



TEACHER'S GUIDE

BERDYCHIV: TOWN OF GREATNESS

PREPARE TO READ

Pick activities that work best for your students. Use English or the native language.

1. Get Students' Attention

To create interest in the topics found in the essay, ask questions, and show pictures if possible. Here are some sample questions to ask:

- “What do you know about the early days of your town or city?”
- “Are any famous writers or artists connected to your city?”
- “What city would you like to visit based on a book, work of art, or movie?”

2. Connect to Background Knowledge

Find out what your students know about Ukraine. If possible, use a map to show Ukraine's location. Here are some sample questions to ask:

- Who has heard of Ukraine? What do you know about Ukraine?
- Where is Ukraine located in the world?

READ & LISTEN

1. Read Text

- Say, “We are going to read an essay by a teacher who lives in Berdychiv, Ukraine.”
- You can read aloud, students can read aloud, or students can read by themselves.
- Suggest they pay attention to certain language such as religious, art, or literature terms.

2. Listen & Visualize

- Before playing the audio story, tell students to listen for descriptive words.
- They should pay attention to what they visualize as they read.
- After listening, they write their visualization.
- In pairs, small groups, or whole class, they share and compare their visualizations.

ESSAY

About 300 kilometers west, away from the crowd and the noise of the capital city of Kyiv lies the historic and picturesque town of Berdychiv. It is a place where the sound of birds singing blends with the morning mist at sunrise. Nobody hurries here. Life goes on in Berdychiv.

The town in northern Ukraine was founded in 1430. It is a place where three world cultures, Polish, Ukrainian and Jewish, meet and are preserved.

[Britannica Dictionary](#) says the town started as a Lithuanian fortress before turning into a Polish city from 1569 until 1793. At one point, it was the fourth-largest city in Ukraine with a large Jewish population.

Overlooking the Hnylopiat River is the ancient monastery fortress of the Barefoot Carmelites, known as the Sanctuary of the Mother of God of the Holy Scapular. The complex was built in the 16th century by the Janusz Tyszkiewicz family. The [Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine](#) says the complex, along with a school and publishing house, turned the city into an important Polish religious center.

The complex is popular with visitors who take pictures of its magnificent buildings and lifelong residents who take part in life ceremonies like weddings and graduations.

Across the Catholic church in this same complex is a museum to celebrate the life of Joseph Conrad. The English writer was born in 1857 in Berdychiv to a family of Polish patriots who fought against Russian rule. They were arrested and exiled to northern Russia where Conrad first learned English at the age of 4. Conrad left Russia and traveled the world as a mariner before starting his writing career.

Down a narrow path near the complex is an old building on the river banks. It is an art school where Ukrainians study to become designers, artists and photographers. It is a place where many modern Ukrainian artists came from and a place filled with great works of art.

In the city center is an art installation *Suit from Berdychiv*. Here visitors often take pictures, eat pizza and sit in a café with a view of the center. Not far from the city center is the Berdychiv Historical Museum. Founded in 1926, the museum has a collection of valuable fabrics and paintings.

Berdychiv is also known for one event related to the world of literature. The well-known French writer Honoré de Balzac married Éveline Hanska, a Polish countess, in 1850 in St. Barbara's Church after an 18-year courtship.

Some believe they chose the church for its beauty and history in a city of writers, and a city of love and culture.



The author, Oleksandra Kravchenko, poses in front of the monastery of the Barefoot Carmelites.

RESPOND

1. Comprehension Questions

After reading and/or listening to the essay, have students answer these questions.

- Where is Berdychiv located? (in Ukraine about 300 km west of Kyiv)
- What religious center does the essay say is popular with tourists, and when was it built? (The *monastery of the Barefoot Carmelites was built in the 16th century.*)
- What famous writer does the essay say was born in Berdychiv? (Joseph Conrad)
- What is the name of the art installation in the city's center? (*Suit from Berdychiv*)

2. Vocabulary Activity

This can be a solo, pair, small group, or whole class activity. Adjust instructions to fit.

- On paper, students draw four columns and label them noun, verb, adverb, adjective.
- Write the key words on a whiteboard, display them, or say them out loud for them.
- Students then write the word in the proper column based on its part of speech.
- Students use some of these key words to write sentences.
- Students change parts of speech: beautiful is an *adjective* and *beauty* is a noun.

Noun	Verb	Adverb	Adjective

Key Words

magnificent	ancient	fascinate	artist
picturesque	culture	exile	unique
passersby	daze	calmness	continue
remain	incredibly	modern	beauty
serene	preserve	greatness	cheerful

3. Grammar Structure: adverb + adjective

- Discuss the grammar structure: adverb + adjective.
- Analyze and translate the word expression "*incredibly calm.*"
- Make as many expressions as possible using the grammar structure adverb + adjective.
- Use the suggested adverbs and adjectives below. Students can also think of their own.

- Adverbs: *absolutely, incredibly, seriously, perfectly, deeply*
- Adjectives: *delighted, honest, beautiful, sad, understandable*

4. Grammar: Passive & Active Sentences

- In the text, find sentences in the passive form.
- Students must change passive sentence into active ones. Discuss what they changed.
- Use the following words to make passive sentences in English:

was / a museum / many / founded / ago / years
is / this place / described / many / books / in

5. Storytelling

Have students write an imaginary diary about a day spent visiting Berdychiv. They tell the story of their day in the city using at least four places from the essay (river, monastery, art school,...)

Variations:

- Have pairs of students compare their diaries and combine the most interesting parts of each, to create a new story. Students can read their new story to the class.
- Have students include dialogue in their stories. For example, one student can meet the other student in the story as they visit Berdychiv, and in the dialogue they can tell each other what they have seen in the city and make plans for the rest of their visit.

EXPAND

1. Extend the Story

- Write a letter to the author of the essay, Oleksandra Kravchenko. Students think of questions to ask her.

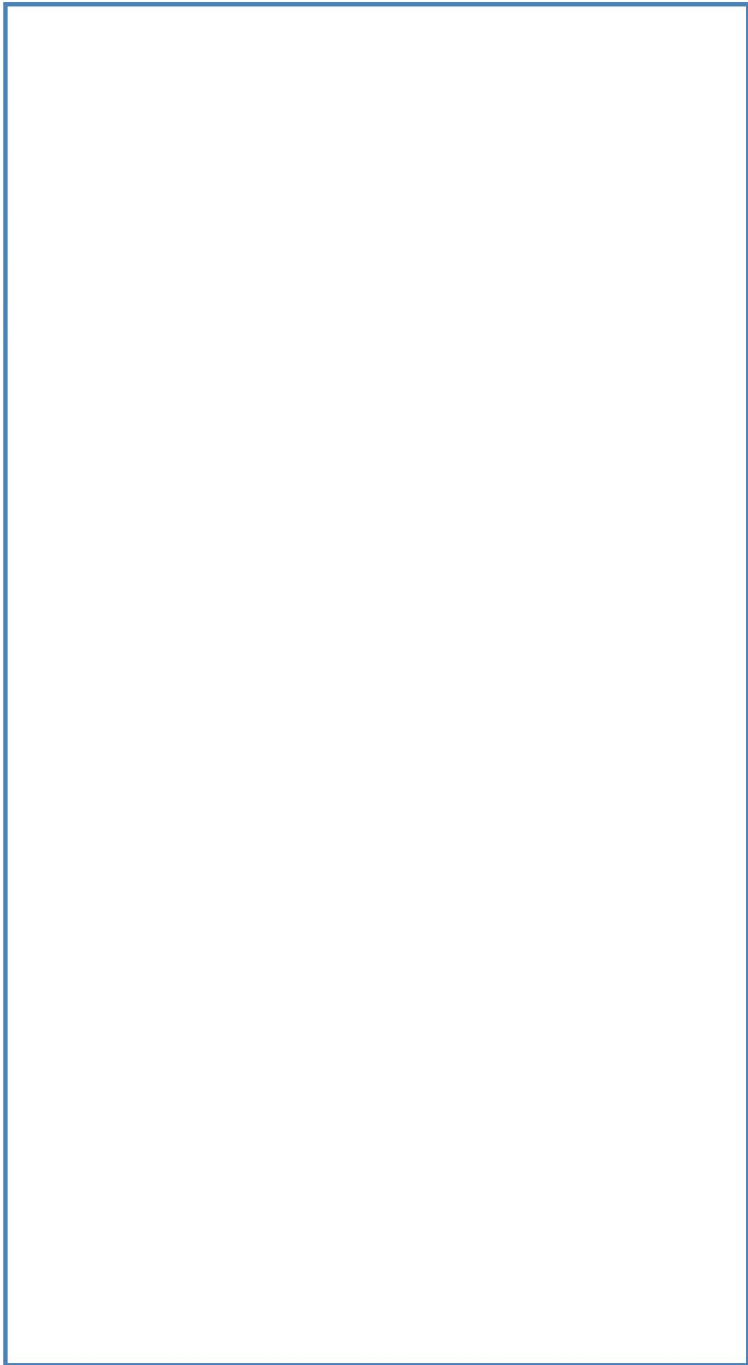
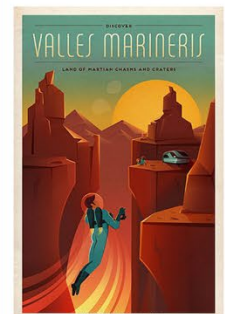
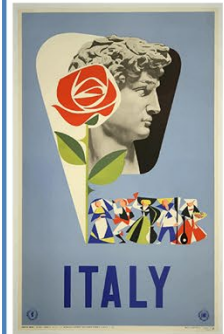
2. Create a Travel Poster

Students make a travel poster for Berdychiv or another city of their choosing.

- Using basic art supplies, students create a tourist poster on large sheets of paper. Or give students the activity sheet on page 6.
- Show travel options, attractions, places of historical interest, and striking locations.
- Add quotes and details from the essay or research to find other quotes.
- Base the poster on famous people and historical, design activities and attractions.
- Students can also do this digitally as a social media post if they have access to technology.

Create a Travel Poster

Think about what you learned about Berdychiv. Draw a travel poster that includes some of the things you think others might enjoy if they visit the city.



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