

Sycamore Gap: L1-2 Functional Skills tasks

Name _____ Date _____

Sycamore Gap: 'It's so sad to see the tree gone'

BBC NEWS 29 Sept 2023



People from around the world have been paying tribute to one of the UK's most famous trees, which officials believe was deliberately cut down on Wednesday.

The tree at Sycamore Gap, beside Hadrian's Wall in Northumberland, was believed to be about 300 years old. It grew in a natural dip in the landscape and featured in the 1991 film 'Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves', starring Kevin Costner.

The lone tree at Northumberland's Sycamore Gap was one of the most photographed in the country before it was deliberately cut down this week.

It had been an iconic symbol of the area, standing tall for around 300 years in a natural dip in the landscape alongside Hadrian's Wall. The tree was not just a beloved landmark, but held a special place in the hearts of many and decorated memorial pebbles were often left at the site.

Northumberland National Park Authority officials believe the tree was "deliberately felled". A teenager was arrested on suspicion of criminal damage and later bailed. A man in his 60s has also been arrested and was assisting police with their inquiries.

TASK 1 – Revise your dictionary skills

Look up the underlined words and write down **all** the meanings of each one.

(L1.13)

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In the next section of the text some people talk about the sycamore tree.

This section is **informal writing**.

There are:

- shortened words
- slang
- idioms
- hyperboles

Imogen Potter and her family were amongst the last people to see the tree when they walked to it on Wednesday. She and her family hiked to Sycamore Gap to mark her mother's 60th birthday.

"We all woke up yesterday and were gutted by the news and also that we're likely the last few people to see this natural beauty," Imogen says.

"If we'd gone on the walk on the last day of our trip it would have been very different. We're all gobsmacked because it has been there forever. I hope the police can find who did this but that's easier said than done."

Miles Courage lives in Hampshire and had a family reunion at the Sycamore Gap tree last year.

"We grew up in Northumberland and I'm one of four siblings. When we get together at Christmas and half term we often hike there and chill for a while. A good walk helps the kids blow off steam."

"It is such a memorable and cool tree in an amazing location. It's as old as the hills. I also had a photo in 1992 with friends in the tree and now my kids can't do that. Whoever has done this is crazy."

TASK 2 – Work with a partner

Read **this** page again. Then

- circle the shortened words
- underline slang
- highlight the idioms and hyperboles.

Write the meaning of the idioms and hyperboles.

(L1.16, L2.17)

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Task 3 – Writing or discussion task

What is your opinion of this?

Do you think it matters?

Why do you think someone has done this?

- Write a few sentences explaining your opinion or discuss in a small group.

(L1.5, L2.6, L1.22, L2.23)

Task 4 – Reading questions

Write your answers in sentences

1. Suggest a different headline for this news report.

(L1.24/L2.27)

2. Why was this tree famous?

(L2.11)

3. How did people show they thought the tree was special?

(L1.9/L2.11)

4. What do officials believe has happened?

(L1.9/L2.11)

5. What has happened to the two people who were arrested?

(L1.9/L2.11)

6. Why did Imogen go to see the tree?

(L1.9)

7. How do you think Imogen felt when the tree was felled and how do you know?

(L1.11, L1.12, L2.13)

8. What is Miles' opinion of the tree?

(L1.11, L2.13)