Unit 11 · Describing People, Places and Objects

STUDY NOTES

The unit in one line

- **describe** a person, place or thing: **who / what** it is, what it **does**, why it **matters**
- what is happening **now**: **am / is / are + -ing**; and **a, an, the**

Song: a busy crowd

- the singer sees people gathered in a crowd, each shouting that **their own job is better**
- some in **aprons**, some with **cameras** and big lenses, some with machines controlled from far away (**remote-controlled devices**)
- on a lawn, people stand round in rows; only a few in the middle, **cheering**; a huge screen keeps flashing the score or result
- rhymes: *crowd / aloud, around / sound, again / then*; *lens / distance* only nearly rhyme

Reading I: Mobile Phones: Uses and Abuses

- an **essay**: one subject from different sides; **uses** (good) and **abuses** (wrong or harmful use)
- **the world in our pocket:** connects us to the world in a second; parents needn't worry for hours; no line at a phone booth
- **multipurpose gadget:** calls, SMS, calculator, clock, calendar, voice recorder, music and video player, camera, games, web browser
- **quick and cheap:** keep in touch from anywhere (bus, street, meeting); a text costs **less than a call**; photos, videos, the internet
- **in a hurry:** parents reach children, **essential** in an emergency; business from a park or shop; brings the world **closer**
- **misuse:** talking or texting while driving → **accidents**; students misuse them; a nuisance in a classroom; hidden cameras harm **privacy**
- **careful:** the essay says phone radiation destroys cells in the ears and head; scientists **haven't found** that; a phone sends weak **radio waves**; **nephrons** are filters in the **kidneys**, not the head
- **the real harms:** accidents looking at a screen on the road; too little sleep; sore eyes and neck; less time for friends, play, study

Reading II: fun facts about mobile phones

- an **infographic**: facts in boxes with pictures, read in any order
- **first smartphone:** IBM's **Simon** (on sale 1994); calendar, address book, world clock, calculator, notepad, email, fax, games, a touchscreen keyboard; about **$1,000**
- **first camera phone: Japan**, **2000**
- smartphones: more powerful than the computers that guided **Apollo 11** (1969); some used in small, cheap satellites
- a person unlocks their phone at least **110 times** a day
- **Finland**: a mobile phone **throwing** contest every year
- **first mobile phone call: April 1973**; **first text message: December 1992**
- old phones about **2.5 pounds** (about 1.1 kg); a smartphone today about **250 grams**
- **ringxiety**: hearing or feeling your phone ring when it isn't
- **nomophobia**: fear of being without your phone or a signal
- phones charged with **urine**; a ton of old phones holds far more **gold** than a ton of gold ore
- not in the infographic: how many people own phones; where adults keep them

Key words

multipurpose: having many uses.
gadget: a small, useful machine.
giant: very big.
abuse: wrong or harmful use.
overlook: fail to notice; ignore.
convenience: being easy and saving time.
essential: very important, necessary.
invisible: that cannot be seen.
privacy: being free from other people watching you.
official, keyboard, signal, powerful, suffer: the infographic's words for the gap sentences

Grammar: present continuous

Person	be	verb + -ing
I	**am**	singing
he, she, it, Rohan	**is**	dancing
we, you, they	**are**	playing

- spelling the -ing form:
  - most add **-ing**: *play* → *playing*
  - silent **e** drops: *write* → *writing*, *dance* → *dancing*
  - one vowel + one consonant **doubles**: *run* → *running*, *sit* → *sitting*, *swim* → *swimming*
  - **-ie → -y**: *lie* → *lying*, *tie* → *tying*

	Present simple	Present continuous
Use	**habits**, things always true	happening **now**; a **plan** for soon
With	every day, always, often, usually	now, at the moment, Look!, Listen!, tonight
Example	*I get up at 7:00 every morning.*	*She is reading a book now.*
Question	**Do / Does** … ?	**Am / Is / Are** … ?

- after **does / doesn't**, no -s: *Does he **eat** rice? He doesn't **play** golf.*

Grammar: a, an, the

- **a / an** = one, any one, often mentioned for the first time
  - **a** before a consonant **sound**: *a mango, a university* ("yoo"), *a one-rupee coin* ("wun")
  - **an** before a vowel **sound**: *an apple, an hour* (silent h), *an MP* ("em"), *an umbrella*
- **the** = one particular thing both of us know:
  - only one: *the sun, the moon, the earth, the sky*
  - mentioned before: *I saw **a** dog. **The** dog was barking.*
  - superlatives: *the tallest, the best*
  - rivers, seas, mountain ranges: *the Karnali, the Bagmati, the Himalaya*
  - some titles: *the Prime Minister, the President*
- the **sound** decides, not the letter: *a uniform*, but *an umbrella*

Extra bit: word classes

Class	Job	Example
determiner	before a noun: which, whose, how many	***The** teacher asked me **a** question. **some** biscuits, **enough** flour*
pronoun	takes a noun's place	*Kriti is helpful. **She** is helping **us**.*
preposition	how a noun relates to other words: where, when	*on the table, in front of the temple, in the kitchen*
conjunction	joins words, phrases, sentences	*and, before, because*
interjection	strong feeling: surprise, joy, pain, grief	***Wow!** What a game! **Oh,** I forgot my bag.*

- an interjection: at the start, with **!** or a **comma**; mostly in speech and dialogues
- the job **in the sentence** decides: *This **book** is mine* (determiner); ***This** is mine* (pronoun); *after lunch* (preposition), *after we ate* (conjunction)

Speaking

- *Who are they? — They are farmers. They are digging in the field*: who they are + what they are doing **now**
- pictures and out of the window: *What is she doing? She is driving a car.*; *Is the boy playing? No, he isn't. He is reading.*

Listening: Plato

- a great thinker of ancient Greece, born in **Athens**; once sold as a **slave**; a student of **Socrates**
- opened a school outside Athens, named after **Academus**: the **Academy**, a place of **learning**
- before he died, gave it to **Speusippus**, his sister's **son**; it lasted almost a thousand years, closed by **Emperor Justinian**

Date	Event
427 BC	Plato's birth
385 BC	the Academy founded (the recording's date; most books: about 387 BC)
347 BC	Plato's death
529 CE	the Academy closed

- **BC** counts backwards (427 BC before 385 BC); **CE** counts forwards
- careful: Academus was a **hero** of Greek stories, not a god; Athens had no king then; the old story says **Dionysius** of Syracuse had him sold

Writing

- **correct a paragraph** (Alfred Nobel): a **capital** to start each sentence; a **full stop** to end it; capitals for **names** (*Alfred, Europe*), not for *nitroglycerin*; a comma after a time phrase at the start (*In 1862,*); dynamite (1867) and blasting gelatin (1875) were two explosives
- **a busy park:** the present continuous (*Two boys are playing football.*)
- **your gadget:** what it **is**, what it **looks like** (size, shape, color), what it **does**, what you like or don't
- **project, your village or town:** draw and label the main places; where it is, *There is… There are…*, what people do, what is **happening now**

COMMON MISTAKES

✗ Look! The bus comes.
✓ Look! The bus **is coming**.

✗ I am going to school every day by bus.
✓ I **go** to school every day by bus.

✗ Does he eats rice every day?
✓ Does he **eat** rice every day?

✗ a umbrella, a hour
✓ **an** umbrella, **an** hour

✗ an university
✓ **a** university

✗ Sun rises in the east.
✓ **The** sun rises in the east.