



Name: _____

QUIZ

Points: _____

Reading Explorer 3: Unit 5 Lesson A

DIRECTIONS: Choose the best answer for each question.

Land of Ice and Fire

[A] With the Atlantic Ocean to its south and the Greenland Sea to its north, Iceland is Europe's westernmost country, with the world's most northerly capital city, Reykjavik. Over a thousand years ago, Viking explorers migrated from northern Europe to Iceland, where they eventually established the world's first parliament. The country's national language can still be traced to the one spoken by the Vikings. Today, Iceland has a population of about 340,000, spread over more than 100,000 square kilometers. Despite its small size, there are many reasons to visit this remarkable country.

City of Culture

[B] Most visitors' first port of call is Reykjavik, a small and clean city known for its colorful and stylish architecture. The city's downtown area is lined with shops, art galleries, cafes, and bookstores. In 2000, Reykjavik was awarded the title of Europe's City of Culture, thanks to its art and museum scenes, and lively nightlife.

[C] The good news for visitors is that Reykjavik's temperatures are fairly mild. Even in the winter, daytime temperatures are usually above freezing. During winter months, nights are long and the northern lights become visible, lighting up the night sky with a spectacular natural display. In summer, the country gets almost 22 hours of daylight. During this time, native Icelanders and visitors alike enjoy partying outdoors until dawn.

Hot Springs

[D] Iceland is one of the most volcanically active nations in the world, with a number of thermal springs around the island. All are heated naturally by underground volcanic activity. In fact, Iceland converts energy generated by these springs into electricity, which powers and heats people's homes and businesses. As a result, Iceland burns very little fossil fuel, such as oil and gas. Iceland has some of the cleanest air in the world.

[E] One of Iceland's most popular hot springs is the Blue Lagoon, a huge lake of bright blue seawater just outside Reykjavik. Surrounded by volcanoes and lava fields, the Blue Lagoon receives more than 1.3 million visitors a year. After a long day's sightseeing or a long night of partying, visitors can relax their muscles and release their tension in the lagoon's steaming hot water, which has an average temperature of about 38 degrees Celsius. Some believe the waters are able to cure certain illnesses and improve skin quality.

Caves and Monsters

[F] Most of the inner part of Iceland is uninhabited and relatively inaccessible. Nevertheless, there is a range of outdoor activities to enjoy elsewhere in the country. This is particularly true along the coasts: "Iceland is an adventure," said Sol Squire, whose Icelandic company organizes adventure trips. "We have Europe's biggest glaciers, active volcanoes, cave explorations, and skiing."

[G] One of Iceland's most popular attractions is caving. Exploring Iceland's unusual lava caves, most of which formed more than 10,000 years ago, requires only basic caving knowledge and equipment. Ice caves are more challenging, however, and require special clothes and hiking tools. The best-known ice caves are in Vatnajokull - a layer of ice which, at 8,000 square kilometers, is Iceland's - and Europe's - largest glacier. It also happens to be situated just above an active volcano!

[H] If exploring caves and glaciers doesn't interest you, head south. Just outside the town of Vik, check out the huge rock formations that were once believed to be monsters turned into stone. These are a dramatic part of the scenery on one of Iceland's most magnificent black-sand beaches.

The Golden Circle

[I] And finally, no trip to Iceland would be complete without a visit to the Golden Circle, a pathway northeast of Reykjavik that connects Gullfoss (a huge "Golden Waterfall"), the hot springs region of Geysir, and Thingvellir National Park. The mid-Atlantic fault that runs through Iceland is literally pulling the island apart. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Thingvellir Valley, where the land is actually separating and the stony ground beneath your feet frequently shifts. Hold on while you hike!

1. What is the main idea of this passage?
 - a. Iceland's culture and history is unique.
 - b. Tourists love Iceland's hot springs.
 - c. Iceland is a good country for sightseeing.
 - d. Reykjavik is a stylish city to visit.
2. When the writer describes the variety of places in Iceland, which is NOT mentioned?
 - a. a city
 - b. hot springs
 - c. mountains
 - d. beaches
3. Where would a reader be most likely to find this article?
 - a. in a travel magazine
 - b. in a guide to Iceland's architecture
 - c. in a blog about beach restaurants
 - d. in a textbook about volcanoes
4. What is special about the Thingvellir Valley?
 - a. a fault line
 - b. the black sand
 - c. the giant rocks
 - d. the hot springs
5. The following sentence would be best placed at the end of which paragraph?
Iceland really offers visitors a variety of exciting choices for outdoor adventures.
 - a. Paragraph E
 - b. Paragraph F
 - c. Paragraph G
 - d. Paragraph H

1	2	3	4	5

DIRECTIONS: Choose the best answer for each question.

While It Lasts

[A] The ultimate irony¹ of writing an article about the charms of a relatively unspoiled island is the fact that the writer is contributing to the island losing those very charms. We all know what happens. The more people that the article inspires to travel to the island, the more likely that peace and quiet will give way to noise and bustle.² For this reason, I have decided that I am not going to tell you the name of this island. I will be honest and tell you, rather selfishly, that I do not want you to go there. The next time I go back - which I hope is soon given the magnificence of the place - I would rather not be faced with the heart-sinking, gut-wrenching³ reality that a large chunk of humanity has migrated there.

[B] At this point, I think you must have a question: "What is the point of writing this article?" Although this answer may not satisfy you, I am writing this article to simply tell you that such an island - clean, beautiful, raw, and inspiring - still exists somewhere on Earth. In fact, if you look hard enough, you might even be able to find it yourself. I am already anticipating another question from you. I can almost hear you screaming at the page. "If you don't tell us anything about the island, why would we want to go there?"

[C] That is a good question and, so, I will say this. The island is relatively isolated and located somewhere in Southeast Asia. That narrows it down to about a dozen countries or so. If you know anything about isolated islands in Southeast Asia, then you should be picturing an incredible coastline, crystal clear water, plenty of sunshine, and spectacular sunsets. It is the kind of scene that appears in a photoshopped picture on the cover of a travel magazine - a quiet beach, few boats in the sea, and no (literally zero) fast food restaurants. On this island, that scene is real. Even the ugly electrical cables and wires that remind you of the city are highly inconspicuous⁴ as most of the island's accommodations run on solar power.

[D] I can hear another question coming: "What can people do at this place?" Once again, you may not be satisfied with my answer. The answer is "nothing." Sure, there are places to go and things to see, but they are nothing to write home about. There are two small fishing villages on either end of the island. Their purpose is to provide employment for the local population and, aside from some decent seafood in the south and a temple in the north, they are not really destinations for visitors. In the center of the island there are some very old trees that some people choose to take pictures of. However, they are certainly not the tallest or the oldest trees in the world. About 1.5 kilometers west of this, there is a waterfall that one can swim under. This is fun, of course, but not something that will make you run to renew your passport. Finally, on the far western edge of the island, some of the locals have converted their own kitchens and living rooms into casual restaurants. Once again, the food is very good but not the best you will ever have.

[E] I can now hear your last question: "Why bother going if there is really nothing to do?" The answer is easy. Because, the last time I checked, doing nothing is the ultimate goal of a real vacation. And what better place to do nothing than in such a naturally wonderful island? See you there!

Glossary Study

1. **Irony** refers to an amusing situation in which something that is opposite to what you intended or expected happens.
2. **Bustle** means a lot of activity.
3. Something that is **gut-wrenching** makes you upset or anxious.
4. Something that is **inconspicuous** is hardly noticeable.

6. Why does the writer not want readers to go to the island?

- Too many tourists will affect the lives of the local people.
- Heavy tourism will have a negative effect on the natural environment.
- The island will become too crowded, and the peace of the island would be ruined.
- Visitors will not really appreciate the island.

7. What does the word *raw* mean in paragraph B?

- uncooked
- natural
- exciting
- isolated

8. What is the purpose of paragraph C?

- to explain how the island receives its electricity
- to tell readers where the island is located
- to explain why the island is an attractive place
- to show that Southeast Asian islands are the best

9. In paragraph D, what does the phrase *nothing to write home about* mean?

- There is nothing very special about the island.
- Visitors cannot visit the two small fishing villages.
- You are not allowed to tell others about the island.
- There is no postal service on the island.

10. According to the writer, what is the best thing about a vacation?

- relaxing
- being adventurous
- learning new things
- trying delicious foods

6	7	8	9	10

Thanks!