

thailand

Exercise 1: Match the words with the pictures and find them in the word search.

() Elephant	S	D	N	A	L	S	I	L	A	C	I	P	O	R	T
() Muay Thai	Z	S	N	K	I	N	G	B	H	U	M	I	B	O	L
() Buddhism	I	A	H	T	Y	A	U	M	C	T	M	Z	S	T	E
() Massage	D	S	O	B	U	D	D	H	I	S	M	K	H	V	L
() Floating market	E	G	A	S	S	A	M	P	E	B	N	U	W	T	E
() Khaosan road	A	P	I	N	Q	I	S	W	I	O	J	T	M	Z	P
() Longneck people	F	L	O	A	T	I	N	G	M	A	R	K	E	T	H
() Tropical islands	S	K	E	E	B	I	F	Y	D	R	K	U	V	Q	A
() Tiger temple	K	H	A	O	S	A	N	R	O	A	D	T	V	Z	N
() Tuk-tuk	E	L	P	O	E	P	K	C	E	N	G	N	O	L	T
() Grand Palace	E	L	P	M	E	T	R	E	Q	I	T	D	B	P	U
() King Bhumibol	T	I	P	Q	R	A	N	D	P	A	L	A	C	E	K
() Monks															



Introduction

Fast facts

Flag:



Population: 67 million

Capital: Bangkok

Language: Thai

Currency: Baht

King: Maha Vajiralongkorn

Government: Constitutional Monarchy



Source: WorldAtlas.com

Geography

Thailand is located in Southeast Asia. The country borders Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, and Malaysia. The southern part of Thailand is covered with forests and mountains. However, the highest mountains are located in the north.

Weather

The rainy season or monsoons in Thailand take place between May and September. The moist and humid weather creates a good place for a large variety of animals to live.

The most spectacular animals, such as elephants, wild oxen, leopards, and tigers, live deep in the forests. Crocodiles and cobras also live in Thailand.

History

The first settlements in Thailand were built around 2000 BC in the mountainous areas. Between the 9th and 13th centuries, Thailand was ruled by the Khmer Empire. The empire was overthrown by several local Thai chiefs and they established the Thai Kingdom in 1238. The Kingdom was overthrown in 1350, and other dynasties emerged. The Chakri Kingdom was established in 1782, and still rules Thailand today.

People & Culture

Around 90% of the Thai population is Buddhist. There are many temples and Buddhist structures all over the country.

Thai food is influenced by Indian and Chinese cuisine. Most dishes are very spicy. The most common ingredients are lemongrass, hot chilies, basil, and coconut milk.

Government & Economy

Until 1939, Thailand was known as Siam. Thailand is the only country in Southeast Asia that has never been colonized by European powers.

In 1932, Thailand became a constitutional monarchy after a revolution. The king is the leader of the country, but his function is only symbolic.

Tourism and agriculture are the most important industries of Thailand's economy.



Exercise 2: Are the following statements true or false?

- 1) Thailand used to be called Siam.

()
- 2) More than 50 million Buddhists live in Thailand.

()
- 3) Thailand borders Cambodia, Myanmar, Malaysia, Laos, China, and India.

()
- 4) Kuala Lumpur is the capital of Thailand.

()
- 5) Thailand was colonized by Britain before 1939.

()
- 6) Thailand has a king.

()
- 7) The tropical islands are located in the south.

()
- 8) Most mountains in Thailand can be found in the north.

()
- 9) Thai food is often very spicy.

()
- 10) Farming and tourism are the country's exports.

()
- 11) Chiang Mai is a city in the north of Thailand.

()
- 12) Thailand is a country in Asia.

()

Exercise 3: The words below are chopped in half. Find the pieces that fit together.

- | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|----------|----------|
| THAI | AM | MON | KOK | 1) _____ | 4) _____ |
| SI | BANG | KING | ELEP | 2) _____ | 5) _____ |
| HANT | DOM | SOON | LAND | 3) _____ | 6) _____ |



Exercise 4: What images spring to mind when you hear about Thailand? Describe your thoughts below.

King Bhumibol



King Bhumibol Adulyadej was the king of Thailand between 1946 and 2016. He was the 9th king of the Chakri Dynasty. Bhumibol was the longest-serving king in the history of Thailand. He has been serving for 68 years! He was born and raised in the United States and studied in Switzerland. When Bhumibol was 19, his brother, King Ananda Mahibol, unexpectedly died. Bhumibol inherited the title and became the king of Thailand. Initially he stayed in Switzerland to finish his studies, but in 1951 he went back to Thailand, and married Sirikit Kitiyakara.

King Bhumibol was highly respected by most Thai people. Even though the king does not have much governing power, he did a lot to help ordinary Thai people. The Thai people really loved their king, and they would never dishonor him in any way.

The king has played an important role in keeping the country stable and united. Many people have benefitted from the king's projects and efforts to make the country better. He set up and supported many projects that benefitted poor people. Minorities and tribes who live in the forests in the north of Thailand were greatly supported with projects such as plant substitution. These projects encourage the minorities to stop deforestation and the production of heroin.

King Bhumibol died on 13 October 2016. His successor, King Vajiralongkorn, does not share the same popularity his father. Many people are afraid that the reputation and influence of the Thai monarchy will suffer.

Exercise 5: Choose the best answers.

1) Who was the Thai monarch before King Bhumibol?

- a. Bhumibol Adulyadej
- b. Ananda Mahibol
- c. Queen Sirikit
- d. Chakri

2) King Bhumibol Adulyadej ..

- a. was the longest serving monarch in the world.
- b. was the 9th king in Thailand's history.
- c. was very powerful.
- d. all of the above

3) King Bhumibol Adulyadej inherited the throne ..

- a. after the death of his father.
- b. in 1946.
- c. 19 years ago
- d. all of the above

4) The king was highly respected because he ..

- a. was the longest reigning monarch in the world.
- b. was born in the United States.
- c. cared about the poor people.
- d. produced heroin.

5) Which groups of people did the king support?

- a. Minorities
- b. Tribes
- c. Poor people
- d. All of the above

Exercise 6: Unscramble the words.

1) rkiach

— — — — —

King Bhumibol was the 9th king of the ... Dynasty.

2) rtiisk

— — — — —

The former queen of Thailand.

3) tistrbe

— — — — —

The king supported projects that helped ... in the north.

4) etreedpsc

— — — — —

The king was highly ... by most people in Thailand.

5) rlnieadzstw

— — — — —

The king studied in ...

6) osercjtp

— — — — —

King Bhumibol supported many ... that help poor people.

7) baselt

— — — — —

The king helped to keep the country ...

Buddhism

Buddhism is the world's 4th largest religion and the main religion in Thailand. There is no God in Buddhism, it is rather a way of life or a philosophy. Buddhists believe in powerful spiritual forces. The Three Jewels are the three central beliefs in Buddhism.

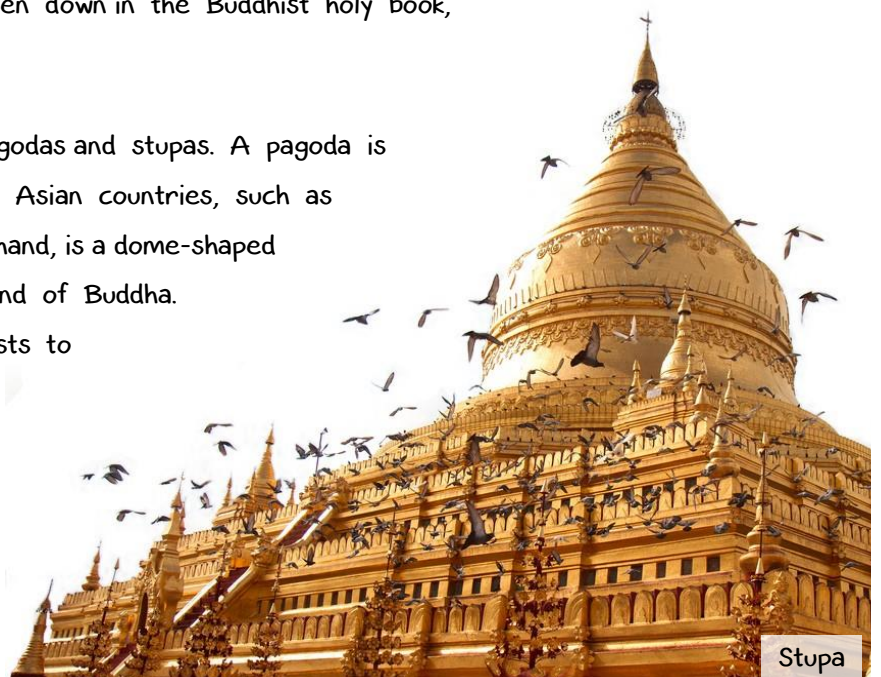
- The belief in Buddha
- Dharma – the teachings of Buddha
- The Sangha – the Buddhist community that consists of ordinary people, monks and nuns. It is the purpose to be helpful to others and move towards enlightenment.



Siddharta Gautama is the founder of Buddhism, he was born around 563 BC. He was also called the Buddha; which means the 'awakened one'. Siddharta wasn't the only Buddha, in fact, there have been several, but Siddharta is considered to be "THE" Buddha, which means that he was considered to be the main Buddha who laid the foundations of Buddhism. A 'Buddha' is a person who finds the true understanding of life through many years of spiritual investigation and meditation.

Siddharta was born as a Hindu, but he found it hard to adhere to and believe the Hindu teachings because of all the suffering he saw around him. He was actually born as a wealthy prince in Nepal, but he sacrificed the comforts of wealth and riches so as to find the true understanding of the world he lived in. At first, he tried different kinds of Hindu beliefs, but eventually he created his own belief system and taught it to many people. Many of Siddharta's teachings come from Hinduism and were written down in the Buddhist holy book, Tripitaka.

There are two kinds of places for worship: pagodas and stupas. A pagoda is a tiered tower that is very common in several Asian countries, such as China, Japan and India. A Stupa, on the other hand, is a dome-shaped stone structure that represents the holy mind of Buddha. These temples are not essential for Buddhists to pray. Some Buddhists have little shrines in their houses that allow them to pray at the most convenient time for them. Buddhist worship is called 'Puja', which includes chanting, bowing, meditation and making offerings.



Stupa



Siddharta believed that life is suffering. In order to end the suffering, a special 'path', or way of life must be followed, which he called Dharma. Reincarnation is an important aspect of this, which is basically a belief that people go through different cycles of life. At the end of the cycle, a person is released from desire and the 'self', and they can reach Nirvana (a state of freedom from suffering). Buddhists aim to understand the reality of the world to end suffering and reach Nirvana. Nirvana is the end of reincarnation and is somehow similar to heaven.

In order to reach Nirvana, Buddhists must train and purify their minds by following The Four Noble Truths.

- Dukkha – Life is suffering.
- Samudaya – There is suffering because of desire and the need to control things.
- Nirodha – There is an end to suffering by letting go our cravings.
- Magga – The true path that leads to the end of suffering.



Exercise 7: Answer the questions about Buddhism.

1) Why is Buddhism considered to be a philosophy rather than a religion?

2) What are the main beliefs of Buddhism?

3) Who is the founder of Buddhism and why did he do this?

4) What is a Buddha?

5) What is dharma?

6) What is Nirvana?

7) What must Buddhists do in order to reach Nirvana?



Exercise 8: Complete the crossword about Buddhism.

Across:

3) The founder of Buddhism.

7) Siddharta said: 'life is '

8) A Buddhist holy book.

9) The Buddhist word for lifestyle.

Down:

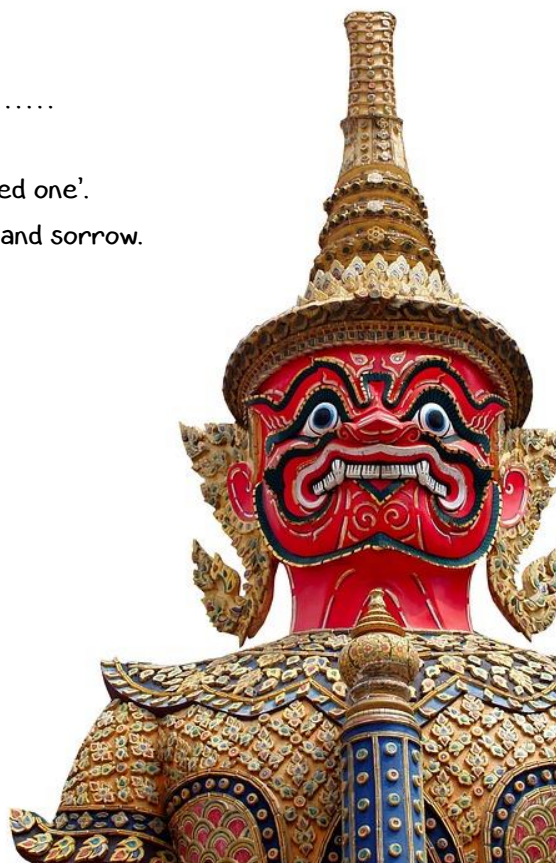
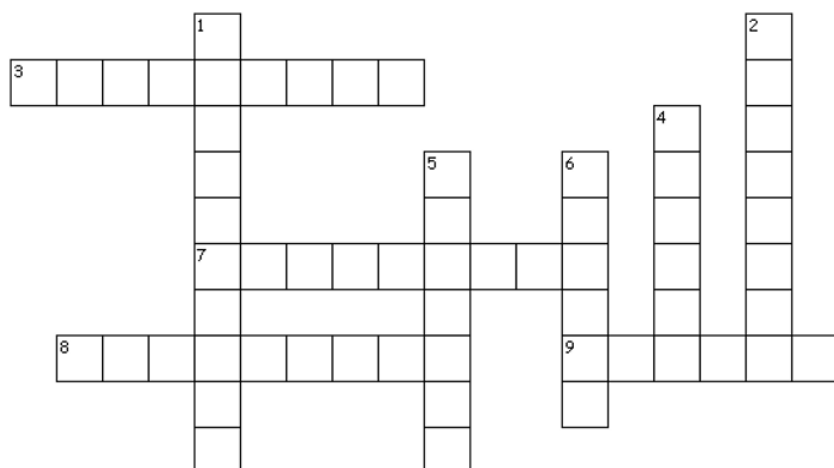
1) Buddhism is not a religion but a

2) is the origin of Buddhism.

4) Another word for 'the enlightened one'.

5) The end of all desire, ignorance and sorrow.

6) A Buddhist temple.



Protests

Before 1932, Thailand was called Siam. However, in 1932, the Siamese Revolution took place and the people took away the power from the monarchy and started a democracy. The king, however, did not have to abdicate and his role would only be symbolic. Until today, the king and the royal family still have many supporters.

The political situation in Thailand has remained unstable ever since the revolution. Supporters of the monarchy are competing with supporters of democracy. Since the revolution in 1932, 17 different governments have been overthrown by the military (coup). Very often, the government leaders are accused of corruption and dictatorship. After a coup, the political leaders are often put in exile or even put in prison. Sometimes, people start protesting on the streets if they do not agree with what is happening to their leaders. However, the military often gets violent when dealing with these protestors.

When you read about these protests in the newspaper or when you see it on TV, you might have noticed that there are two main groups of protestors, the 'red shirts' and the 'yellow shirts'.

The group with the yellow shirts consists of nationalists, royalists and the wealthy elite. They believe that the 'red shirts' are too uneducated to vote and consider the King as their 'father'. The 'yellow shirts' want to restore the



monarchy and give the king more power. This group is allied with the Democratic Party. But, they have never won an election in the last 21 years. The military also supports the 'yellow shirts'.



The group with the 'red shirts' is a mix of people with different ideas. Some of them support the king and the monarchy, while other 'red shirts' hate it. Some are communists and others are capitalist. Most 'red shirts' are poor people. They have won practically all elections in the last 21 years.

Exercise 9: Are the following statements true or false?

- 1) Thailand got a king after the Siamese Revolution. ()
- 2) The king does not have much political power. ()
- 3) There have been many protests in Thailand since the Siamese Revolution. ()
- 4) The military supports the red shirts. ()
- 5) There are many protests in Thailand because the king is a dictator. ()
- 6) All people of both groups support the king. ()
- 7) The 'red shirts' group mainly consists of poor and uneducated people. ()
- 8) The 'red shirts' have more supporters than the 'yellow shirts'. ()
- 9) The military has overthrown several governments over the years. ()

Exercise 10: The words below are chopped in half. Find the pieces that fit together.

TARY	ARCHY	SIA	DEMO
YAL	TESTS	RO	CRACY
PRO	MILI	MESE	MON

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1) _____ | 4) _____ |
| 2) _____ | 5) _____ |
| 3) _____ | 6) _____ |

thai culture

Exercise 11: Complete the text with the words below.

ordinary	traditional	taxis	Siamese	comfortable
self-defense	attention	Thai boxing	cheap	



tuk-tuks

Tuk-tuks are three-wheeled motorcycle _____ that can be found in most cities in Thailand. Riding in a tuk-tuk is not very _____, but it is a true Thailand experience for many tourists. Many tuk-tuk drivers are waiting near tourist spots to pick up passengers. They often decorate their rides with lights and paint to get

more _____. The word 'tuk' means _____ in the Thai language. Prices for rides in tuk-tuks need to be negotiated. Generally, the drivers charge a price that is even higher than a regular taxi. So, tuk-tuks are not cheap at all!

มวย thai

Muay Thai is also called _____. It is the national sport of Thailand. These martial arts originated during ancient battles of the _____ (Thai) army. Over the years, Muay Thai became more popular and also _____ people started practicing it. The sport is now practiced by hundreds of thousands of people all over the world.

Thai boxing is a sport, but also used for _____.

The sport is also referred to as "The Art of the Eight

Limbs", as contestants may use the hands, shins, elbows and knees during a fight. There are many

Thai boxing events all over Thailand. During such

fights, _____ music is played to

increase the excitement.



Exercise 12: Choose the best answers for the questions below.

1) Muay Thai is the same thing as ..

- a. karate
- b. boxing
- c. Thai boxing
- d. all of the above

2) Muay Thai is also called "The Art of the Eight Limbs" because ..

- a. contestants can use their arms and legs as weapons.
- b. eight fighters join an event.
- c. fighters can use everybody part as a weapon.
- d. none of the above

3) Muay Thai ..

- a. may only be practiced for self-defense.
- b. originated in the Thai army a long time ago.
- c. is practiced all over the world.
- d. B and C are correct.

4) The word tuk-tuk means in the Thai language.

- a. cheap-taxi
- b. three-wheeled motorcycle
- c. cheap-cheap
- d. none of the above

5) Tuk-tuks are a cheap way of getting around because ..

- a. people can negotiate the price before the ride.
- b. the rides are less comfortable than regular taxis.
- c. they often wait for tourists at popular attractions.
- d. none of the above

6) Tuk-tuk drivers often decorate their ride because ..

- a. they also live in their tuk-tuk.
- b. they want to get more attention.
- c. they can charge more money with a nicely decorated tuk-tuk.
- d. all of the above

Exercise 13: The words below come from the passage on the previous page and are scrambled. Unscramble the words and find them in the word search.

yuMahTai _____

dTnhaial _____

aiThgnoxiB _____

ktkuuT _____

uitsTor _____

tilarMastrA _____

K Y T S O F L F X M S T S I R U O T
P U G H F Z N H W U H Z T P E A H P
J I T S A P C S F A N C I N
Y S T K H I S K I Y S L O
Q N Q G U K B L C T T F R
X R R U I T A O L H P M T
N Q A E P N N J X A J L
B S P R D O F H F I N Y
T V V J L Q S V W G N O
M A R T I A L A R T S G



Attractions



Phang Nga

Phang Nga is a coastal province in the south of Thailand. The region has scenic forests, islands and numerous needle formed rocks in the sea.

It is a very popular place for tourists and one of Thailand's main diving destinations.

Floating Markets

Thailand is home to several floating markets. All kinds of goods, such as fruit and vegetables are sold from boats. Most markets originated in times where water transport played an important role in daily life. The sellers arrive early in the morning with their boats laden with tropical fruit, vegetables and flowers. Most floating markets that still operate today are mainly tourist attractions.



Ayutthaya

Ayutthaya was the capital city of Thailand between 1350 and 1767. It is located around 55

miles from Bangkok. The remains of the city are now a popular tourist spot. The ruins offer a glimpse of what was once a prosperous city with more than 400 Buddhist monasteries. The kingdom of Ayutthaya was very powerful for 417 years.

Khaosan Road

Khaosan Road is a street in the center of Bangkok and a very popular place for backpackers. There are all kinds of shops that sell handicrafts, fruit, paintings, clothes and pirated CDs. In the late evening, the street turns into a place of entertainment. There are bars with live music, restaurants and discos.



Doi Suthep

Doi Suthep is a temple on top of a hill in Chiang Mai, in the north of Thailand. The first temple was built in 1383 and

additional temples were built over the years. The site of the temple was chosen in a very unusual way. The king ordered to strap a 'magical' relic on a sacred white elephant and the animal was turned loose. The elephant walked its way up in the dense forest and stopped near the top of the hill, the animal trumpeted its last breath and died. The king ordered that a golden pagoda had to be built where the elephant lay.



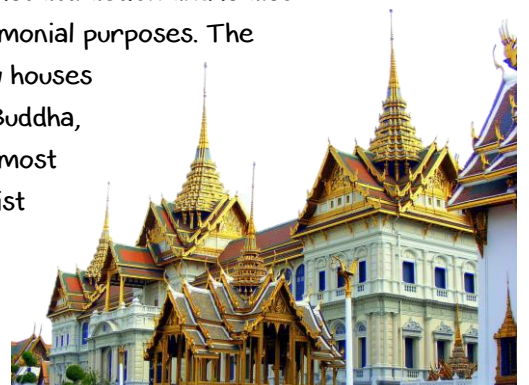
Karen Tribe

The Karen is a tribe from the north of Thailand. The women of the group wear heavy brass rings around their necks. There are around 40,000 Karen members today. The women wear the rings because it is a tradition of the tribe. Wearing the rings originally started as protection against tigers and for its beauty. It looks as if the women have very long necks, but in fact, the rings actually push their shoulders down. Some women have more than 25 rings around their necks!



Grand Palace

The Grand Palace and Wat Prakaew are the most sacred Buddhist temples in Thailand. They are located in the city center of Bangkok. The Grand Palace used to be the Residence of the Kings of Siam. The palace is currently a popular tourist attraction and is also used for ceremonial purposes. The Wat Phrakaew houses the Emerald Buddha, the country's most sacred Buddhist relic.



Exercise 14: Answer the questions about attractions in Thailand.

1) Why do the women of the Karen tribe wear rings around their necks?

2) What is Ayutthaya?

3) Why are there floating markets in Thailand?

4) What is Khaosan Road and why is it such a popular place for backpackers?

5) Why is the Doi Suthep temple built on top of a hill?

6) What is the Grand Palace in Bangkok?

7) What is the Emerald Buddha?

8) When were the ruins of Ayutthaya built?

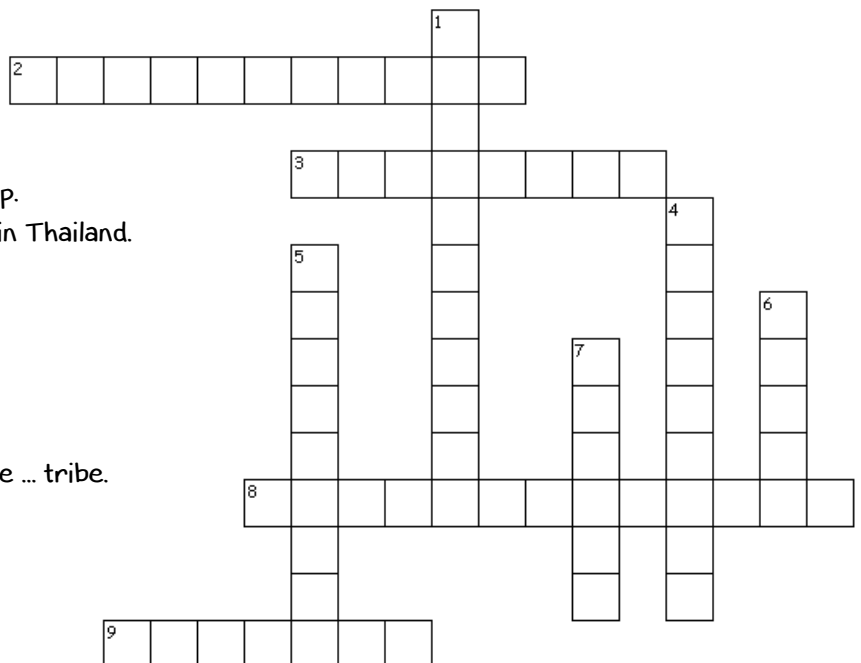
Exercise 15: Complete the crossword below about the attractions in Thailand.

ACROSS

- 2) Lots of ... visit Khaosan Road.
3) A touristic area with forests, islands and beaches.
8) A sacred ... chose the location of Doi Suthep.
9) The ... Buddha is the holiest Buddhist relic in Thailand.

DOWN

- 1) The ... used to be the residence of the king.
4) ... is located on top of a hill in Chiang Mai.
5) ... used to be the capital city of Thailand.
6) The longnecked people are members of the ... tribe.
7) The women of the Karen tribe originally wore their rings as protection against



Exercise 16: Which Thai attraction do you like the most? Give reasons why you think this place is so impressive.

elephants

The elephant is the national animal of Thailand, and plays an important role in Thai culture and in the national symbols. According to Thai beliefs, the mother of Buddha (Queen Maya) was only able to get pregnant after dreaming about a white elephant. This is the reason the white elephant is believed to bring good luck and has royal status.



In the past, a lot of trees were cut in Thailand. Most forests are in the mountains. Therefore, it was too difficult to use machines and trucks to collect wood. Many elephants were used to pick up the trees that were cut by people. The elephants carried the trees to the rivers. The trees then floated down the river to nearby villages, where the trees were cut into pieces of wood.



It took many years to teach elephants how to work. Each elephant had its own trainer called a mahout. A mahout would spend his whole life with the same animal. It was definitely not an easy and cheap task to train an elephant. An elephant eats 550 pounds of plants and drinks over 80 gallons of water each day! The mahout trained the elephant for 20 years, and afterwards the elephant began to work. They would work for around 35 years.

In 1989, the Thai government banned all logging in protected areas. It was a very wise choice to protect the vulnerable areas, but it left many elephants without work. The rapid rise in tourism around that time solved that problem. Today, more than half of the population of domesticated animals work in tourism.

There are nearly 2,700 domesticated elephants in Thailand today. There used to be more than 100,000 elephants in captivity in 1850, as they were intensively used to help people work in the dense forests. It is very difficult to count the number of animals that live in the wild, as they live deep in the forests. Experts believe that there are between 2,000 and 3,000 left.

Exercise 17: Read the passage and answer the questions.

1) Why is the elephant the national animal of Thailand?

2) Why did Thai people use elephants to work in the forests instead of using machines and trucks?

3) What is a mahout?

4) Do Thai people still use elephants to work in forests? Explain.

5) Was it easy for a mahout to train an elephant? Explain.

6) What do Thai people use domesticated elephants for these days?

7) How many elephants live in Thailand today?

tropical islands

Exercise 18: Complete the text with the words below.

groups visited Thailand tropical luxurious developed problems dodgy

Thailand is famous for its _____ islands. Many tourists visit these islands for their beaches, exotic dives, parties and _____ resorts. There are three main _____ of islands in Thailand: The Andaman Islands, the Southern Gulf Islands, and the islands east of Bangkok. There are more than 1,430 islands in _____, but there are only a few that attract most travelers and tourists. The most popular islands near Bangkok are Ko Samet and Ko Chang. Koh Samui, Ko Pha Ngan, and Ko Tao are the most _____ islands in the Gulf of Thailand, and the most popular islands in the Andaman Sea are Phuket and Ko Phi Phi. All of these islands are very _____, and have a steady flow of tourists throughout the year, especially during the high season. The islands suffer from _____ that most tourist destinations have: overcrowding and _____ operators.

Exercise 19: If you had the chance to visit Thailand, would you prefer to go to an exotic island or experience the Thai culture such as visiting temples and tribes in the north? Explain.



Reflection

Exercise 20: Write the names of the things related to Thailand and find the hidden word.

- 1) _ _ _ _ _
- 2) _ _ _ _ _ _
- 3) _ _ _ _ _ _
- 4) _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
- 5) _ _ _ _ _
- 6) _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
- 7) _ _ _ _ _ _

Answer: _ _ _ _ _



Exercise 21: Unscramble the words. Hints are given below.

- 1) madanna _ _ _ _ _
Phuket is located in the Sea.
- 2) haksanoaord _ _ _ _ _
A popular street for backpackers in Bangkok.
- 3) ylwleoirsths _ _ _ _ _
A group of Thai protestors who support the king.
- 4) nokbgak _ _ _ _ _
The capital city of Thailand.
- 5) htba _ _ _ _ _
The currency of Thailand.
- 6) oidpeutsh _ _ _ _ _
A temple in Chiang Mai that is located on top of a hill.

