

# Unit 2: Bear essentials

## A Reading

### 1 Read the article below.

#### Passage A: How the teddy got its name

A few people, perhaps of the kind who like to **amass** curious snippets of information, could probably tell you that the children's cuddly toy known as a 'teddy bear' is so called after Theodore ('Teddy') Roosevelt, who was President of the United States from 1901 to 1909. Far fewer could tell you just why a US President should have given his name to an object which by 1907 was selling almost a million a year.

All accounts are agreed upon the fact that early in life Roosevelt suffered from asthma and that his father believed that fresh air and exercise would improve his health. As a result, the future President became keen on outdoor pursuits and even studied to be a naturalist before taking up politics. However, he still continued to hunt, a very fashionable sport at the time.

And so it was that in 1902, while the President was taking time off from solving a border **dispute** in Mississippi, that the incident took place which linked his name for ever with the little furry creature. Roosevelt had had a bad day and shot nothing at all, so the guides, not wishing the **expedition** to be a failure, sent out dogs to track down a bear for the President to shoot. Here, however, accounts differ: some say that the black bear which they cornered was old and exhausted; others that it was a lost bear cub which was tracked down. Whichever was the case, Roosevelt refused to shoot it, saying that he considered this would be **unsporting**.

A political cartoonist called Clifford K. Berryman heard the story and made a drawing of the incident for the *Washington Post* (and in a second version of the cartoon he reduced the size of the bear, which may have given rise to the idea that it was a cub). The cartoon was so popular that Berryman depicted the young bear in other drawings of Roosevelt. The President's name was now firmly linked with bears, but how did his nickname of 'Teddy' come to be given to the toy bear? The owner of a New York toy shop, Morris Mitchom, asked the President if he could call

the bears in his shop, which his wife made, 'Teddy's Bears', to which Roosevelt agreed. Mitchom then founded the Ideal Toy and Novelty Company, which was to become one of the biggest toy companies in the United States.

However, the Mitchoms were not the first to make toy bears. Richard Steiff, a member of a German family firm, invented a bear with jointed limbs in 1902. This he **exhibited** at the 1903 Leipzig Spring Fair. The creature was a metre high, fierce-looking and heavy, and had the effect of scaring off potential customers rather than attracting them – with the exception of an American importer, Borgfeldt, who thought he recognised a way of cashing in on the popularity of the bear in the Roosevelt story. He ordered 3000 of them: the teddy bear boom had begun. Early examples of the teddy bear are now worth a fortune: a 1904 Steiff bear was sold for \$110 000 in 1994.

Since then, generations of children – and adults – have been **entranced** by this domesticated version of one of nature's fiercest predators, now made of every possible material from wool and wood to modern **synthetics** such as nylon. The teddy has featured as the hero of immensely popular books such as *Winnie-the-Pooh*, *Rupert Bear*, *The Jungle Book* and the *Paddington Bear* series, and its image appears on keyrings, greetings cards, mugs, posters and charity logos. It is also used to draw attention to the problems of bears that today live in threatened habitats, perhaps the most fitting way of **commemorating** President Roosevelt's refusal – 100 years ago – to shoot a defenceless bear for 'sport'.



## B Language and style

- 2 Make sentences of your own which show the meaning of the words in bold in Passage A. Use a dictionary if you are not sure, but first try to work out their meaning from their **prefixes**, their context and their similarity to other words you already know. The first one has been done for you as an example.

- a **amass** *The researchers worked hard to amass a great deal of data.*
- b **dispute** \_\_\_\_\_
- c **expedition** \_\_\_\_\_
- d **unsporting** \_\_\_\_\_
- e **exhibited** \_\_\_\_\_
- f **entranced** \_\_\_\_\_
- g **synthetics** \_\_\_\_\_
- h **commemorating** \_\_\_\_\_

- 3 Circle all the pairs of dashes, brackets and commas in Passage A. As you can see, they form a **parenthesis** (i.e. a word or phrase of comment or explanation inserted into a sentence which is grammatically complete without it). Commas are the most subtle, and brackets the least, because of their relative visual impact.

Put a variety of parenthetical punctuation into the following sentences, considering how close you think the extra information is to the content of the main sentence. Some sentences may need more than one parenthesis.

- a Wild apes have no need of language and have not developed it but tame ones can use it as a tool for communicating with each other.
- b Each slaughtered ape is a loss to the local community a loss to humanity as a whole and is a hole torn in the ecology of our planet.
- c The skills of language and counting essential for negotiating trade can be taught to orang-utans who are less social primates than chimpanzees in a matter of weeks.
- d Fifteen million years a small gap in the broad scale of evolution is an immense period in terms of everyday life.
- e Gorilla mothers prefer to cradle their babies on their left sides a feature shared with humans and there have been cases of them showing maternal behaviour to human children.

## C Comprehension and summary

**4** Referring to Passage A, say whether the following statements are True (T), False (F) or Don't know (D), and give reasons.

**a** More people know who the bear is named after than know why.

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**b** Roosevelt was more of a hunter than a wildlife supporter.

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**c** The bear Roosevelt refused to shoot was a cub.

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**d** The Ideal Toy and Novelty Company was the first to manufacture teddy bears in the USA.

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**e** The customers at the Leipzig Spring Fair in 1903 found the bears very attractive.

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**5 a** Highlight the material in Passage A that you would use to explain how the teddy got its name. Write each point separately below, in your own words as far as possible, ordering them logically.

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**b** Link the points to create no more than two sentences.

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