Peru seizes over 3,000 tarantulas in socks

LEVEL A2/B1


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I. WARM-UP

1. What checks do officers do at airports?
2. Why might someone try to hide an item in luggage?
3. How do you feel about keeping spiders as pets?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

smuggle
to move something secretly and illegally from one place to another

suitcase
a large bag with a handle used for travel

sock
a piece of clothing you wear on your foot

inspect
to look at something carefully to check it

wriggle
to twist and move in small quick movements

hatchling
a very young animal that has just come out of an egg

detain
to keep someone in a place and not let them leave

trafficking
the illegal buying and selling of goods or animals

III. READING

Peruvian officials seized more than 3,000 tarantulas at Jorge Chávez international airport in Lima. Agents inspected three suitcases and saw unusual wriggling inside. The spiders were smuggled in dirty socks. Two Germans and a Polish citizen were carrying them, and were going to take them to Germany.

The National Forestry and Wildlife Service (SERFOR) said the spiders came from several regions of Peru. They were found at different stages, from eggs and hatchlings to adults. One tarantula can sell for about €500 in Europe, so the load could be worth around €1.5m.

Police specialising in environmental crimes detained the travellers, who will face criminal proceedings. Interpol says illegal wildlife trafficking generates about $20bn a year worldwide and is one of the main causes of the loss of wildlife.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **The Guardian***: "Peru airport officials discover 3,000...". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Where were the tarantulas found?
2. How many tarantulas were seized by officials?
3. How were the spiders hidden inside the luggage?
4. Where were the travellers going to take the spiders?
5. How much can one tarantula sell for in Europe?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Is it ever OK to buy wild animals? Why or why not?
2. How can airports better stop people who smuggle animals?
3. Which animals in your country risk illegal trade?
4. Would you report wildlife crime if you saw it? Why?

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Going to (future)

Use be going to for future plans or intentions. Form: am/is/are + going to + base verb (was/were going to for a plan in the past). We use it when a decision has already been made or there is present evidence.

"Two Germans and a Polish citizen **were going to take** *them to Germany."*

"Traffickers **are going to sell** *spiders in Europe."*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete each sentence with be going to: am/is/are + going to + verb.

1. Security teams (increase) ___ checks next week. _____
2. A traveller (try) ___ to hide spiders again. _____
3. Officials (warn) ___ visitors about trafficking soon. _____
4. My brother (keep) ___ a tarantula as a pet. _____
5. Collectors (pay) ___ high prices this year. _____

Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.


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I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8–10 minutes warm-up, 8–10 minutes vocabulary, 8–10 minutes reading, 8–10 minutes comprehension, 8–10 minutes grammar, 10 minutes discussion.
- Pre-teach or check: tarantula, smuggle, suitcase, sock, wriggle, hatchling, detain, trafficking; review saying large numbers and euro/dollar amounts.
- Reading procedure: first, students skim for the main idea; then scan for numbers and places; finally, check in pairs before group feedback. The topic involves crime against animals, so allow students to answer about the news rather than personal experiences with pets if they prefer.
- Differentiation: stronger students calculate the total value from the price per spider; others underline clues that showed officers the spiders were inside.

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Start with a quick show of hands, then in pairs ask for one clear reason and an example.
2. Elicit ideas from the text (wriggling, socks), then groups propose two practical checks.
3. Have students think, then pair and share examples with reasons why those animals are targeted.
4. Give brief scenarios (at a market, online). Ask for yes/no plus one reason, then swap pairs.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Writing: Write a 60-word airport notice warning travellers about wildlife trafficking and penalties.

Role-play: In pairs, act as a customs officer and a traveller at security for 6 minutes; then swap roles.

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

Grammar exercise: Going to (future)

Discussion: open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

Answer Key

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These answers are for teachers only. Please do not share this page with students.


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IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Where were the tarantulas found?
   At Jorge Chávez international airport in Lima.
2. How many tarantulas were seized by officials?
   More than 3,000.
3. How were the spiders hidden inside the luggage?
   Inside dirty socks in three suitcases.
4. Where were the travellers going to take the spiders?
   To Germany.
5. How much can one tarantula sell for in Europe?
   About €500.

V. DISCUSSION

Open answers. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete each sentence with be going to: am/is/are + going to + verb.

1. Security teams ___ checks next week. **are going to increase**
2. A traveller ___ to hide spiders again. **is going to try**
3. Officials ___ visitors about trafficking soon. **are going to warn**
4. My brother ___ a tarantula as a pet. **is going to keep**
5. Collectors ___ high prices this year. **are going to pay**

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: Use be going to for future plans or intentions. Form: am/is/are + going to + base verb (was/were going to for a plan in the past). We use it when a decision has already been made or there is present evidence. (Example 2 constructed.)

> *"Two Germans and a Polish citizen* **were going to take** *them to Germany."*
>
> *"Traffickers* **are going to sell** *spiders in Europe."*