

# Preserving Heritage

# 8



This mask is worn at a yearly festival for women in Benin.

## Warm Up

**Talk with a partner.**

1. How has your country changed since your parents were young?
2. What are some traditions that people don't follow as much as they used to?

99



# Disappearing Languages



More than half of the world's 7,000 languages may be extinct (no longer in use) by the year 2100. These are the top five areas in the world where languages are dying the fastest.

## Before You Read

**A Discussion.** Look at the map above. Do you live near any of the areas where languages are dying? What kinds of people do you think speak these languages? Talk about your ideas with a partner.

**B Definitions.** Match the words with their meanings.

- |          |            |             |                 |
|----------|------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 1. allow | 2. amount  | 3. economic | 4. express (v.) |
| 5. local | 6. reflect | 7. respond  | 8. specific     |

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| _____ a. to show what you think or feel     | _____ e. how much of something there is                              |
| _____ b. to let something happen            | _____ f. to reply  |
| _____ c. to think carefully about something | _____ g. about or related to a particular area                       |
| _____ d. referring to a particular thing    | _____ h. related to the money and businesses of a country or society |

## Reading

**Strategy: Predicting.** What are some reasons why a language becomes endangered? Discuss with a partner. Read the passage to check your predictions.

# Language Death

- 1 Every 14 days, another language dies. There are many reasons for this. Some people think more common languages have more **economic** power. Because of this, young people choose to learn a common language as they think it is more useful. Another
- 5 reason is that some languages aren't written down. Guujaaw is a leader of the Haida Nation. His people have lived on the Queen Charlotte Islands, Canada, for more than 10,000 years. Their language is endangered.<sup>1</sup> Traditionally, it wasn't written down, and, as a result, some people are worried that it will die one day. Guujaaw **responds** to this, "We talk to each other, listen, visit, and **trust** the spoken word.
- 10 **Expressing** yourself without writing is natural." However, if Guujaaw's language and others like it are going to survive, writing may have to become part of their lives.

## Too Important to Lose

- When a language dies, an amazing **amount** of knowledge dies with it. To begin with, language is a huge part of the culture of the people who speak
- 15 it. Language **allows** speakers to say **specific** things: words that describe a cultural idea may not translate exactly into another language. Furthermore, many endangered languages have rich spoken cultures. Stories, songs, and histories are passed on from older people to younger generations. Anthropologist Elizabeth Lindsey emphasizes this. "When an elder<sup>2</sup> dies,
- 20 a library is burned," she claims.

Language death also affects our knowledge about nature. Native tribes often have a deep understanding of **local** plants, animals, and ecosystems.<sup>3</sup> David Harrison, an expert on endangered languages, **reflects**. "Eighty percent of [plant and animal] species have been undiscovered by science. But that doesn't mean they're unknown to humans."

## 25 Still Hope

Many languages are endangered. However, it's not too late. Children often grow up speaking two languages. "No one . . . becomes richer by abandoning<sup>4</sup> . . . one language to learn another," Harrison said. If children feel both languages are important, they will use both. Therefore, it is necessary that children realize how useful their local language is.

<sup>1</sup> A language that is **endangered** is one that is at risk of falling out of use.

<sup>2</sup> In some societies, an **elder** is one of the respected older people who have influence or power.

<sup>3</sup> An **ecosystem** includes all the plants and animals in an environment, and the relationship between them.

<sup>4</sup> When you **abandon** something, you stop using it.



▲ Abamu Degio speaks Koro, an Indian language with about 800 native speakers. Linguists first learned about it in 2008.



▲ Guujaaw, leader of the Haida Nation

## Reading Comprehension

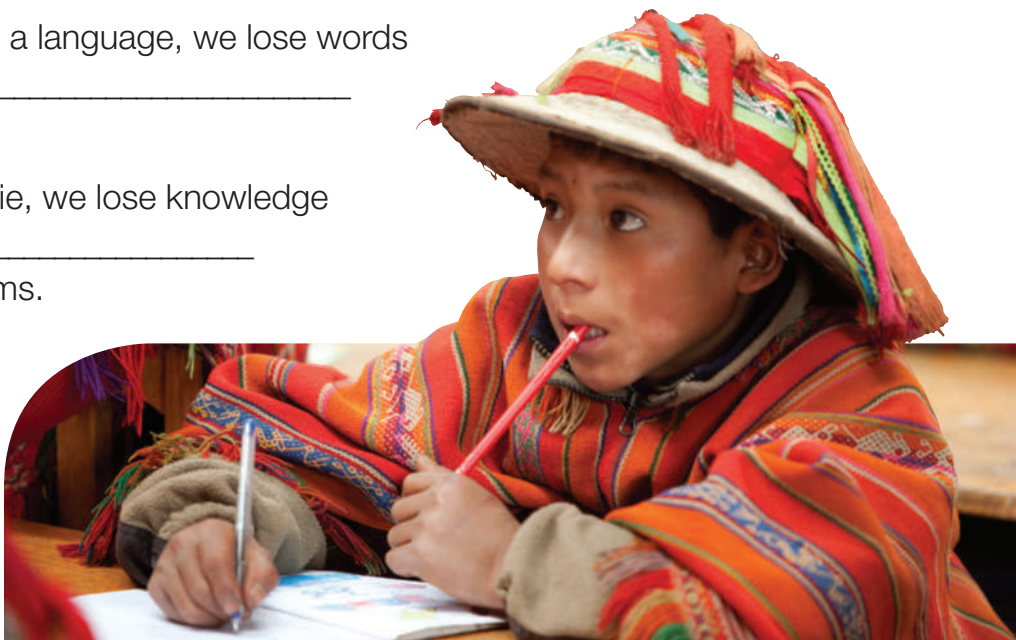
**A** Circle the correct answer.

- Vocabulary** 1. In line 9, the word **trust** means \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. remember                      b. believe in                      c. expect to
- Paraphrase** 2. What does the sentence “When an elder dies, a library is burned” (line 19) mean?  
a. When an elder dies, the people in the tribe start to forget them.  
b. When old people who speak an endangered language die, lots of knowledge dies too.  
c. People in some areas burn books when the leader of their tribe dies.
- Detail** 3. Harrison believes that \_\_\_\_\_ know about undiscovered animal species.  
a. scientists                      b. language experts                      c. local tribes
- Inference** 4. According to the passage, who is most important in stopping language death?  
a. elders                      b. children                      c. linguists

**B Strategy: Identifying fact and opinion.** Complete the statements below using one or two words from the passage. Then decide if each statement is a fact (**F**) or an opinion (**O**).

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Languages die because they don't have as much \_\_\_\_\_ as other languages.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Endangered languages often aren't \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. More common languages are more \_\_\_\_\_ for children to learn.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. When languages die, we also lose \_\_\_\_\_ and histories of a group of people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. When we lose a language, we lose words that express \_\_\_\_\_ ideas.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. If languages die, we lose knowledge about \_\_\_\_\_ and ecosystems.

A Quechua high school student in a language class, Peru.



## Language Practice

**A Vocabulary: Words in context.** Answer the questions below. Share your answers with a partner.

1. Name three countries with a powerful **economy**.
2. What was the last question you didn't know how to **respond** to?
3. Do you prefer to **express** yourself in writing or by speaking?
4. How many hours a night do you think is the right **amount** of sleep?
5. What do you wish your teacher would **allow** you to do in class?
6. What are two **specific** things you want to do this year?
7. What **local** foods should visitors to your city try? Why?
8. Do you usually make decisions quickly, or do you **reflect** for a while first?

**B Grammar: Using *furthermore*.** Read the example sentences. Sentence **a** is from the passage.

- a. Words that describe a cultural idea may not translate exactly into another language. **Furthermore**, many endangered languages have rich spoken cultures.
- b. To begin with, language is a huge part of the culture of the people who speak it. **Furthermore**, language allows speakers to say specific things.

Complete the first sentence using **furthermore**. Then write three more sentences. Read your sentences with a partner.

1. I don't like \_\_\_\_\_. Furthermore \_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_.
4. \_\_\_\_\_.

### Word Partners

**Use *local* with:**

(n.) local **area**, local **artist**, local **business**,  
local **news**, local **office**, local **government**,  
local **police**



# The Hadza



## Before You Read

**A Discussion.** The Hadza are a tribe in Tanzania whose way of life has changed little in the last 10,000 years. What do you think their lives are like? Discuss with a partner.

**B Definitions.** Match the words with their meanings.

- |          |            |                |            |
|----------|------------|----------------|------------|
| 1. aware | 2. fear    | 3. forget      | 4. freedom |
| 5. hurry | 6. medical | 7. opportunity | 8. raise   |

- \_\_\_ a. to move or do something quickly
- \_\_\_ b. the condition of being able to do whatever you want
- \_\_\_ c. to not remember
- \_\_\_ d. related to helping sick people

- \_\_\_ e. knowing about something
- \_\_\_ f. to keep animals or grow plants on a farm
- \_\_\_ g. the feeling of being scared
- \_\_\_ h. a chance to do something

◀ The Hadza used to move freely over the Great Rift Valley. As Tanzania becomes more modern, the Hadza have only 25% of the land they once had.





▲ Hadza women dance in celebration.

## Reading

**Strategy: Scanning.** The Hadza own very few things. What are some of the things they own? \_\_\_\_\_

# What have we forgotten?



▲ Hadza men follow an animal's trail.

1 They grow no food and **raise** no livestock. They live without calendars. In fact, they don't count hours, days, or months. The Hadza language doesn't even have words for numbers past three or four. Consequently, they don't celebrate birthdays or anniversaries. Their way of life has changed very little for the last 10,000 years.

5 To the outside world, this way of living may be hard to understand. We may think that there's nothing the Hadza can teach us. Michael Finkel, a journalist,<sup>1</sup> would disagree. He had the **opportunity** to spend two weeks with the Hadza and said that being with them changed the way he looked at the world.

10 So what can we learn from the Hadza? One thing is their attitude toward life. Each Hadza tribesperson owns very little: a cooking pot, a water container, an ax, and a bow. The things they own can be wrapped<sup>2</sup> in a blanket and carried. This teaches us that perhaps modern city-living people don't really need everything they own.

15 We can also learn about their **freedom** from stress. Their lives are incredibly dangerous, and **medical** help is far away. One bad fall from a tree, or one bite from a poisonous snake can leave a member of the Hadza dead. Yet they don't worry about the future—or anything. Finkel described the change in his feelings as “the Hadza effect.” He said that after being with the Hadza, he felt calmer.<sup>3</sup> He wasn't in such a **hurry**, and was more **aware** of the present. He also felt more self-sufficient<sup>4</sup> and had less **fear**. “My time with the Hadza made me happier,” he said.

<sup>1</sup> A **journalist** is a person whose job is to write for newspapers, magazines, TV, etc.

<sup>2</sup> When you **wrap** something, you fold something around it.

<sup>3</sup> When you are **calm**, you don't show or feel any worry, anger, or excitement.

<sup>4</sup> Someone who is **self-sufficient** doesn't need to depend on other people.

# Reading Comprehension

**A** Circle the correct answer.

**Detail 1.** The Hadza don't celebrate yearly events because they don't \_\_\_\_\_ like we do.  
a. like celebrating      b. remember things      c. count time

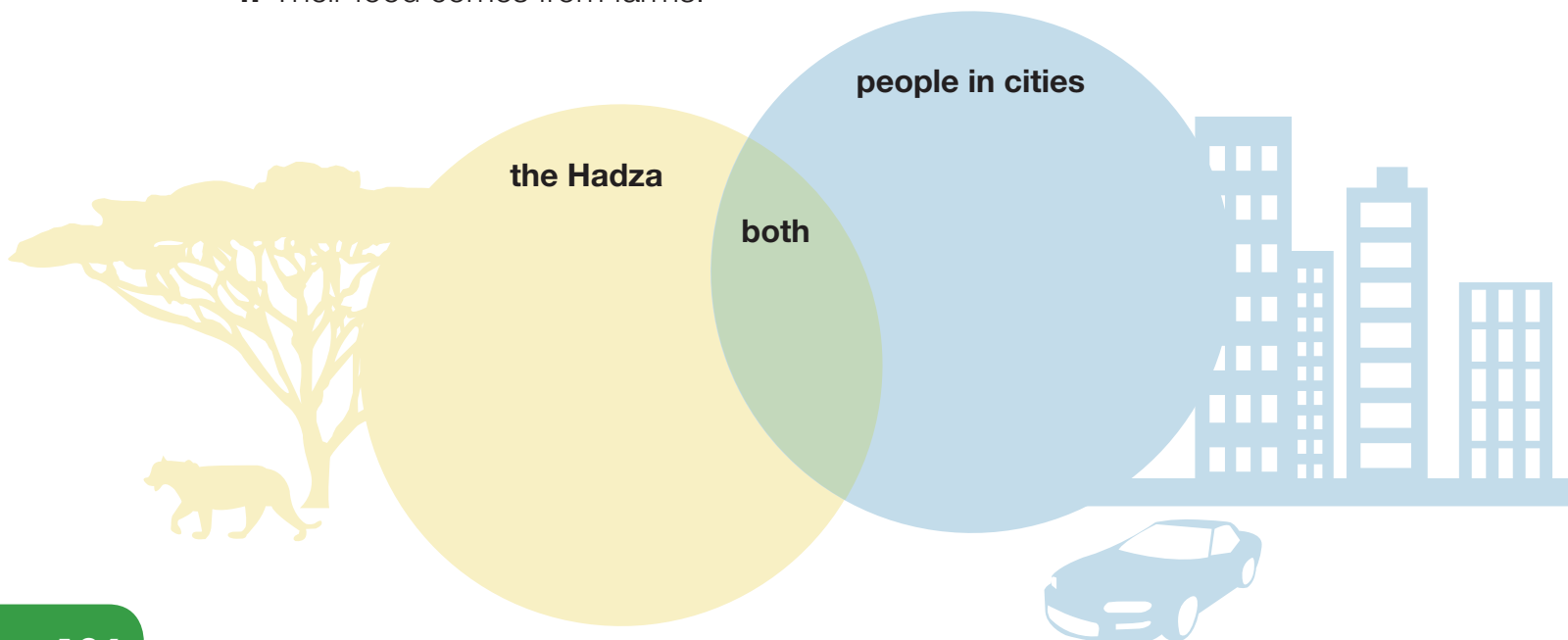
**Detail 2.** After spending time with the Hadza, Finkel changed \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. the way he spent his free time  
b. his ideas about the world  
c. the clothes and shoes he wore

**Inference 3.** The Hadza probably \_\_\_\_\_ food.  
a. buy      b. hunt for      c. raise animals for

**Detail 4.** Which of these is NOT part of *the Hadza effect* (line 15)?  
a. better health      b. a relaxed attitude      c. a slower way of life

**B Strategy: Classification.** Which group of people do these things match?  
Write **a** to **f** in the correct place on the chart.

- a. Owning a lot of things is not very important.
- b. Life is sometimes dangerous.
- c. They worry about what will happen a few years from now.
- d. They celebrate birthdays.
- e. They live almost the same way as some people did thousands of years ago.
- f. Their food comes from farms.





## Language Practice

**A Vocabulary: Words in context.** In each sentence, circle the best answer. The words in **blue** are from the reading.

- Which of these is easier to **forget**?  
a. a long number                      b. your name
- Some people **raise** \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. goats                                      b. bicycles
- If you take an **opportunity**, you \_\_\_\_\_ something.  
a. do    b. miss
- To be able to \_\_\_\_\_ is an example of **freedom**.  
a. speak English well                      b. say what you want
- Medical** help includes \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. X-rays                                      b. teaching
- When you are **in a hurry**, you \_\_\_\_\_ time.  
a. have a lot of                                  b. don't have much
- Which of these are you more likely to be **aware** of?  
a. a noise near you                              b. a secret
- Most people \_\_\_\_\_ the feeling of **fear**.  
a. enjoy    b. dislike

### Usage

#### *raise and rise*

**Raise** also means "to move something to a higher position." E.g. *Students raise their hands when they want to speak in class.*

**Rise** means that something moves upward: *Smoke rises from a fire.*

**B Grammar: Using *consequently*.** Read the example sentences. Sentence **a** is from the passage.

- The Hadza language doesn't even have words for numbers past three or four. **Consequently**, they don't celebrate birthdays or anniversaries.
- The bugs look like thorns. **Consequently**, animals stay away from them.
- Scientists thought animals couldn't live without the sun's energy. **Consequently**, scientists never expected to find living creatures down there.

Complete the sentences. Then read them with a partner.

- More schools teach English. Consequently, \_\_\_\_\_.
- More people are aware of language death. Consequently, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_.



Video  
**Saving  
Languages**

Aboriginal artist  
Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula,  
Central Desert, Australia

- A Preview.** The video discusses the languages of Aboriginal people in Australia. What do you know about Australian Aborigines? Talk about your ideas with a partner.
- B After you watch.** Circle the correct answers.
1. Aborigines have lived in the area of the Northern Territory for ( **about 5,000** / **more than 50,000** ) years.
  2. Greg Anderson and David Harrison are members of the ( **Enduring Voices** / **Lost Languages** ) Project.
  3. The project calls an area with a large number of endangered languages a “language ( **focus area** / **hotspot** ).”
  4. The team uses old ( **photos** / **maps** ) to find out where languages were spoken in the past.
  5. The team meets Charlie, ( **an important local linguist** / **the last living speaker of Amurdag** ).
  6. Greg and David watch a teacher of Yawuru, a language with ( **no** / **very few** ) native speakers today.
- C Think about it.** Why do you think the attitudes toward local languages in Australia are changing?