

Letter from an International Pen Pal

COMPREHENSION • VOCABULARY • DISCUSSION

INTERACTIVE ONLINE TEST

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Reading Passage

Read the passage carefully. Each paragraph is labelled with a letter for easy reference.

A Hello Emma, My name is Sofía, and I live in Córdoba, Argentina. Thank you for your first letter. I feel happy to have a pen pal in Germany! Today I will tell you about my daily life, my school, and my city. On weekdays I wake up at 6:45 a.m. The sun is bright now because it is summer in the Southern Hemisphere while it is winter for you. I eat toast with dulce de leche (sweet milk jam) and drink maté, a hot herbal tea that most Argentines love. At 7:30 I walk to school with my brother. Our classes start at 8 o'clock and finish at 1 p.m. My favourite subject is history because our teacher, Señor Gómez, tells funny stories about the past. After school I go to the city centre. Córdoba is famous for its colonial buildings—old white churches and patios with orange trees. Tourists take many photos. My friends and I sometimes sit on the steps of the Jesuit Church to chat and listen to street musicians. When the weather is very hot, we buy helado, which is creamy ice cream, and sit in the shade. Each Saturday my family visits my grandparents' farm outside the city. We help collect eggs, tomatoes, and peppers. At lunch we eat a big asado (barbecue). The beef cooks slowly on the grill, and we add chimichurri sauce—parsley, garlic, oil, and a little vinegar. The smell is amazing. I have never seen snow, so I would love to visit Germany in December and try your Christmas markets. What food do you eat there? Do you also study history? Please write back soon and send a photo of your town. Best wishes, Sofía

Vocabulary Glossary

Key words and phrases from the passage. Study them before attempting the exercise below.

WORD / PHRASE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
pen pal	a person you write letters to, who lives far away	<i>I have a pen pal in Japan, and we send each other letters every month.</i>
dulce de leche	a sweet spread made from milk and sugar, popular in Argentina	<i>I like to put dulce de leche on my pancakes for breakfast.</i>
maté	a hot drink made from dried leaves, popular in South America	<i>People in Argentina often drink maté with friends in the afternoon.</i>
colonial	related to a time when a country was controlled by another	<i>The city has many colonial buildings from the old days.</i>
helado	ice cream, a cold dessert made from milk and sugar	<i>We went to the shop to get some helado on a hot day.</i>
asado	a barbecue, especially popular in Argentina	<i>Every weekend, my family has an asado with lots of meat and vegetables.</i>
chimichurri	a green sauce with parsley, garlic, and oil, used in Argentina	<i>We put chimichurri on our steak to give it more flavor.</i>
Jesuit Church	a specific church in Córdoba known for its history and architecture	<i>Tourists visit the Jesuit Church to see its beautiful old design.</i>

Vocabulary Exercise — Fill in the Blank

Use one word or phrase from the glossary above to complete each sentence. Each item is used only once. Answers are on the final page.

1. I was excited to receive a letter from my _____ in Italy.
2. For breakfast, I spread _____ on my toast.
3. In the afternoons, people often gather to drink _____ together.
4. The museum is in a _____ building from the 1800s.
5. We all enjoyed a cold _____ after the long walk in the sun.
6. The Argentine family prepared an _____ for their guests.

Comprehension Questions

These questions are different from the online practice test. Choose the best answer (A, B, C, or D). Answers and explanations are on the final page.

Question 1

What is Sofia's favorite school subject?

- A. Math
- B. History
- C. Art
- D. Science

Question 2

Why do tourists visit the city center of Córdoba?

- A. To shop for clothes
- B. To see modern buildings
- C. To take photos of colonial buildings
- D. To visit amusement parks

Question 3

What do Sofia and her friends do at the Jesuit Church?

- A. Pray inside
- B. Listen to music
- C. Paint pictures
- D. Take history classes

Question 4

What special meal does Sofia's family have on Saturdays?

- A. A pasta dinner
- B. A big breakfast
- C. An asado
- D. A seafood lunch

Question 5

Why does Sofia want to visit Germany in December?

- A. To see the snow
- B. To visit museums
- C. To learn German
- D. To meet new friends

Discussion & Writing Prompts

Each prompt references a specific detail from the passage above. Use for classroom discussion or a short written response (150–200 words).

1. Sofia writes about the hot weather in the Southern Hemisphere during her summer. How do the seasons affect daily life in your country, and how might it differ from Argentina?

2. In the passage, Sofia describes the colonial buildings of Córdoba. Are there historical sites in your city or country that attract tourists, and why are they important?

3. Sofia's family buys helado when it's hot. What are some traditional foods in your country that people enjoy during different seasons or holidays?

Answer Key

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Q1 B

Q2 C

Q3 B

Q4 C

Q5 A

VOCABULARY EXERCISE

FIB1 pen pal

FIB2 dulce de leche

FIB3 maté

FIB4 colonial

FIB5 helado

FIB6 asado

Comprehension Question Explanations

Why the correct answer is right — and why each wrong option is incorrect.

1. What is Sofía's favorite school subject?

✓ B — History Sofia mentions that history is her favorite subject because of her teacher's stories.

✗ A — Math Math is not mentioned as Sofía's favorite subject.

✗ C — Art Art is not mentioned in the passage.

✗ D — Science Science is not mentioned as Sofía's favorite subject.

2. Why do tourists visit the city center of Córdoba?

✓ C — To take photos of colonial buildings Tourists visit Córdoba to take photos of its colonial buildings.

✗ A — To shop for clothes Shopping for clothes is not mentioned as a reason.

✗ B — To see modern buildings The passage mentions colonial, not modern, buildings.

✗ D — To visit amusement parks Amusement parks are not mentioned in the passage.

3. What do Sofia and her friends do at the Jesuit Church?

✓ B — Listen to music Sofía and her friends listen to street musicians at the Jesuit Church.

✗ A — Pray inside The passage does not mention them praying inside.

✗ C — Paint pictures Painting pictures is not mentioned in the passage.

✗ D — Take history classes They do not take history classes there.

4. What special meal does Sofía's family have on Saturdays?

✓ C — An asado Sofía's family enjoys a big asado on Saturdays.

✗ A — A pasta dinner The passage does not mention pasta.

✗ B — A big breakfast The passage does not mention a big breakfast.

✗ D — A seafood lunch Seafood is not mentioned in the passage.

5. Why does Sofia want to visit Germany in December?

✓ **A — To see the snow**

Sofia wants to visit Germany in December because she has never seen snow.

✗ **B — To visit museums**

Visiting museums is not mentioned as a reason.

✗ **C — To learn German**

Learning German is not mentioned as her reason.

✗ **D — To meet new friends**

Meeting new friends is not mentioned in the passage.

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