

UNIT 13

POMPEII, THE VANISHED CITY

(This passage is taken from: Time-life Books 1992)

Students Learning Outcomes:

On completion of the unit, students will be able to:

- answer the comprehension questions.
- illustrate the use of adverbs.
- identify and use adverbial phrases and clauses.
- recognize varying positions of adverbs.
- write a research report.
- write a letter.
- prepare themselves for job interview.

Pre-reading:

- Have you ever heard/read of any vanished / ancient city in Pakistan? Discuss.

In the middle years of the first century A.D., Pompeii was a prosperous and thriving city, only a few days' journey by road from the great city of Rome. It had about 20,000 residents, and was situated on a well-watered coastal plain with particularly fertile soil,



bearing three or more crops a year. The climate was gentle with brief winters, long springs and autumns, and summer days cooled by sea breezes. The nearby sea offered a fine harvest for fishermen. Pompeii lay alongside the Sarno River which served as a highway to the interior. While ease and pleasure were very much in the air, the hum of business was always audible. In addition to its role as a trading link between the Italian interior and the outside world, Pompeii was a regional centre for cloth making and dyeing, and a home for many other craftsmen. But the cause of Pompeii's destruction had been present all along. Above it loomed the volcano, Mount Vesuvius, now beginning to stir after centuries of sleep, Vesuvius had concealed its nature well. Rising to a height of only about 2,000 metres, the mountain had given no clear sign of threatening behavior through all of its recorded



history. Its upper slopes were sometimes warm, but this was hardly considered **menacing**; few people were even aware that it was a volcano. It was innocently cloaked in green, with pastures, orchards and vineyards spreading up its sides. Understandably enough, no legend or folk-tale warned of its darker side the volcano had not erupted in more than a thousand years.

However, all that while, tremendous pressure had been building up far underground. Early in August of 79 A.D., tremors shook the countryside around Vesuvius, accompanied by a deep rumbling sound that signalled the approaching end of the volcano's long repose. Some people gathered their belongings and left for safer ground. They were none too soon. During the very early morning of August 24, with a tremendous crack, the rocky crust that had long sealed the volcano gave way under pressure and was blown into fragments, transforming Mount Vesuvius into a giant cannon, open to the sky. It sent a vast mass of molten rock heavenwards, which then rained down on Pompeii. During the early hours of the eruption, most of the remaining population fled. Yet at least 2,000 people decided to stay, intimidated by what was going on but unwilling to abandon their precious homes and profitable business. Soon the volcano demonstrated a new way to kill. A hot cloud of lightweight ash poured down the sides of the mountain, followed by rock fragments made fluid by temperature as high as 400 degree Centigrade. Pompeii escaped these avalanches at first, but Vesuvius was still gaining strength and finally took deadly aim at Pompeii, killing every person remaining there. The ash covered everything that was left, burying the city in its final agony.

Through time, Pompeii almost completely slipped from the world's memory. Even among scholars, the precise location of Pompeii remained unknown, primarily because a thick flow of molten rock had poured over the area from eruptions in later years. This had entirely altered the shape of the coast. Also, when the digging to uncover the ruins began in the eighteenth century, the debris from these excavations had been left scattered in heaps around the site, further obscuring it. Rainwater, too, collected and had hastened its decay. These early excavators had acted purely for the sake of plunder; they made no genuine effort to investigate the past. This did not come about until the appointment in 1860 of the archaeologist Fiorelli as director of the excavations.

Fiorelli set as his goal the total recovery of the vanished city of Pompeii. His approach was the essence of discipline and orderliness. He removed all the debris that had piled up during earlier excavations and installed a drainage system to draw off the rainwater. He differed from previous archeologists because he was the first to believe that systematic study of the ruins and all that they contained was



essential. Only in this way could their past history be thoroughly understood. After tracing the perimeter walls, he mapped out the site and divided it into districts, identifying individual buildings and carefully numbering them in a logical sequence.

Bit by bit, as details accumulated and were pieced together, the long buried past came alive. Because the city and its houses had been taken from the world almost intact, they could be brought back almost whole. As the work proceeded, Fiorelli made sure that every new object that emerged was given a precise description, not just of its appearance and nature, but also of its position in relation to other objects. He insisted that, whenever possible, new discoveries were left in place rather than removed for shipment to a museum or storehouse. Not only interior wall paintings were left intact, but also exterior notices, shop signs and even **graffiti**.

As he worked, he recorded his progress in journals to help future archaeologists, many of whom followed the lead set by Fiorelli. As a result of his excavations, all manner of household items were found: eggs and fish were discovered lying on a dining table, as well as pots containing meat bones. Personal items of every kind turned up, like jewellery, cosmetics, perfume and combs. In a way, voices could be heard as well, as the graffiti that were uncovered gave insight into the lives of the citizens of Pompeii. Among these scribbles on the walls were messages from lovers, personal attacks and casual observations on the world in general. The excavation told a story of ordinary life stopped in its tracks.

And then there were the people themselves, recovered by a method that even today still seems almost magical....

At Pompeii, volcanic ash had been the cause of a sort of preservation miracle. During the later phases of the eruption, this ash enveloped many of the victims and then solidified around them, leaving body-shaped cavities behind when the flesh decayed. Fiorelli was the first to realize the possibility that there were human remains buried in the ruins of the city, and that their impressions might have been left deep in the sandy covering of volcanic ash.

The moment of discovery occurred in February 1863, when a workman accidentally made a hole in a mound at the site. Fiorelli noticed that there was a cavity of some sort. He ordered liquid plaster to be poured into the cavity and gave time to solidify. He had the surrounding ash removed, revealing complete figure that was uncannily life-like. Eventually, he was responsible for many victims being uncovered by this technique, and people's fascination grew as the intimate details of Pompeii's tragic story were disclosed. The plaster casts fixed the terror and

desperation of that long ago disaster in a kind of eternal present.

From the first cast created by Fiorelli in 1863 to the many others created by archeologists since, these frozen images of death send a shock and a jolt to our sense even so many centuries later. The rediscovery of Pompeii is one of archeology's greatest stories, because from it has come not only an extraordinary scene of disaster but also a precisely detailed and comprehensive picture of life in the classical world. It was the destiny of Pompeii to speak to the future with unsurpassed clarity – a destiny that involved a terrible doom.

Reading and Thinking Skills:

1. Answer the following questions.

- i) What was it that first sent people fleeing from Pompeii?
- ii) How was Pompeii city before destruction?
- iii) Explain why some people chose to stay in Pompeii?
- iv) What finally caused the death of those who stayed in Pompeii?
- v) Suggest the reasons why Fiorelli insisted that discoveries were left in place and not moved to museum.
- vi) What two features of its position made Pompeii an ideal trading link between the Italian interior and outside the world?
- vii) Why were some people reluctant to leave Pompeii?
- viii) Why was Pompeii skipped away from the world's memory till 1860?
- ix) What is the significance of the rediscovery of Pompeii?
- x) How was a hole made in a mound at a site?

2. Choose the correct answer.

I What is the fact about Pompeii city?

- (a) Once it was a prosperous city which destroyed in 79 A.D.
- (b) Its inhabitants already knew that a volcano was going to erupt anytime.
- (c) It was a prosperous city of Denmark.
- (d) It was destroyed in 20 B.C.

ii) During the early hours of eruption of lava

- (a) everyone fled.
- (b) 2000 people decided to stay.
- (c) nobody left the city.
- (d) 5000 residents decided to stay.

- iii) Pompeii was situated near
 - (a) Paris.
 - (b) Rome.
 - (c) London.
 - (d) Tokyo.
- iv) The height of Mount Vesuvius is
 - (a) about 2000 meters.
 - (b) 5000 meters.
 - (c) 1500 meters.
 - (d) 100 meters.
- v) Fiorelli was
 - (a) an archeologist.
 - (b) an astronomer.
 - (c) an architect.
 - (d) a plumber.
- vi) The climate of Pompeii was
 - (a) gentle with brief winters.
 - (b) gentle with severe winters.
 - (c) severe cold.
 - (d) severe hot.
- vii) Pompeii was a regional centre for
 - (a) caps making and dyeing.
 - (b) shoes making.
 - (c) cloth making and dyeing.
 - (d) Jackets making.
- viii) During the early hours of the eruption,
 - (a) most of the remaining population stayed.
 - (b) Most of the remaining population fled.
 - (c) Most of the population died.
 - (d) Most of the population got injured.
- ix) Not only interior wall paintings were left intact,
 - (a) but also the train signs.
 - (b) but also the road signs.
 - (c) but also the shop signs.
 - (d) but also exterior notices, shop signs and even graffiti.
- x) The early excavators had acted purely
 - (a) for the sake of knowledge.
 - (b) for the sake of plunder.
 - (c) for the sake of gold.
 - (d) for the sake of silver.

3. Mark the sentences as True or False.

- i) 'Graffiti' means writings or drawings on a surface in a public place. (T / F)
- ii) Fiorelli was the first archeologist who studied the ruins of Pompeii systematically. (T / F)
- iii) 2000 people decided to stay because they didn't want to abandon their precious homes and business. (T / F)
- iv) The early excavators had acted purely for the sake of plunder. (T / F)
- v) The re-discovery of Pompeii does not tell anything about the city. (T / F)
- vi) Pompeii was a prosperous and thriving city. (T / F)
- vii) The volcano had not erupted in more than a thousand years. (T / F)
- viii) A hot cloud of lightweight ash poured down the side of the plains. (T / F)
- ix) John set as his goal the total recovery of the vanished city Pompeii. (T / F)
- x) Fiorelli was the first to realize the possibility that there were human remains buried in the ruins of the city. (T / F)

Critical Thinking:

- Why should we take precautionary steps before a disaster occurs?

Grammar:

Adverb

Adverb is a word which tells more about a verb, an adjective or another adverb.

Examples:

- i) Mr. Naeem teaches English *devotedly*.
- ii) The weather is *too* hot, today.
- iii) Our cricket team played *very* well.

NOTE: *An adverb is used to express manner, time, place, reason or cause of an action.*

Adverbial Phrase

An adverbial phrase is a group of words without subject and predicate, which performs the function of an adverb.

Examples:

- i) The tiger ran *with great speed*.
- ii) He spoke *in soft manner*.

- iii) She was cooking food *at that moment*.

Adverb clause

An adverb clause is a dependent clause which works as an adverb.

Examples:

- i) As soon as the train left, he reached the station.
- ii) The patient had died when the doctor came.
- iii) He could not go outside because it was raining heavily.
- iv) She studied hard in order that she could pass the exams.
- v) You can go on picnic wherever you want.
- vi) If we study round the clock, we will get good marks.

Activity:

Identify the adverbial phrases or clauses in the following sentences.

- i) He switched on the radio so that he could listen to the news.
- ii) His brother arrived in the evening.
- iii) He arrived before the game started.
- iv) My family had shifted to another place.
- v) He will get a good job when he graduates.
- vi) We should not speak in a rude manner.
- vii) Even if we hurry, we may not get there on time.
- viii) Aslam kept the books on the shelf.
- ix) The frightened child ran away as fast as he could.

Position of Adverbs

We can put adverbs in different positions in sentences. There are three main positions but also a lot of exceptions.

The three main positions of adverbs in English sentences:

1. Adverb at the beginning of a sentence

Unfortunately, we could not see Mount Everest.

2. Adverb in the middle of a sentence

The children *often* ride their bikes.

3. Adverb at the end of a sentence

Shazia reads a comic story *every afternoon*.

Activity:

Insert the given adverbs in their normal position in the following sentences.

- i) Students play an important role in the development of a society. (always)
- ii) I am sorry. (terribly)
- iii) My brother speaks English. (well)
- iv) She has seen a Kangaroo. (never)
- v) They have to get up early. (usually)
- vi) The bus is going. (fast)
- vii) My teacher writes. (quickly)
- viii) I go to library. (daily)
- ix) We missed the train. (unfortunately)
- x) He takes a morning walk. (every morning)

Writing Skills:

Activities

Write a letter to your friend suggesting him / her to opt information technology (IT) for his / her future career.

Research Project

- Collect information from different sources about any historical place in Pakistan and write a research report on it.

Oral Communication Skills:

Preparing For Job Interview

Do's and Don'ts for an Interview.

- Do take a practice run to the location where you are having the interview — or otherwise be sure you know exactly where it is and how long it takes to get there.
- Do your research and know the type of job interview you will encounter. And do prepare and practice for the interview, but don't memorize or over-rehearse your answers.
- Do dress the part for the job, the company, the industry.
- Do plan to arrive about 10 minutes early. Late arrival for a job interview is never excusable. If you are running late, do phone the company.

- Do greet the receptionist or assistant with courtesy and respect.
- Don't chew gum during the interview.
- If presented with a job application, do fill it out neatly, completely, and accurately.
- Do bring extra resumes to the interview. (Even better, if you have a job-skills portfolio, do bring that with you to the interview.)
- Do greet the interviewer(s) by title (Ms., Mr., Dr.)
- Do shake hands firmly. Don't have a limp or clammy handshake!
- Do wait until you are offered a chair before sitting. And do remember body language and posture: sit upright and look alert and interested at all times. Don't fidget or slouch.
- Don't tell jokes during the interview.
- Do make good eye contact with your interviewer(s).
- Do show enthusiasm in the position and the company.
- Do brush your teeth, use mouthwash, or have a breath mint before the interview.
- Do avoid using poor language, slang, and pause words (such as “like,” “uh,” and “um”).
- Don't be soft-spoken. A forceful voice projects confidence.
- Do have a high confidence and energy level, but don't be overly aggressive.
- Don't act as though you would take any job or are desperate for employment.
- Do avoid controversial topics.
- Don't say anything negative about former colleagues, supervisors, or employers.
- Do make sure that your good points come across to the interviewer in a factual, sincere manner.
- Don't ever lie. Answer questions truthfully, frankly and succinctly. And don't over-answer questions.
- Do stress your achievements. And don't offer any negative information about yourself.
- Don't answer questions with a simple “yes” or “no”. Explain whenever possible.

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- Do show off the research you have done on the company and industry when responding to questions.
 - Don't bring up or discuss personal issues or family problems.
 - Do remember that the interview is also an important time for you to evaluate the interviewer and the company she represents.
 - Don't respond to an unexpected question with an extended pause or by saying something like, "boy, that's a good question." And do repeat the question aloud or ask for the question to be repeated to give you a little more time to think about an answer. A short pause before responding is okay.
 - Do always conduct yourself as if you are determined to get the job you are discussing. Never close the door on an opportunity until you are sure about it.
 - Don't answer cell-phone calls during the interview, and do turn off (or set to silent ring) your cell phone.
 - Do show what you can do for the company rather than what the company can do for you.
 - Don't inquire about salary, vacations, bonuses, retirement, or other benefits until after you've received an offer. Be prepared for a question about your salary requirements, but do try and delay the salary talk until you have an offer to join.
 - Do close the interview by telling the interviewer(s) that you want the job and asking about the next step in the process.
 - Do try to get business cards from each person you interviewed with — or at least the correct spelling of their first and last names. And don't make assumptions about simple names regarding their spellings.
 - Do immediately take down notes after the interview concludes so you don't forget crucial details.

Activity:

Ask a student to act as an interviewer and the second student to as a candidate and conduct a job interview in pairs.