



مقطع تحصیلی: کاردانی □ کارشناسی □ رشته: مترجمی مکتوب ترم: ۴ سال تحصیلی: ۱۳۹۸ - ۱۳۹۹  
 نام درس: خواندن و درک آثار مکتوب نام و نام خانوادگی مدرس: فرهاد تابنده  
 آدرس email مدرس: farhad021.t@gmail.com تلفن همراه مدرس: ۰۹۳۵۷۷۶۴۴۶۳

جزوه درس: خواندن آثار مکتوب (پنجشنبه ۱۲-۱۴؛ ۵ تیر) مربوط به هفته: سیزدهم □  
 text: دارد □ ندارد □ voice: دارد □ ندارد □ power point: دارد □ ندارد □  
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 کلاس به صورت حضوری نیز در دانشگاه برای تمرین و رفع اشکال در تاریخ و ساعت مربوطه طبق برنامه برگزار می شود

## Unit 6, Chapter 1: The Lost Word of South America

Please read the text carefully and then check the difficult words/phrases.



- 1 The world is far less a mystery than it was a century ago, but it still holds a few locations that **baffle** scientists and researchers. Early explorers spoke of mysterious mountains towering above South America's jungle. Such stories inspired Arthur Conan Doyle to write *The Lost World*, a novel set in an isolated place still inhabited by dinosaurs. The dinosaurs were **fiction** ... but the mountains are real.
- 2 The mountains are called *tepuis*, or "house of the gods," in the language of the local Pémon. Rising thousands of meters into the sky over the jungles of Guyana, Brazil, and Venezuela, these are dramatic sandstone structures (called *mesas* by geologists) with flat tops and steep sides. *Tepuis* are so **remote** that they have prevented researchers from exploring them fully—they truly are among the last unexplored places on Earth.
- 3 The flat **summits**, ranging from a few square kilometers to dozens and even hundreds of square kilometers, used to be connected. Some scientists even believe that these tepuis have life forms from the ancient super continent<sup>1</sup> known as Gondwana, which may have included what we know today as South America, Africa, Antarctica, Australia, and other land masses. "A few people have been there, but really not a lot, considering what they are—among the oldest formations in the world," Jesus Rivas, a biology professor, said. "They are like a place where time stopped. In the fauna<sup>2</sup> you can see South America evolving for the last 300 million years."
- 4 The high **altitude** and the ancient age of the tepuis make them extremely interesting to biologists. They are frequently described as "islands in the sky,"



Mount Roraima, one of the tepuis



covered in tropical greenery that supports a wide range of wildlife. Indeed, many of the species that live on top of the tepuis are found nowhere else on the planet. But because they are so hard to reach, scientists have only begun to scratch the surface of the enormous diversity on and around the tepuis.

5 One question still mystifies scientists: how did animals and plants end up in such an **inaccessible** place? Some scientists believe in the "Lost World" theory—that these creatures have been living there since the tepuis were born. But, in a paper published in the journal *Evolution*, studies on tree frogs exclusive to these tepuis showed that they had climbed up slowly over a few million years. Unfortunately, until further studies are conducted, scientists can only **speculate**.

6 People who want to visit these tepuis can arrange special tours, but it will require enormous effort to get there. To make a comparison, Angel Falls in Venezuela—the tallest waterfall in the world—is probably the most popular tourist destination in the tepui region. However, the base of the falls can only be reached after flying into the jungle and hiking for hours.

7 When the creators of *Up* (a movie which featured the tepuis) visited to get a feel of the place, they chose Roraima—the "easiest" of the tepuis to climb. Bob Peterson, one of the climbers, said: "It was like your worst nightmare. It was like a six- or seven-hour climb to the top, and I had on way too much gear. When we got to the top, we had to hike across uneven

**terrain** for another hour and a half. It was already dark when we got to our camp. And suddenly, from out of the darkness we saw this cave lit by candles and there was warm soup waiting for us. When we saw our tents, most of us just sat down and started crying. We were so happy to be there."



Angel Falls



a scene from the animated film *Up*, showing the tepuis





Difficult words and phrases of the text.

Mystery	Strange happening
To baffle	To confuse
To inhabit	To live somewhere
Fiction	Not based on reality
Dramatic	Very attractive
Remote	Far
To evolve	To develop
Altitude	Height
Greenery	Green lands
Species	A type of animal
To scratch the surface	To understand only a small amount of sth
Enormous	Very big
Inaccessible	Impossible to be accessed; Difficult to reach
Tepuis	A sort of table-top mountain
Exclusive	Special
To conduct	To do
To speculate	To guess
Uneven	Not even; not at the same level
Terrain	A stretch of land



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**A** Choose the correct answers for the following questions.

- 1 Why is there still not much known about the tepuis?
  - a They were discovered only very recently.
  - b They are too remote for people to explore.
  - c They are restricted and protected by the locals.
- 2 According to the passage, which is true about Gondwana?
  - a It has broken up into other smaller continents.
  - b Scientists believe the wildlife that lived there has gone extinct.
  - c It was about the same size as continents like South America and Africa.
- 3 Tepuis are described as "islands in the sky" because, like islands, they \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a are very isolated
  - b were formed by volcanoes
  - c are surrounded by water
- 4 Which is probably NOT true about the life forms on the tepuis?
  - a Some originated from the base of the tepuis.
  - b They have been studied thoroughly by scientists.
  - c They are unlike plants and animals elsewhere.
- 5 What is the main idea of paragraph 5?
  - a There are many unique species of tree frogs living on the tepuis.
  - b One of the theories about its wildlife is based on the book *The Lost World*.
  - c Scientists are still unsure as to how wildlife ended up on the tepuis.

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