

Hawaii Benefits from its Famous TV Show

Difficulty:

AVERAGE

Date of release:

Wednesday 19th October 2011

Discussion activities to be done after completing this EA lesson

Today's report is about the island of Hawaii and its movie industry. Why are films being made on the island? Which films have been made there? What effect is the film industry having on Hawaii?

Extension discussion topics

A. Talking about and going over the specific topic / idea / issue in listening text

Introduction = Which films were discussed in the report and what are they about? Why are filmmakers shooting in Hawaii? What effect on Hawaii have these films had?

1. Which TV series and films were discussed in the report, and what are they about?

- "Hawaii Five-O" was the main series discussed.
- it is a police drama based on a 1968 TV series.
- a new film called the "The Descendants" starring George Clooney is being filmed in Hawaii.
- it is about a man whose wife is in a coma and the devastating information he learns about her while she's dying.
- "Pirates of the Caribbean", "Soul Surfer" and "Just Go With It" were mentioned.
- these three movies were all filmed in Hawaii and have been successful.

Have you ever seen any of these films? Did you enjoy them? Does "The Descendants" seem an interesting movie? Would you go and see it?

2. Why are filmmakers shooting in Hawaii?

- the island has a variety of scenery, and has been used to recreate scenes from countries such as Korea, Iraq, England, Africa and even snowy Russia.
- it has a wet and sunny, tropical climate.
- Hawaii gives tax incentives to filmmakers, if they help with funding, donations to schools or internships.
- some producers, such as Peter Lenkov, think Hawaii is unique.

Have you ever been to Hawaii? Would you like to go, why or why not?

3. What effect on Hawaii have these films had?

- they have showcased Hawaii to the world.
- this has led to an increase in people holidaying in Hawaii.
- last year production companies spent four hundred million dollars filming in Hawaii.
- the increase in visitors and film companies has given Hawaii an economic boost.
- Hawaii needs this income.

B. Expanding on (one of) the topics / ideas / issues in listening text

Topic = Life on Islands.

1. Does your country have any islands as part of it? Have you ever visited any of these islands? Which ones, and what were they like? Why did you go? What makes them unique (e.g., different language, foods, jobs, etc.). How are the islands accessed? Are the local people any different from those on the mainland? Do you know anyone who was born and brought up on an island? Has it affected them in any way?
2. What are the benefits and disadvantages of living on an island? Some advantages may be: less taxes, peaceful, maybe less crime, fresh fish to eat, many people will know each other, near the beach, etc. Some of the disadvantages may be: few modern facilities, few jobs, reliant on tourist industry, difficult to reach other places, cost of living high because things have to be imported, etc.
3. Would you like to live on an island such as Hawaii? Why, why not? Would it depend on the island and what it was like? If so what factors would persuade you to live on an island e.g., its size, how remote it was, whether you were born there, its climate, if it had natural dangers threatening it, whether there were good facilities, or that jobs were easy to get? Or which factors would definitely dissuade you from moving to live on an island?
4. A "desert island" is an island where no other people live. Would you like to be on a desert island? Would you survive, and if so how? What would you miss most and least from your current life? Would you enjoy anything about being alone on a desert island? If you could take just one thing with you, what would it be and why? Make a list of your top five things to take to a "desert island", and compare it with a friend's list. How similar or different are they?

C. Extending discussion of (one of) the topics / ideas / issues in listening text

Topic = Taxes.

1. All governments tax people and businesses. What different types of taxes do people pay in your country? Here is a list of the different types of taxes paid for different things in different circumstances in France - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taxation_in_France. Does your country have the same types of taxes; e.g., for businesses, for people on earnings, on goods which are sold and bought, on gasoline, on money and property which you inherit, etc. Are there any different types of taxes in your country? If you don't know, try to find out from your government's websites.
2. Look at the current rates of tax, or the amounts people and businesses have to pay in France here: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taxation_in_France. Are they higher or lower than in your country (look up your country here, if you don't know the rates - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tax_rates_around_the_world.) If the rates are different, why might that be? Which countries, do you think, have the highest and lowest rates of taxes on personal earnings? Why might this be? Check out the top ten of each here: <http://www.businesspundit.com/12-countries-with-the-highest-lowest-tax-rates/> Does any of this surprise you?

3. Why do governments collect taxes? What types of things is tax money used for and spent on in your country? Does your government have any problems collecting taxes? If so, what are these? Are there ways in which people can avoid paying taxes? Have you ever avoided paying any taxes which you should have paid? What are the penalties for avoiding tax in your country? Why are different people taxed differently? Do you think that is fair? How could taxation in your country be improved?
4. Hawaii uses tax incentives or reduced tax rates to attract filmmakers. Does your country reduce taxes for different types of people or activities? Why do they do this? Is using tax reductions, or tax increases e.g., on cigarettes and alcohol, a good way to change people's or businesses' behaviors? Does your government do this, if so in what way, and does it work?

Audioscript

When the original "Hawaii Five-O", a police drama, premiered in 1968, it was the first television series to shoot on location in Hawaii. It helped develop Hawaii's TV and film industry, and its number one economic engine, tourism.

Ever since 2010, when CBS began producing a new version, the state has been reaping the benefits.

"Hawaii Five-O" has contributed significantly to Hawaii's economy, not just in production, but in what they do to help promote the destination. "Hawaii Five-O" is a buzz word everywhere, whether you're on Twitter, FaceBook or you watch broadcast television. So for us, it is a huge enormous pump into our tourism economy, as well as our local economy."

That's Georja Skinner, she heads the Hawaii State Film Office. She says last year production companies spent four hundred million dollars filming in Hawaii, making it the state's best year ever.

Hawaii has also been getting good publicity from several recent movies that were made here.

"Well, I think the whole "Pirates of the Carribean," "Soul Surfer," films like "Just Go With It," these are big feature films that have really showcased Hawaii in a great way. And we're very excited about "The Descendants," a film based on a book by a Hawaii writer, Kauai Hart Hemmings, and that film will be coming out this year. It is the first time I think that people will see Hawaii in a very different light, than they're used to seeing it."

"The Descendants" is about a man whose wife is in a coma and the devastating information he learns about her while she's dying. The lead is played by George Clooney.

While luring film productions hasn't been easy, Skinner says tax incentives passed five years ago have helped.

To qualify for a tax credit in Hawaii, productions must provide internships or contribute to the state's public schools through funding, equipment donations or education programs.

"We compete more with global destinations, so New Zealand, Australia, Puerto Rico, often other tropical locales but we're much more than just tropical locations."

Skinner, says "Lost," the ABC drama, showed the world that Hawaii could double for places like Korea, Iraq, England, Africa and even Russia, covered in snow.

Now, she says, the new "Hawaii Five-O" is reviving interest in the Hawaiian islands as a vacation spot.

About 10,000 people turned out to kick off the premiere of season two at a special screening on Waikiki Beach.

Hawaii Five-O's executive producer Peter Lenkov, says you can't recreate the look of Hawaii on a sound stage.

"You know it's "Hawaii Five-O," so I think you couldn't shoot this show anywhere else. What gives it an edge, I think it's just the people, the location, it's just unique."

Many in Hawaii hope the ripples from Hawaii Five-O continue to bring film crews and, along with them, the economic boost that the state wants and needs.