



Culture and Traditions

Short-answer questions: Hadrian's Wall | Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you read.

1. Why do countries build walls or borders?
2. What can Roman remains teach us?
3. Should ancient monuments be protected from tourism?
4. Would you walk a long-distance heritage trail?

Exercise 1 at a glance

Read one factual text. Answers are in the text. Copy exact words and check the question carefully before choosing your answer.

2. Read for overall understanding

Read the text. Why is Hadrian's Wall more than just an old wall?

Hadrian's Wall

Hadrian's Wall stretches across northern England. It was built after the Roman emperor Hadrian visited Britain in AD 122. The wall ran from coast to coast and became one of the most famous frontiers of the Roman Empire. Today, parts of it can still be seen in the landscape.

The wall was not only a barrier of stone and turf. It was part of a much wider military system. Forts, milecastles, turrets, roads and ditches helped soldiers control movement across the frontier. These features allowed the Roman army to watch the border, manage trade and respond to trouble.

Life along the wall was not just military. Soldiers came from different parts of the Roman Empire, and civilian settlements grew near some forts. Traders, families and craftspeople supplied goods and services. This means Hadrian's Wall can tell historians about daily life as well as defence.

Building and maintaining the wall required huge effort. Stone had to be cut, carried and fitted into place. Soldiers and workers also had to deal with difficult weather and rough ground. The wall's route crosses hills, rivers and open countryside, which makes its survival even more impressive.

Today, Hadrian's Wall is protected as part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Visitors can walk sections of the wall, explore forts and see museum collections of Roman objects. Tourism brings money to local areas, but it can also create pressure on paths, archaeology and fragile landscapes.

Hadrian's Wall remains important because it combines history, archaeology and landscape. It helps people imagine the Roman Empire at its northern edge, while also reminding visitors that borders are lived places, not just lines on a map.

The wall also helps archaeologists understand movement and contact. It did not completely stop people crossing the frontier. Instead, gates and forts helped the Roman army control who crossed, what goods moved and where people paid attention to Roman authority. This makes the wall more complex than a simple line dividing two sides.

Modern visitors often experience the wall as a walking route. Following the landscape on foot can show why the Romans chose certain positions. High points gave wide views, while rivers and valleys created natural routes. The walk therefore connects physical geography with military planning.

It also helps visitors understand the scale of the project in a way that a museum object alone cannot. The length of the route makes the wall feel like a landscape, not just a monument.

3. Strategy focus

Look for the wider system

A text may focus on one famous feature but describe a wider system. Check whether the answer is the wall itself or another part of the site.

4. Exam-style short-answer questions

Answer the questions using words from the text.

1. What did gates and forts help the Roman army control? Give one detail. [1]

2. What helped soldiers control movement across the frontier? Give one example. [1]

3. Who supplied goods and services near some forts? Give one. [1]

4. What difficult conditions did soldiers and workers face? Give one detail. [1]

5. What can tourism create pressure on? Give one detail. [1]

6. According to the text, what are three aspects of Roman history or life that Hadrian's Wall can teach visitors about? [3]

5. Vocabulary notebook

Underline five useful words or phrases. Check their meaning, then record them in your vocabulary notebook.

6. Follow-up tasks

1. Discussion: Why should ancient sites be protected?
2. Summary: Summarise Hadrian's Wall in about 50 words.
3. Creative task: Write a short guidebook entry for a Roman fort.
4. Research: Find another Roman site in Britain.

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2. Read for overall understanding

Suggested answer: It is more than an old wall because it was part of a Roman frontier system, included forts and settlements, and is now protected as an important historic landscape.

4. Exam-style short-answer questions

1. Any one from: who crossed; what goods moved.
2. Any one from: forts; milecastles; turrets; roads; ditches.
3. Any one from: traders; families; craftspeople.
4. Any one from: difficult weather; rough ground; hills; rivers; open countryside.
5. Any one from: paths; archaeology; fragile landscapes.
6. Any three from: the Roman frontier; the Roman military system; daily life near the wall; defence; the Roman Empire at its northern edge; movement and contact across the frontier.

Notes for checking

1. Answers should be short and clearly based on the text.
2. Accept bracketed or optional wording if the meaning is clear.
3. For the final question, learners need three separate details.