle of a city. They had both been working very hard since Mum got her new job. So they wanted complete peace and quiet.

Interviewer: Well, I imagine you got that!

Lotte: We certainly did. It's very **remote**. There are no roads leading to Matavenero, only a dirt track.

Interviewer: How did you get there, then?

Lotte: We got a bus, then we walked. It was a long way, but it was worth it. The views were spectacular.

Interviewer: What did you learn about the village?

Lotte: Because it's so far from other places, it has to be **self-sufficient**. People grow their own food, build their own houses and recycle their waste. You don't need much money in the village, as there isn't much to buy.

Interviewer: Has the village always been like this?

Lotte: No, it hasn't. The village's original inhabitants had been working in mining, but the village was abandoned in the 1960s when life became too difficult. Then, in 1989, the town was re-inhabited by five friends from Germany who had been searching for a place where they could live a self-sufficient **lifestyle**. They were joined by an international mix of others who shared the same vision. The group began to rebuild the existing houses and build new ones. The eco-village that exists today has about 60 inhabitants.

Interviewer: So, you didn't have to go to school for a few weeks while you were there?

Lotte: That's what I had been hoping! But there was a school in the village. It was great, though, and I made such a lot of fantastic friends.

Interviewer: Were you sorry to leave Matavenero and come back to city life?

Lotte: That's a difficult question. There are pros and cons. I loved it there – it was a **privilege** to experience a totally different way of living. But there are **drawbacks**. Life there can be hard. All in all, Amsterdam is my home.



3 Answer the questions.

- 1 How does Lotte describe Matavenero?
- 2 Why is Matavenero difficult to get to?
- 3 Why did Lotte's mum and dad want to spend time in a quiet place?
- 4 What do Matavenero's inhabitants do to be self-sufficient?
- 5 What kind of work did the original inhabitants of the village do?
- 6 Would Lotte like to live in Matavenero all the time?

4 Circle the correct words.

- 1 This city isn't **difficult** / **picturesque**, but it's a nice place to live.
- 2 They moved to the country to experience a different **lifestyle** / **drawback**.
- 3 You can't drive to the village. It's very **hard** / **remote**.
- 4 It's a **privilege** / **challenge** to visit such a wonderful place.
- 5 They live far from any shops, so they have to be **picturesque** / **self-sufficient**.
- 6 Pollution is one of the **drawbacks** / **opportunities** of city life.