

8 City of water

Summary

In the northeast of Italy, there is a city of canals: Venice. There are no cars here, only special boats called *gondolas*. We see Venice in winter, during its famous festival, Carnevale, with people in masks and dressed in elaborate costumes. At night, we accompany a Venetian to a typical party.

Background

Venice had success in the Middle Ages as a city-state and was a considerable commercial and maritime power in Europe. It became part of a unified Italy in 1866.

Before you watch

1 Answer the question.

- Ask the class: *What do you know about Venice?*
- Elicit students' answers and write them on the board.
- If you have access to the Internet and an interactive whiteboard, put some pictures of Venice up and ask students to say what they think of them.

Suggested answers

It's a city in Italy. It doesn't have any roads. People travel around the city by special boats called *gondolas*. It's popular with tourists.

While you watch

2 Watch and find out.

- Tell students they are going to watch a video about Venice.
- Ask students to watch the video to find out what people wear during the festival.
- Play the video.

Answer

They wear colourful clothes and masks.

3 Watch and say what the numbers refer to.

- Play the video again for students to watch and note down what the following numbers refer to:
60,000 118 177 1162 500
- Students can compare answers in pairs before you check answers with the class.

Answers

- 1 Every day 60,000 people visit Venice.
- 2 Venice has 118 islands.
- 3 There are 177 canals in Venice.
- 4 The first Carnevale in Venice was in 1162.
- 5 There are 500 people at the party.

After you watch

4 Work with a partner. Answer the questions.

- Put students into pairs to answer the following questions:
 - a Would you like to visit Venice? Why? Why not?
 - b What mask would you like to wear to the Venice Carnevale?
- Ask some students to report back to the class on their partner's ideas.

At home

5 Design your own mask for Carnevale.

- Tell students to design their own mask for Carnevale.
- Students should try to make their masks as colourful and imaginative as possible. They could make masks of famous people, animals or characters from cartoons.
- Students can then wear their masks to the next lesson.

6 Find out about the oldest festival in your country.

- Students find out about the oldest festival in their country.
- They should find out when it started, how it started, where it takes place, what happens, how many people go, etc.
- Students can then compare what they find out with a partner in the next lesson.



City of Water

Today we're going to the north-east of Italy, to the city of Venice. Every day, 60,000 people visit this 'city of water'. Venice is a group of islands – 118 islands. It has streets of water, called canals. There are 177 canals here – and no cars. People here walk and travel by boat.

These people are riding in special Venetian boats called *gondolas*. These boats can go everywhere because they're very narrow. It's winter in Venice now. It's cold, rainy, and foggy. So why are there thousands of people here – in *February*? Because they're going to Venice's big festival – Carnevale! The first carnevale in Venice was in 1162. It was a religious festival – but now it's just a big party.

People wear colourful clothes and masks. These mysterious masks hide their faces. *Who are these people?* No one really knows. This is Venice at night. This is Alessandro. And this is Antonia. *Alessandro, buona sera.*

Antonia is going to a party for Carnevale. The party is *huge*. There are 500 people! These parties are very special. They are a Venetian tradition.

That's Venice – the city of water, and the city of light!