



Segment 5 (Units 9–12)

London and the Thames

Genre: Travel show

Viewing Time: 2:21

Background Information

Travel shows are very popular on English-language television in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Many viewers are interested in traveling in other countries and are looking for ideas on where to go for their next vacation. Other viewers cannot afford to travel themselves but enjoy imagining that they are on a trip by looking at international tourist attractions on TV.

This travel show is about London. London is one of the most popular tourist destinations on the planet. Many of the most famous tourist attractions, such as the Tower of London, the Houses of Parliament, the Tower Bridge, and the London Eye, are located along the River Thames, which runs through the center of the city. Taking a tour boat cruise along the Thames is one of the best ways to see London.

Vocabulary for Comprehension

Preview the vocabulary with your students.

cosmopolitan: *from many different parts of the world*

double-decker bus: *a bus with two levels*

iconic: *famous; represents a particular idea or place*

panorama: *an impressive view of a wide area*
tranquil: *calm, quiet, peaceful*

Answer Key

Previewing (Answers may vary—as long as they are appropriate guesses, accept them for now.)

1. It's London.
2. They are the London Eye, Tower of London, Tower Bridge, Big Ben, and Buckingham Palace.
3. London is a city with a lot of interesting historical places to visit.
4. We'll learn more about visiting London.

In-Depth Viewing

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| 1. d | 4. c |
| 2. e | 5. a |
| 3. f | 6. b |



Video Script

Narrator: From its tranquil parks to its busy streets and popular historic sites, London is a cosmopolitan city that's filled with tradition—but it's also a place where you can find the most modern architecture, clothing, and design.

At the heart of this great city is the River Thames. The Thames has been a central part of life in London since the city was first founded by the Romans in 43 A.D. It provides jobs, transportation, and a fantastic view from almost any one of the tourist attractions along the riverbank.

A great way to get an overview of the entire river is to hop aboard one of the many tour boats that cruise along the Thames. But let's start our visit at the Tower of London, one of the oldest buildings in the city. Today, the Tower of London is a museum, but this ancient fortress was also used as a royal residence in the Middle Ages, and later it became a jail for some of English history's most famous prisoners.

The Houses of Parliament are also located along the river, at the Palace of Westminster. The British government has met here for more than 700 years. And one of London's most iconic sights—Big Ben—is also located at Westminster. Did you know that the name "Big Ben" refers not to the clock tower itself, but to the 13-ton bell hung within it?

Another stop to make on your river tour is the 100-year-old Tower Bridge, named for its two impressive supporting towers. The Victorian bridge, completed in 1894, took over eight years to build and is one of the best-known landmarks along the Thames. Be sure to climb to the top of its 140-foot towers—you'll be rewarded with a wonderful panorama.

The London Eye, one of the city's newest attractions, is also located on the Thames. The Eye is a giant observation wheel that allows riders to see this working river and the surrounding area. It moves slowly enough for you to get a really great view and to take lots of pictures, too.

Of course, most visitors to London won't want to miss a visit to Buckingham Palace or a ride on one of London's famous double-decker buses. So now let's leave the river behind and pay a visit to some of London's other attractions, starting with the Victoria and Albert Museum in Kensington.