

# Wonder

## Pre-Reading

### A. Warm-Up Questions

1. What does the word “wonder” mean to you?
2. What do you do when you don’t know an answer right away?
3. How did Google Search change the world?
4. Who comes to mind when you hear the word “genius”?



### B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.

Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| ___ 1. wander     | a) a new thing that solves a problem or makes something possible |
| ___ 2. wonder     | b) an extremely tall building                                    |
| ___ 3. invention  | c) an acceptance of new ideas and opinions                       |
| ___ 4. curiosity  | d) not known, understood, or explained                           |
| ___ 5. wisdom     | e) a strong interest to know more                                |
| ___ 6. open mind  | f) to walk slowly without a true purpose                         |
| ___ 7. a lost art | g) knowledge and good sense that often come with experience      |
| ___ 8. movement   | h) something that people don’t do as often anymore               |
| ___ 9. skyscraper | i) a group trying to organize a change                           |
| ___ 10. unsolved  | j) to have curiosity, to think about things you don’t know about |

## Reading

### WONDER

*Where wisdom begins*

1. In 1927, author Virginia Woolf took a long evening walk to buy a pencil. In her essay, "Street Haunting: A London Adventure," Woolf describes the thoughts that went through her mind along the way. *Who are these people in the streets? Where do they live? How would my life change if I wore this pearl necklace?*
2. **Wandering** stretches the body and the mind. As you wander, you naturally begin to **wonder** about the world around you. When is the last time you wandered around your city? Have you ever spent an evening wondering beneath the stars?
3. Many of our world's **inventions** and advancements started out as questions that people with curious minds had. The Wright brothers wondered how birds flew. Edward Jenner wondered how to prevent smallpox. When Einstein couldn't find a teaching job, he wondered what to do with his life. Wonderopolis, an educational site for children, describes the connection between **curiosity** and **wisdom**: "An **open**, wondering **mind** is a common quality shared by inventors."
4. Do you google the answer to a question the moment it pops into your head? With the advancement of science, cell phones, and search engines, wondering may become **a lost art**. To keep wonder alive, many companies and schools have joined a **movement** called Genius Hour. During a set amount of time (e.g., one hour per week), students or employees explore their own curiosities. Genius Hour has resulted in many inventions, including Post-it Notes and Gmail.
5. We already know how to land on the moon and build a 3,000-foot **skyscraper**. What mysteries are left **unsolved**? Instead of googling this answer, take a moment to think about it. You could even take this question for a walk!

*"Mystery creates wonder and wonder is the basis of man's desire to understand."*

—Neil Armstrong

## Comprehension

Discuss these questions in pairs and write the answers in your notebook.

1. What is paragraph 1 mainly about?
2. What often happens when people wander around without a purpose?
3. What can you infer about Edward Jenner?
4. What examples of major human achievements are given in the reading?  
Identify at least three.
5. Describe Genius Hour in your own words.

## Vocabulary Review

### A. Chunking

Create six expressions by pairing the words that are commonly found together in English. Write a sentence for each example.

**Word List:**

- |            |           |          |              |
|------------|-----------|----------|--------------|
| • unsolved | • a lost  | • art    | • mind       |
| • wonder   | • mystery | • join   | • a movement |
| • open     | • about   | • wander | • around     |

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

# Vocabulary Review cont.

## B. Complete the Sentences

Complete the sentences using vocabulary from page 1.  
You may need to change the word forms.

1. I \_\_\_\_\_ into a candy store and bought some of my favorite treats from my childhood.
2. Do you ever \_\_\_\_\_ what our kids will be like as grandparents?
3. Try to keep an \_\_\_\_\_. Exercising can be fun if you find an activity you're good at!
4. You're in a teen knitting club? I thought knitting was \_\_\_\_\_.
5. This used to be the world's tallest \_\_\_\_\_. I wonder where the tallest building is now.

# Pronunciation Practice

## MINIMAL PAIRS

### A. Introduction

A minimal pair is a pair of words that differs by only one sound. The words *wonder* and *wander* are a minimal pair.

### B. Listening

Which of the following is NOT a minimal pair?  
Place a star beside the pair that is not a minimal pair.  
Then listen to the recording and repeat each word.  
Change your answer if you need to.

1. wonder / wander
2. want / won't
3. winter / wonder
4. word / weird
5. wrist / roast
6. wrote / road

### C. Practice

Choose a letter. Create a minimal pair set that begins with this letter. Include one pair that is not a minimal pair. Challenge a partner to find it.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

## Discussion

1. What do you wonder about most often?
2. Do you ever go for a walk for no real reason? Why or why not?
3. What are the most important human inventions in history?
4. What mysteries remain unsolved?
5. Why don't kids spend as much time wondering as they did in previous generations? Why don't they spend as much time wandering?
6. What do you think astronauts wonder about when they are in space? What do you think skyscraper builders wonder about?
7. Why are Post-it Notes useful for people who like to wonder?
8. Do you think your class should join the Genius Hour movement? Why or why not?

## I Wonder Challenge

Choose a small item (e.g., a pack of gum) to purchase at a store. Take a slow, wonderful walk to go and get it. As you walk, let your curiosity wander. Write a paragraph (or record a short selfie video) about your experience. What were you curious about? What did you wonder along the way?

*"I went for a walk to buy a... .  
As I wandered, I wondered about..."*

Submit your video or paragraph to your teacher or share it with your classmates.

# Listening

Fill in the blanks as you listen to the recording.

## WONDER

*Where wisdom begins*

1. In 1927, author Virginia Woolf took a long evening walk to buy a pencil. In her essay, "Street Haunting: A London \_\_\_\_\_," Woolf describes the thoughts that went through her \_\_\_\_\_ along the way. *Who are these people in the streets? Where do they live? How would my life change if I wore this pearl necklace?*
2. \_\_\_\_\_ stretches the body and the mind. As you wander, you naturally begin to wonder about the world around you. When is the last time you wandered around your city? Have you ever spent an evening \_\_\_\_\_ beneath the stars?
3. Many of our world's \_\_\_\_\_ and advancements started out as questions that people with curious minds had. The Wright brothers wondered how birds flew. Edward Jenner wondered how to prevent smallpox. When Einstein couldn't find a teaching job, he wondered what to do with his life. Wonderopolis, an educational site for children, describes the connection between \_\_\_\_\_ and wisdom: "An open, wondering mind is a common quality shared by inventors."
4. Do you google the answer to a question the moment it pops into your head? With the advancement of science, cell phones, and search engines, wondering may become \_\_\_\_\_. To keep wonder alive, many companies and schools have joined a \_\_\_\_\_ called Genius Hour. During a set amount of time (e.g., one hour per week), students or employees explore their own curiosities. Genius Hour has resulted in many inventions, including Post-it Notes and Gmail.
5. We already know how to land on the moon and build a 3,000-foot \_\_\_\_\_. What mysteries are left \_\_\_\_\_? Instead of googling this answer, take a moment to think about it. You could even take this question for a walk!

# Answer Key

**LESSON DESCRIPTION:**

Students read about and discuss wondering and wandering and consider the importance of both. This lesson includes pronunciation practice with minimal pairs.

**TEACHING TIPS:**

See *Discussion Starters Teaching Guide* (<https://esllibrary.com/courses/72/lessons/>) for a variety of ways to use the reading.

**LEVEL:** Int

**TIME:** 1.5–2 hours

**TAGS:** discussion, wonder, wander, curiosity, inventions, wisdom, minimal pairs

## Pre-Reading

**A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS**

Have students work in small groups or discuss as a class.

**B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW**

- |      |      |      |      |       |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. f | 3. a | 5. g | 7. h | 9. b  |
| 2. j | 4. e | 6. c | 8. i | 10. d |

## Reading (and/or Listening)

Read individually, in small groups, or as a class. Discuss the quote. You can also play the listening as your students read along. A gap-fill version of the reading is available on page 6. Help your students with vocabulary and expressions that they are unfamiliar with.

## Comprehension

- Paragraph 1 is mainly about an essay by Virginia Woolf that explores the theme of wondering while wandering.
- When people wander around, they naturally begin to wonder about the world around them.
- It can be inferred that Edward Jenner created a vaccine or cure for smallpox.
- Major human achievements that students might mention from the reading include airplanes, vaccinations, the theory of relativity (or anything related to Einstein), cell phones, the Internet, Post-it Notes, Gmail, skyscrapers, and space travel.
- Answers will vary. Genius Hour is a movement that encourages people to explore their curiosities for a short amount of time during their school or work week. This special time often leads to new inventions.

## Vocabulary Review

**A. CHUNKING**

Example sentences will vary.

- |                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. unsolved mystery | 4. a lost art      |
| 2. wonder about     | 5. join a movement |
| 3. open mind        | 6. wander around   |

**B. COMPLETE THE SENTENCES**

- |              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| 1. wandered  | 4. a lost art |
| 2. wonder    | 5. skyscraper |
| 3. open mind |               |

## Pronunciation Practice

Go over the minimal pairs and have your students choose the pair they think is NOT a minimal pair. (Number 3 is not a minimal pair because there are two sounds that differ.) Play the recording and have students listen and repeat the word pairs. Then have students create their own minimal pair lists using the instructions provided.

If you need an example to show your students, you can use one from ESL Library’s pronunciation section, such as page 4 (Comparing /r/ and /l/) in this lesson:

<https://esllibrary.com/courses/118/lessons/2765>

*(continued on the next page...)*

## Answer Key cont.

### Discussion

Answers will vary. Can be done in small groups or as a class.

### I Wonder Challenge

Encourage students to use the prompt for a homework task.

You may want to assign this task over a weekend. Decide whether you want an oral response or a written response. If your students don't have recording equipment, they can share their experience out loud in class.

### Listening

1. Adventure, mind
2. Wandering, wondering
3. inventions, curiosity
4. a lost art, movement
5. skyscraper, unsolved

#### SPELLING NOTE:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the word *Favorite*.

Most other English-speaking countries spell it this way: *Favourite*.

Make it a challenge for your students to find this word in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spelling.