8 Reading

Before Reading

1. ***Eco***- means "related to the earth or environment." What do you think ***ecotourism*** means?
2. Read the passage and underline all the words and phrases that can help you understand what ecotourism means.

Ecotourism: See the World While Saving It

Imagine vacationing in a place of stunning, natural beauty. Picture yourself relaxing on a pristine beach in Belize, exploring the desert on a camel in Riyadh, or following lions and zebras in Kenya. Now imagine that while enjoying those experiences, you are also helping to preserve the environment, protect wildlife, and support local communities. Sound too good to be true? It isn't! Such vacations are part of the fastest growing trend in the travel industry. The trend is called ecotourism.

While ecotourism was almost unheard of before the 1990s, it has quickly become a multi-billion dollar industry. But what exactly *is* ecotourism? These are some of its characteristics:

- It involves travel to natural, often remote, destinations. These are often protected areas where development is limited.
- Ecotourism destinations focus on recycling, water conservation, and using renewable energy sources.
- It builds environmental awareness. As visitors explore an area, they also learn about it.
- It provides an economic incentive to preserve the environment and raises money to help protect it.
- It creates financial opportunities and jobs for the local population.

Costa Rica was one of the first ecotourism success stories. At one time, Costa Rica had the highest rate of deforestation in all of Latin America. However, since ecotourism, there has been a dramatic reduction in deforestation. Now, more than a quarter of Costa Rica's land is protected from development. Costa Rica is now the world's top ecotourism destination. Amazingly, this small country of five million people has about three million visitors per year.

Stacy Davison is one of the three million tourists who chose to visit Costa Rica this year. "We wanted to explore a country that was largely unspoiled by development. And, boy, did we get what we were looking for. We saw beautiful beaches, lush rain forest, and exotic wildlife." Stacy is especially enthusiastic about a wildlife refuge she and her husband visited during their trip. "Getting there took four hours by bus along an unpaved road. But it was so beautiful that it was worth it. We hiked the trails and took a tour through the rain forest canopy. Our guide showed us how to poke a stick into a termite nest to get a snack (They have a nutty flavor!), and how to use live leaf-cutter ants to create stitches for a cut. It was quite an amazing experience!"

Stacy also enjoyed knowing that the money she was spending on her vacation was being used in environmentally responsible ways. She stayed in locally-owned, environmentally-friendly hotels that grow their own fruits and vegetables, and use renewable sources of energy such as wind and solar power.

Undoubtedly, ecotourism plays a critical role in preserving the land in Costa Rica as well as in other ecotourism destinations around the globe. At the same time, ecotourism provides visitors with a unique, unforgettable, and educational vacation. Basically, ecotourism is a win-win situation for both the tourists and the

Choose the correct words :

1-ECOTOURISM was almost unheard before the { 1990s - 2020s}.

2- { Brazil – Costa Rica } was one of the first ecotourism stories.

3- Stacy Davision is one of three million tourists who chose to visit { BraziL – Costa Rica}.

4-Stacy stayed in locally-owned , environmentally { hotel – apartment }.