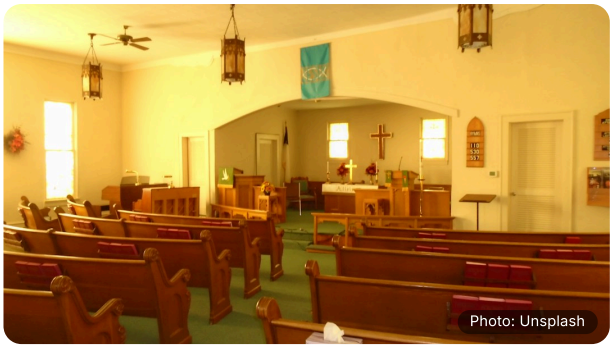
Rick Wakeman plays for rescued moon bears

LEVEL A2/B1


Photo: Unsplash

I. WARM-UP

1. What kinds of music do you enjoy, and why?
2. Have you ever visited a wildlife park or sanctuary?
3. How can music make people or animals feel calmer?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

sanctuary
A safe place where animals are protected and cared for

rescue
To save a person or animal from danger or harm

awareness
Understanding and attention to a problem or issue

bile
A body liquid taken from bears for traditional medicine

ban
To make something not allowed by law or rules

composition
A piece of music that someone writes

adopt
To take responsibility for an animal and support its care

melodic
Having a clear, pleasant tune

III. READING

Rick Wakeman, the former Yes musician, played a live piano show in Vietnam for an audience of 150 rescued moon bears. The concert was at Animals Asia's sanctuary in Tam Dao national park. He sat at a Yamaha grand piano. He wrote new compositions for the bears.

He wants to raise awareness about animals still kept for bile. Vietnam has banned bear bile farming. But 125 bears remain in cages from old farms. He thinks that about four bears die each month. Wakeman has supported rescue work since 2016 and recently adopted a young bear. He joked about the heat.

He also said gentle, melodic music can calm animals. He hopes the bears will come to the edge and listen. He wants the government to free the remaining bears so they can live safely at the sanctuary.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **The Guardian***: "Rick Wakeman performs piano concert to 150...". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Where did the concert take place?
2. How many bears were in the audience?
3. Why did Wakeman give the concert?
4. What change has Vietnam made about bear bile?
5. How many bears are still kept in cages?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Do you think music can help animals relax? Why or why not?
2. How can concerts or art help a good cause?
3. Should governments act faster to help rescued animals? Why?
4. What local places protect wildlife in your country?

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

How questions

Put a question word (How) at the start, then a helping word (did) before the subject. Use: How + did + subject + verb?

"**How did the bears react?**"
"**How did the concert go?**"

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

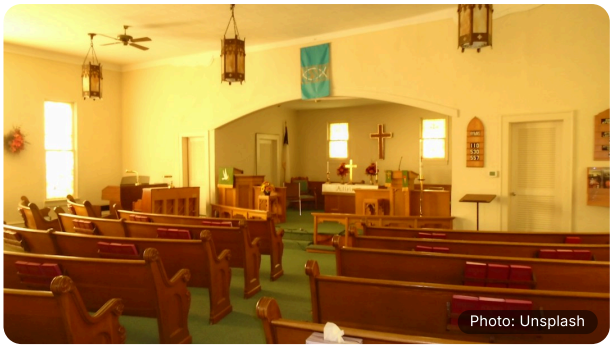
Choose the correct option.

1. How (did Wakeman adopt / Wakeman adopted) the young bear? _____
2. How (he wrote / did he write) the music? _____
3. How (did he feel / he felt) about the heat? _____
4. How (Vietnam banned / did Vietnam ban) bear bile farming? _____
5. How (did he raise / he raised) awareness? _____

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.


Photo: Unsplash

I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8–10 minutes warm-up, 8–10 minutes vocabulary, 10–12 minutes reading, 8–10 minutes comprehension, 8–10 minutes grammar, 10–12 minutes discussion.
- Pre-teach key words from the box using pictures or quick examples, then set a gist task: Who played? For whom? Where?
- Run a first skim read, then a second read for numbers and reasons. The story mentions animal harm, so begin discussion in pairs and allow students to speak about the news rather than about personal experiences with pets.
- Differentiate by product: stronger students write a 2–3 sentence news update; others match numbers (150, 125, 2016) to facts before sharing.

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Start with a show of hands, then ask for one example of music that calms and one that excites.
2. Have pairs list two concrete actions art events can do, then share and rank the ideas.
3. Make it a quick vote, then group students by side to give one strong reason each.
4. Build a class map of local places on the board; prompt for what each place does.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Writing: In pairs, write a 60-word public message asking Vietnam to free the remaining 125 bears.

Role-play: One student is an Animals Asia spokesperson, the other a journalist; run a 2-minute Q&A.

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

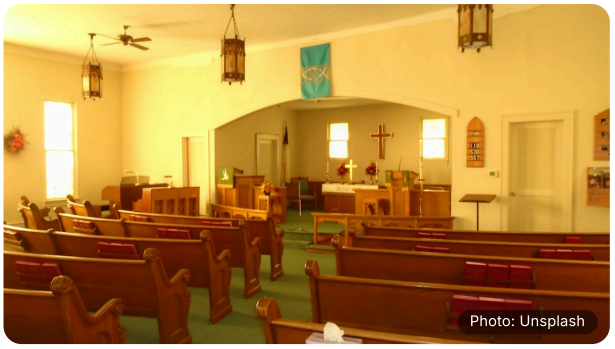
Grammar exercise: How questions

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

Answer Key

TEACHERS ONLY

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


Photo: Unsplash

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Where did the concert take place?
   At Animals Asia's bear sanctuary in Tam Dao national park, Vietnam.
2. How many bears were in the audience?
   150 bears.
3. Why did Wakeman give the concert?
   To raise awareness about bears still kept for bile.
4. What change has Vietnam made about bear bile?
   It has banned bear bile farming.
5. How many bears are still kept in cages?
   125 bears.

V. DISCUSSION

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

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Choose the correct option.

1. How (did Wakeman adopt / Wakeman adopted) the young bear? **did Wakeman adopt**
2. How (he wrote / did he write) the music? **did he write**
3. How (did he feel / he felt) about the heat? **did he feel**
4. How (Vietnam banned / did Vietnam ban) bear bile farming? **did Vietnam ban**
5. How (did he raise / he raised) awareness? **did he raise**

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: Put a question word (How) at the start, then a helping word (did) before the subject. Use: How + did + subject + verb? (Examples constructed.)

"**How did the bears react?**"
"**How did the concert go?**"