
OVER-TOURISM

This month's Teacher's Corner explores the world of travel and tourism. With travel becoming easier and cheaper all around the world, people who live in popular tourist locations have begun to ask if too much tourism can be a problem. In this week's activity, students will debate the positives and negatives of tourism.

LEVEL

Intermediate to Advanced

LANGUAGE FOCUS

Speaking, listening (primary focus)

Reading, writing (secondary focus)

GOALS

During this activity students will

- Practice reading skills while reading an article about over-tourism
- Practice speaking and listening during a debate on tourism

MATERIALS

- Teacher: whiteboard or chalkboard, markers or chalk, a timing device, Internet (optional)
- Students: pencils or pens, notebooks or writing paper

PREPARATION

1. Read through all the materials carefully.
2. Before class, read the article "[Too Much Tourism](#)" and listen to the audio version of the story.

3. Print out copies of Appendix 1: “Too Much Tourism” article. Print enough copies so that each student has one. **Note:** If a computer lab is an option for your class, have the students read the article by visiting this URL: <https://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/too-much-tourism/4118421.html>
4. On the website, the article has an audio version that can be streamed over the Internet or downloaded and played on a computer in class.

ACTIVITY PART ONE: “TOO MUCH TOURISM” ARTICLE

1. Direct students’ attention to the board.
2. On the board write the word *tourism*. Ask the students what the word *tourism* means.
3. Next, as a check of their understanding, ask the class where in their country is popular for tourism?
4. Then, write the word *over* in front of the word *tourism* to create the new word *over-tourism*.
5. Again ask the students to provide a definition for this word.
 - a. **Note:** Over-tourism is a recent issue that has gained attention in the news and travel industry. It does not have an exact definition, but as long as students describe a problem of too many visitors to a place, their definition is acceptable.
6. Once again, check the students’ understanding by asking if there are any locations in their country that they think face problems with over-tourism.
 - a. **Note:** Depending on the level of the students, this question can be asked as a Think, Pair, Share. First have the students think about the question, then have them share their

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answers with a partner, finally have the pairs of students share their answers with the class.

7. Next, provide each student with a copy of the “Too Much Tourism” article in Appendix 1. Give students time to read the article.
 - a. **Note:** To provide students more listening practice, have them listen to the article by playing the audio version of the story from the webpage.
8. To check their comprehension, ask the following questions:
 - a. How many trips are tourists expected to take by the year 2030? (Answer: 1.8 billion)
 - b. What is Croatia doing to help stop over-tourism? (Answer: Limiting the number of daily visitors to the city of Dubrovnik.)
9. Finally, as a show of hands, ask the students who thinks limiting tourism is a good idea? Tell the class they will have the opportunity to share their opinions in a debate.

ACTIVITY PART TWO: THE TOURISM DEBATE

1. **Note:** For this debate, students will argue for and against tourism. If you teach a large class, you may want to break students into groups and then have these groups form two teams that can debate. Another option for larger classes is for students to volunteer to participate in the debate, while the rest of the class can act as audience and decide which team won.
2. Begin the debate by dividing the class (or a group of students) into two teams. Decide which team will be the *For* side, which will argue in favor of the topic, and which will be the *Against* side, which will argue against the theme of the topic.

3. While the students are forming For and Against teams, go to the chalkboard and write the theme and topics for the debate:

Debate Theme: Tourism

Topic #1: Whether tourism is always good for the local economy, and the economy is more important than too many tourists.

Topic #2: Whether too much tourism can harm the local culture of a city.

Topic #3: Whether people should travel less.

- a. **Note:** If time permits have the students debate all three topics. For large classes, students can take turns debating: one group of students debates one topic, then the next group of students debates the next topic, and so on.
4. Direct the students' attention to the three debate topics that you have written on the board and tell the students they should prepare their ideas on these topics for the debate.
 - a. **Note:** For more advanced lessons, assign the debate preparation as homework so students can research the topics and prepare with more details.
5. Once the students are prepared, have the students who are going to debate first come to the front of the class. Have the two teams form lines on opposite ends of the board. Begin the debate by having the first student in line of the For team present his or her argument for one minute. Then the first student from the Against team has one minute to challenge the ideas presented by the For team's student.



6. After the first students from each team have spoken for a minute, have them move to the back of the line and have the second student in each line move forward. They will now debate against each other. This time the Against student goes first for one minute. The student for the For team then gets to present his or her argument on the topic. Continue until all students have had the opportunity to debate.

Remember: An effective debate is not only about presenting an argument but also challenging the argument of one's opponent. For more information on debates and ideas for using debates in class, check out [The Great Mini-Debate](#) on the American English webpage.

APPENDIX 1: TOO MUCH TOURISM?

Cities – particularly in Europe – are increasingly taking steps against tourists. Venice, Italy, for example, is planning to bar some large passenger ships. Barcelona, Spain, has placed restrictions on apartment rentals. The problem these cities say they are dealing with is "over-tourism" -- too many tourists visiting at once.

Debate over tourism

Jonathan Keates is the chairman of the Venice In Peril Fund, an aid and activist group. He said too many people are crowding the walkways and canals of Venice, interfering in what he calls a "still living city." Taleb Rifai is the secretary general of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). He spoke recently to tourism ministers at London's World Travel Market. He said the rise of slogans, such as "tourists go home" and "tourists are terrorists," was "a wake-up call."

Anger about tourism could continue to grow as more people travel every year. The UNWTO estimates tourists will take 1.8 billion trips by 2030, up from 1.2 billion in 2016. Low-cost airline tickets are helping fuel the growth in tourism numbers, along with increasing travel from China. Yet many places depend on tourism for jobs and wealth. Around 10 percent of the world's gross domestic product, or GDP, comes from tourism. Taleb Rifai said that growth is not "the enemy." But, he said tourism must be made "sustainable and responsible" to help local communities.

What are countries and cities doing to limit tourism?

Ecuador permits only 100,000 visitors to the Galapagos Islands each year. The Croatian city of Dubrovnik is considering permitting only 4,000 visitors daily. Visitors have flooded the Adriatic Sea town since it was used as a setting for the television series "Game of Thrones."

Other cities are urging tourists to visit less famous parts of town. Prague, for example, has an "off the beaten track" tourist program. London is promoting neighborhoods such as Greenwich and Richmond. Barcelona has cracked down on unofficial housing rentals and established a tourism council that includes residents, businesses, and unions.

Is there a solution?

Gloria Guevara is the president and CEO of the London-based World Travel & Tourism Council. "There is no one solution for all. Every destination is different," she said.

Tim Fairhurst leads planning and policy at the European Tourism Association. He said businesses do not want to put their customers in places where they are treated as unwelcome. He said simple measures can make a difference, such as changing opening hours or increasing parking space.

"There are lots of ways in which we use our cities inefficiently," he said, "We could do better."

Pan Pylas wrote this story for the Associated Press. John Russell adapted it for Learning English. Caty Weaver was the editor.