Taming the tourists

The era of mass tourism in the mountain regions of industrialized countries began soon after World War II. This new phenomenon was a result of many factors, including increases in urban populations, income, vacation time, and mobility.

Today, in the era of cheap, global air travel, almost no mountains in any corner of the world are out of reach. Moreover, `adventure tourists' and `ecotourists' are willing to pay well, and their money is very welcome to poor governments and communities.

Although stories about the problems caused by tourism have become increasingly frequent in recent years, it is not necessarily a destructive force. The situation could be far better if tour operators and legislators considered how best to integrate tourism into the existing culture, with a minimal impact on the environment, and without host countries becoming too dependent on it. Merely restricting tourism cannot be the solution, because people's desire to see new places will not just disappear.

But the real key to the problem lies in giving indigenous communities greater control over the rate at which tourism grows, and the paths it takes. Encouragingly, more and more communities are demonstrating that, with firm decision-making, this is possible.

1. Answer the following questions using your own words. (2 points: 1 point each)

a) Why did mass tourism in the mountains begin?

b) According to the text, what is the principal way to reduce the negative effects of ecotourism?

2. Are the following statements true (T) or false (F)? (1 point: 0.5 each)

a) There are still a lot of inaccessible areas in the mountains.

b) Some people are controlling the growth of tourism in their communities.

3. Find a word or phrase in the text which, in context, is similar in meaning to: (1 point: 0.5 each)

a) inexpensive

b) increases

4. Choose a, b, or c, in each question below. Only one choice is correct. (2 points: 0.5 each)

1. Mass tourism in the mountains ...

a) was a result of World War II.

b) occurred partly because people had more money.

c) helped to improve income and mobility.

2. Nowadays, mountain communities ...

a) are happy to receive money from tourism.

b) see tourism as an impossible problem.

c) are willing to pay well to visit new destinations.

3. Tourism is not necessarily a problem if ...
   a) it is integrated into the local culture.
   b) it is not accepted by the community but integrated into its culture.
   c) it can be avoided, causing minimal impact on the environment.

4. According to the text, we need to ...
   a) reduce people's desire to see new places.
   b) restrict tourism in rural areas.
   c) control the growth of tourism and how it develops.

5. Composition (100-150 words approximately). Choose one of the following topics. (4 points)

1. You go on a trip to the mountains and when it grows dark you get lost. Write the story.

2. Every year more and more fires destroy our forests. Write a letter to a newspaper complaining about the situation and suggesting possible solutions.