MONUMENTS

Topic: Monuments

EFL CEFR Level: B2+

Main objectives:

- Students will be able to describe iconic monuments from a fresh perspective.

- Students will become aware of the use of metaphor in describing artifacts like monuments.

Method: Frame-inspired TBLT (pre-task, task cycle, language focus)

Metaphor: ARTIFACTS ARE PEOPLE; GOODNESS IS LIGHT

Materials: PC, Internet, texts, FrameNet, MetaNet

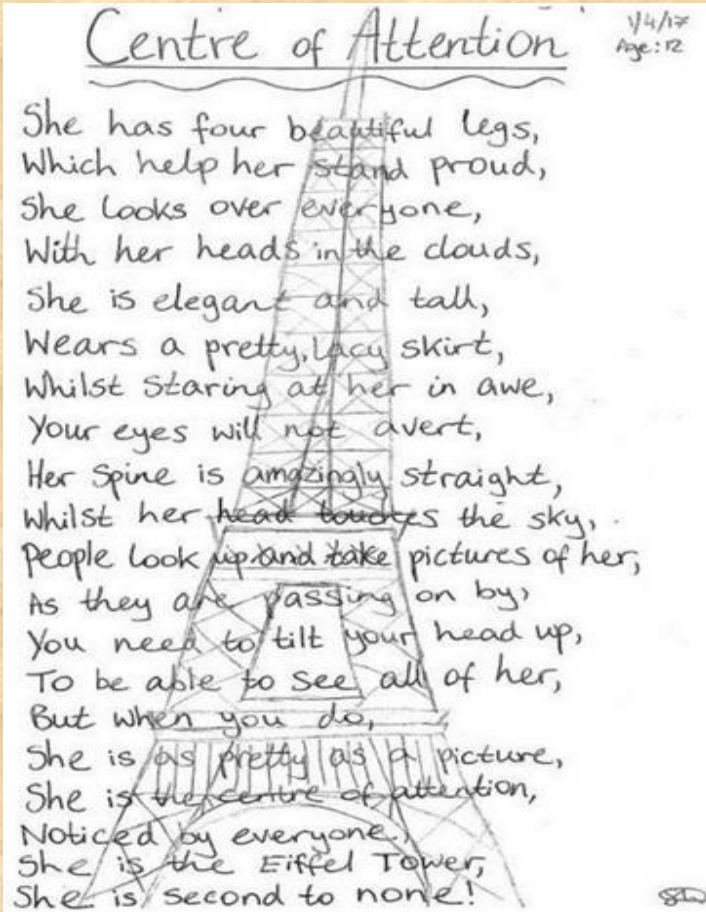**Skills involved:** listening, speaking, reading, writing

A) Pre-task

➢ Read the words of two visitors of the Eiffel Tower. How do they describe the iconic monument? What do the two descriptions have in common?

a) "When I see my friends again, I'll certainly tell them that I met a grand old lady nearly one hundred years old, still steady on her legs as she looks down on Paris."
https://wol.jw.org/en/wol/d/r1/lp-e/101985084

b)

Centre of Attention

4/4/17
Age: 12

She has four beautiful legs,
Which help her stand proud,
She looks over everyone,
With her heads in the clouds,
She is elegant and tall,
Wears a pretty, lacy skirt,
Whilst staring at her in awe,
Your eyes will not avert,
Her spine is amazingly straight,
Whilst her head touches the sky,
People look up and take pictures of her,
As they are passing on by,
You need to tilt your head up,
To be able to see all of her,
But when you do,
She is as pretty as a picture,
She is the centre of attention,
Noticed by everyone,
She is the Eiffel Tower,
She is second to none!

https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-41846235

➢ Have you ever visited the Eiffel Tower? How would you describe it?

B) Task cycle

1. Task

➢ Form groups of four and read your task.
   You will participate in the "Wiki Loves Monuments" contest, which calls for descriptions of monuments from a fresh viewpoint. Your task is to choose a famous monument, collect information about it and prepare a short description to present in class.

➢ Choose a famous monument (e.g. Big Ben, Colosseum, Eiffel Tower, Tower of Pisa, Taj Mahal) and search information on the Internet about it (e.g. what the artifact is, its appearance and function, what it represents).

2. Planning

➢ Think of an interesting perspective to organize the information you have collected and prepare the report you will present to the class.

3. Report

➢ Choose a member of your group to present your work.
➢ Decide which one was the most vivid and interesting description. Vote!

C) Language focus

1. Analysis

We often think of and talk about artifacts (e.g. buildings, machines) as living beings.

➢ Read the text about Big Ben and answer the following questions.

Big Ben: A Handsome London Monument

I'm called Big Ben, and I'm one of the most handsome buildings in one of the greatest cities in the world. You might think I'm bragging –and I suppose I am– but I hope you'll indulge an old man. I'm 157 years old, after all. Perhaps that's not all that old as buildings go, but during my lifetime, I've certainly seen a lot happen on the streets of my city, often right at my feet. I've lived through some of London's most glorious times and some of its most terrible. But through it all, like the true Londoner that I am, I've stood tall, kept calm, and carried on.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, when I was born… I mean built, the Industrial Revolution was in full swing. Life was changing quickly: Horses and carts were replaced by bicycles, then motor cars. Electricity replaced gas street lights, and railroads linked cities together. The first underground transportation system in the world was built right here at my feet. As the twentieth century rolled around, human creativity seemed to have no limits, and all kinds of machines were being invented to make people's lives easier. However, the same machines that made London prosper almost destroyed her during the two World Wars.

World War I was the first war fought in the air, and London had its share of bombers lying overhead. Since I was the tallest building around, and had a lighted face, we had to turn off my lights and stop my chiming every night. I certainly wouldn't have wanted to be responsible for helping to guide in any bombs. It was such a relief when that war was finished.

In 1923 the BBC installed a special microphone next to my big bell so they could broadcast my chimes to ring in the New Year of 1924. Afterward, they left the microphone in place, and it would come in handy during the Second World War.

I know I look big and strong, but I have to admit that during that time, I was afraid. Afraid of what might happen to our country, our way of life, and our beloved freedom and ideals. Just like everyone else, I was terrified as explosions shook the ground and fires blazed around me every night. But, like my compatriots, I gathered up all my courage, stood tall, and carried on. As I watched those brave Londoners on the streets below, I was never prouder to be British.

I wanted to do my part too – so I did the only thing I could. Every hour, I rang my heart out to reassure the British people, and the world, that London was still free. The BBC used that microphone to broadcast my chimes out to every home, and I like to think that my reassuring bells gave people courage and strength.

Before the United States came to our aid, we were standing almost alone against all of Europe for freedom and justice. Winston Churchill called it our finest hour, and I have to agree with him.

When the war was over, London lay in rubble. Not much of the city had escaped the bombs, but I was pretty lucky. I wasn't badly bruised – only two of my clock faces and part of my roof were damaged. The British people dug in and started to put our country back together. Times were hard, but slowly we recovered.

Even if, as Churchill said, our conduct during World War II was our finest hour, there have been many times since then that have made me puff out my chest. For 157 years, I've seen her at her best and at her worst, and I plan to stand here watching over her for many more years to come!

https://curiousrambler.com/big-ben-a-handsome-london-monument

a) Read about the MACHINES ARE PEOPLE metaphor in MetaNet (https://metaphor.icsi.berkeley.edu/pub/en/index.php/Category:Metaphor). What do the machine, its hardware, software and functioning resemble?

b) Find words in the text that are used metaphorically to create the impression that the clock is a person. Use MetaNet's mappings to group the words together according to the information they convey.

c) Is personification used sparingly in the text or does it extend over the whole description? What is the effect created?

2. Practice

<u>Activity 1</u>

Read the text about the Taj Mahal and complete the gaps with words from the [Light_movement] frame in FrameNet in the correct form (https://framenet2.icsi.berkeley.edu/fnReports/data/frameIndex.xml?frame=Light_movement).

> **The Taj Mahal**
> A *(0) glistening* masterpiece of white marble and precious stones that is considered one of the greatest architectural achievements in the world. It represents the Emperor's vision of his wife's home in paradise. It is believed to have been constructed in such a way that the white marble reflects the sky. The monument changes its colors during the day. Early morning the Taj appears pinkish, milky white at noon, *(1) _____* golden at sunset and *(2) _____* silver in the moonlight. The Taj *(3) _____* like a jewel in moonlight when the semi-precious stones inlaid into the white marble on the main mausoleum catch and reflect back its *(4) _____* with a better *(5) _____*. These changes, they say, portray the various mindsets of a delight of any sort.

<u>Activity 2</u>

Writing: Work in pairs and write a better title for the previous text. Work in the following way:
- Consider how the Taj Mahal is described in the text.
- Decide which FrameNet frame (http://framenet.icsi.berkeley.edu/) is most relevant.
- Find a relevant metaphor in MetaNet (https://metaphor.icsi.berkeley.edu/pub/en/index.php/Category:Metaphor).

<u>Activity 3</u>

Speaking: Reconsider the report you presented in class. Discuss in your group the positive and negative points of your work. Make a list of suggestions for improving your description.

D) Assignment

Choose a country or a city that you are familiar with or that you have visited. Prepare a short description of its most recognizable icon.

Self-assessment criteria:

- Did you use many words from a specific frame? Which one? Check FrameNet (http://framenet.icsi.berkeley.edu/)!

- Do you think that your report is based on a metaphor? Can you find it in MetaNet (https://metaphor.icsi.berkeley.edu/pub/en/index.php/Category:Metaphor)?