Evenings outside

Is there anything more pleasant than a balmy evening outdoors in summer? ANNA HOCHSIEDER presents language you can use to talk about sitting out at night.

The twilight hour

It was a balmy Friday evening in July at the end of what had been one of the hottest days of the year’s heatwave. Thanks to the fact that it was summer time, the sun still hadn’t set. Streaks of red and orange were beginning to spread across the sky. The town square was full of people strolling along paths or sitting on benches, enjoying the gentle evening breeze. Children nagged their parents to buy them an ice lolly from the cart. Teenage boys lounged against the church wall, eyeing giggly groups of teenage girls. A family was enjoying its supper al fresco on the green. Some of the older folk had placed chairs outside their front doors and sat chatting to the neighbours. Smoke drifted across from a back garden, where someone had fired up the barbie and was flipping burgers.

Dusk had descended when a woman none of us had seen before crossed the square, her heels click-clacking sharply on the cobblestones. All eyes were fixed on her. Even the teenage boys and the giggly girls had fallen silent. What was a stranger doing in the town at this hour?
PRACTICE

Now try the following exercises to practise talking about sitting outside in the evening.

Exercise 1

What do you need to enjoy an evening outdoors? Complete the following sentences with suitable words from the illustration on the opposite page.

A. It might get a bit chilly at night, so don’t forget to bring a(n) ____________.

B. The grass might be ____________, so we’ll need a(n) ____________ to sit on.

C. There are lots of mosquitoes around at dusk, so it would be good to have some ____________.

D. You’re in ____________ of the barbecue cooking, so bring a(n) ____________ to protect your clothes.

E. We’ll need plates, glasses and ____________, so I’ll bring them in my ____________.

Exercise 2

Match the verbs from the text to their definitions (1–6).

A. To “drift”...
   1. means to “open something out so as to cover a larger area”.
   
B. To “eye someone”...
   2. means to “keep troubling someone to do something”.
   
C. To “lounge”...
   3. means to “walk slowly and in a relaxed way”.
   
D. To “nag someone”...
   4. means to “look at a person with great interest”.
   
E. To “spread”...
   5. means to “be carried along slowly by a current of air or water”.
   
F. To “stroll”...
   6. means to “lean, sit or lie in a relaxed way”.

Exercise 3

Find the words in the text on page 44 that mean the same as those in bold in the sentences below. You may need to change the form of the words.

A. It was a ____________ evening, so we left the windows open.

B. In Germany, ____________ ends on 28 October this year.

C. Couples ____________ by hand in hand.

D. No, I won’t buy you an ice cream, so stop ____________ me.

E. In summer, they serve meals and drinks ____________.

F. Can you ____________ the barbecue while I make a salad?

G. ____________ is feeding time for mosquitoes.

How closely have you looked at the picture on page 44? Our illustrator was inspired by the holiday spirit and hid five things you wouldn’t normally see on a balmy night out in July. Can you spot them?

Answers