

# TRAVELS ACROSS AFRICA

For six hours we shot through the barren landscape of the Karoo desert in South Africa. Just rocks and sand and baking sun. Knowing our journey was ending, Daniel and I just wanted to remember all we had seen and done. He used a camera. I used words. I had already finished three notebooks and was into the fourth, a beautiful leather notebook I'd bought in a market in Mozambique. Southern Africa was full of stories. And visions. We were almost drunk on sensations. The roaring of the water at Victoria Falls, the impossible silence of the Okavango Delta in Botswana. And then the other things: dogs in the streets, whole families in Soweto living in one room, a kilometre from clean water.


As we drove towards the setting sun, a quietness fell over us. The road was empty – we hadn't seen another car for hours. And as I drove, something caught my eye, something moving next to me. I glanced in the mirror of the car; I glanced sideways to the right, and that was when

I saw them. Next to us, by the side of the road, thirty, 20 forty wild horses were racing the car, a cloud of dust rising behind them – brown, muscular horses almost close enough to touch them, to smell their hot breath. I didn't know how long they had been there next to us.

I shouted to Dan: 'Look!' but he was in a deep sleep, 25 his camera lying useless by his feet. They raced the car for a few seconds then disappeared far behind us, a memory of heroic forms in the red landscape. When Daniel woke up an hour later I told him what had happened.

30 'Wild horses?' he said. 'Why didn't you wake me up?' 'I tried. But they were gone after a few seconds.' 'Typical,' he said. 'The best photos are the ones we never take.'

We checked into a dusty hotel and slept the sleep of 35 the dead.



## Reading

- 1 a** Complete the phrases with the words from the box.

diary emails home photos souvenirs

phone home

- 1 keep a \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 take \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 buy \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 send postcards/letters/\_\_\_\_\_

**b** Do you do any of the things in exercise 1a when you travel?

- 2** Work in pairs and discuss the questions.

- 1 Have you been/Would you like to go to Africa?
- 2 What you would expect to see/experience there?

- 3** Read the extract from *Travels Across Africa* by Sophie Van Ranst, and answer the questions.

- 1 Where are Sophie and Daniel?
- 2 Do they experience the things you talked about in exercise 2?
- 3 How do they like to remember their travels?

- 4** Read the extract again. Write true (T), false (F) or not given (NG).

- 1 They drove slowly through the busy desert. ☐
- 2 Sophie wrote about her experiences in a notebook. ☐
- 3 Daniel took photos of the Victoria Falls. ☐
- 4 They had seen a lot of things, and heard many stories. ☐
- 5 Daniel was driving when they saw the horses. ☐
- 6 They had seen other animals, but they hadn't seen wild horses before. ☐
- 7 The horses didn't come near the car. ☐
- 8 Sophie woke Daniel so that he could take photos. ☐

- 5** Look at the descriptive language from the extract. Choose the correct words in *italics* and answer the questions.

We shot through the barren landscape (line 1)  
*This means we moved very fast. Normally we use the word 'shoot' when guns are involved – 'He shot someone!'*

- 1 *drunk on sensations* (line 9)  
 This means that you have seen and heard so much that you feel *incredible/bored*.  
 What normally makes people drunk?
- 2 *roaring of the water* (line 9)  
 This means the water *makes a loud noise/is quiet*.  
 What animal normally roars?
- 3 *quietness fell over us* (lines 14–15)  
 This means that as they drove *they had a small accident/it became silent*.  
 Give some more everyday examples of things that fall.
- 4 *caught my eye* (line 16)  
 This means that she had *something in her eye/noticed something and looked at it*.  
 What else can you catch?
- 5 *slept the sleep of the dead* (lines 34–35)  
 This means that they slept *very well/very badly*.

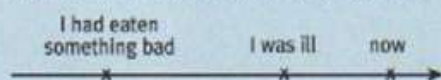
## Past Perfect Simple

We use the Past Simple to talk about something that happened in the past, e.g. *I was ill*.

We use the Past Perfect Simple to talk about what happened before that, e.g. *I had eaten something bad*.

We use it to make the order of events clear.

*I was ill because I'd eaten something bad.*



We don't need to use the Past Perfect Simple when the sequence of events in the past is clear:

*I came home and turned on my computer.*

The Past Perfect uses many of the same expressions as the Present Perfect (*since, for, already*).

- 6** a Look at the Active grammar box and answer the questions. Then choose the correct underlined words.  
 b Find other examples of the Past Perfect Simple in the extract on page 78.

### Active grammar

(Past Simple)

(Past Perfect Simple)

*We wanted to remember all we had seen ...*

Which action happened first?

- 1 *We saw things ...*
- 2 *We wanted to remember ... (the experience)*

We use the Past Perfect/Past Simple to make it clear that one event happened before another one in the past.

We make the Past Perfect Simple with *had/hadn't + past participle/infinitive*.

see Reference page 89

- 7** Read the text and put the verbs in brackets into the Past Simple or the Past Perfect.

I had been warned about the dangers in Peru, but no one (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (tell) me how incredibly beautiful it was. The mountains (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (be) all shades of green and purple and as we arrived at Machu Picchu early in the morning, I was glad we (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (decide) to walk there rather than take the tourist train. The sun had only just come up and the air (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (smell) very fresh and sweet. Machu Picchu (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (be) built in around 1450 but archeologists think it (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (be) abandoned by the time the Spanish (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (arrive) in the area a hundred years later.

- 8** a Complete the sentences using the Past Perfect and your own ideas.

- 1 I got lost in the city because ...
- 2 My first evening on holiday went well because ...
- 3 I missed the flight because ...
- 4 I decided to travel overland because ...
- 5 There was a traffic jam because ...

b Have you ever been in any of the situations in exercise 8a? Work in pairs and discuss.