

Before you watch**1 SPEAKING** Work in pairs. Answer the questions.

- 1 What large houses or palaces are there in your country? Where are they?
- 2 Do you know who lives in them?
- 3 Would you like to live in a very large house? Why? / Why not?

Comprehension check**2**  Watch the DVD clip. Choose the correct answers.

- 1 Where does the name Blenheim come from?
a a family b a village c a battle
- 2 How long did it take to build Blenheim Palace?
a 7 years b 17 years c 70 years
- 3 How many rooms are there in the house?
a 170 b 178 c 187

3  Watch again. Tick the things that you see.

- | | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| a a garden | <input type="checkbox"/> | g a chair | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b a wardrobe | <input type="checkbox"/> | h a hall | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c a kitchen | <input type="checkbox"/> | i a bedroom | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d a church | <input type="checkbox"/> | j a lamp | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e windows | <input type="checkbox"/> | k a chest of drawers | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f a bed | <input type="checkbox"/> | l a garage | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4  Watch again. Match the years (1–8) with the events (a–h).

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 1 1704 | a The formal gardens were built. |
| 2 1705 | b Winston Churchill was born here. |
| 3 1722 | c Winston Churchill asked his wife to marry him here. |
| 4 1874 | d The Duke of Marlborough started building the house. |
| 5 1908 | e The Duke of Marlborough finished building the house. |
| 6 1920s | f The palace became a World Heritage Site. |
| 7 1950 | g The Duke of Marlborough won a famous battle. |
| 8 1987 | h The palace opened to the public. |

Round up**5 SPEAKING** Work in groups. Answer the question.

Would you like to visit Blenheim Palace? Why? / Why not?

Vocabulary

6 **RECYCLE** Complete the sentences with the correct words. The first letter of each word is given.

- 1 My family usually watches TV together in the l_____ r_____.
- 2 I need to buy a bed, a table, chairs and a wardrobe because there isn't any f_____ in my new room.
- 3 When I read at night, I turn on the l_____ next to my bed.
- 4 Can you set the t_____ before dinner?
- 5 There is a large c_____ on the town hall so you can see the time.
- 6 Let's go outside and sit in the g_____.

7 Match the words below with the pictures from the DVD clip.

fountain grave grounds palace statue



1 _____

2 _____

3 _____



4 _____

5 _____

Extension

8 Work in groups. Find a photo and some information about a large house or palace in your country and compare it to Blenheim Palace. Think about the following:

- the size
- what it looks like and how old it is
- the number of rooms
- the grounds and gardens

9 Present your photo to the class and talk about the two places. Use the key phrases for comparing and contrasting, and speculating.

Comparing and contrasting

In this house / palace, there is ..., whereas in Blenheim there is ...

You can see ... in both photos.

Both houses / palaces have got ...

Speculating

It looks as if ...

I would say that ...

Perhaps it / they ...

DVD clip summary

This DVD clip is about Blenheim Palace, one of the most famous palaces in Britain and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Background

Blenheim Palace is one of the largest houses in England and is on a site that covers seven acres. It's located in the village of Woodstock, about 15 km north of Oxford. It was built on an old deer park that was given to Sir John Churchill – the first Duke of Marlborough – by the country as a reward for winning an important battle. It has been home to the Dukes of Marlborough and the Churchill family ever since.

The palace was designed by John Vanbrugh, an untrained English architect, and his trained colleague Nicholas Hawksmoor. Unfortunately, Vanbrugh had many disagreements with the Duchess of Marlborough over the size and grandness of the house and he was eventually banned from the site and wasn't able to finish his masterpiece.

Today, the palace, park and gardens are open to the public. As well as being able to look around the house, visitors can visit the Pleasure Gardens, where there is a large maze, a butterfly house, and an adventure playground for children. The palace holds regular events throughout the year, including art exhibitions, fairs and concerts, and has been used as a location for famous films such as the James Bond film *SPECTRE*, *Cinderella*, and *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*.

Before you watch

Exercise 1

- Read the questions with the class and elicit answers from individual students. Encourage the students to personalise their answers and use their suggestions to start a class discussion.
- **Answers:** Students' own answers

Comprehension check

Exercise 2

- **Pre-watching:** Go through the questions with the students.
-  Play the whole DVD clip. The students choose the correct answers. Check their answers.
- **Answers:** 1 c 2 b 3 c

Exercise 3

- **Pre-watching:** Ask the students to look at the words and tick the things they remember seeing before they watch the DVD clip again.
- **Weaker classes:** Tell the students that they need to choose nine words in the list.
-  Play the DVD clip to check the answers.
- **Answers:** a, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k

Exercise 4

- **Pre-watching:** Ask the students to try and match the years with the events before they watch the DVD clip again.
- **Weaker classes:** Check that students understand the meaning of the sentences. Play the DVD clip and pause after each answer.
-  Play the DVD clip to check the answers.
- **Answers:** 1 g 2 d 3 e 4 b 5 c 6 a 7 h 8 f

Round up

Exercise 5

- Put the students in groups. Give them a few minutes to discuss the question.
- **Answers:** Students' own answers

Vocabulary

Exercise 6

- Ask the students to complete the sentences with the correct words. With a **weaker class**, you could give the students the next letter of each of the words to help them.
- **Answers:** 1 living room 2 furniture 3 lamp 4 table 5 clock 6 garden

Exercise 7

- Ask the students to match the words with the pictures from the DVD clip.
- **Answers:** 1 palace 2 grave 3 statue 4 fountain 5 grounds

Extension

Exercises 8 and 9

- **Materials needed:** Access to the internet
- **Preparation:** Put the students in groups of three or four. Tell them that they are going to compare a large house or palace in your country with Blenheim Palace. Give them a few minutes to find a photo of a large house or palace in your country.
- **Language:** Encourage them to use the key phrases for comparing and contrasting, and speculating.
- **Activity:** Nominate one note-taker in the group. Give the students 5–6 minutes to find out about all the points and make notes. Alternatively, you could ask students to do this at home. Then give them another 5–6 minutes to compare their large house or palace with Blenheim and write their presentation. Ask them to show their photo and present their ideas to the class. Set a time limit for each presentation of 2–3 minutes.
- **Extension:** Ask the students to write a postcard to a friend describing a visit to the house or palace.

Blenheim Palace

This is Blenheim Palace, one of the most famous old houses in the world.

John Churchill – the first Duke of Marlborough – started building the house in 1705. The name 'Blenheim' comes from a famous battle he won in 1704. The house took seventeen years to build, but the Churchill family have lived here since then.

On 30 November 1874, Winston Churchill – the famous British Prime Minister – was born here. His grandfather was the 7th Duke of Marlborough, so Winston and his family often stayed at Blenheim. In fact, the young Churchill asked his wife to marry him here in the Temple of Diana in 1908. Today, his grave is less than two miles away in the small village of Bladon.

On 1 April 1950, the palace opened to the public and since then the family hasn't lived in the main house. Today, it's a major tourist attraction. It has been a World Heritage Site since 1987. It's easy to see why. The house has got 187 rooms. There's a huge entrance hall with beautiful paintings. There are living rooms and bedrooms full of antique furniture, including beds, lamps, tables, chairs, and clocks.

Outside, the grounds are huge. These are the palace's formal gardens, which have been here since the 1920s. These include the Water Terrace, with its beautiful fountain and statues, and the Italian Garden. Beyond the gates is two thousand acres of parkland, a large man-made lake and the Column of Victory, with its tall statue of the first Duke of Marlborough.

Blenheim Palace is full of history. Many famous people have lived here and for over three centuries it has been one of the most important houses in Britain.