



Sun Moon Lake

Reading Worksheet — Level F | tahricteaches.com

Nestled in the mountainous heart of Nantou County, Sun Moon Lake is the largest body of fresh water in Taiwan and one of the island's most celebrated **scenic** destinations. The lake derives its evocative name from its distinctive shape: the eastern half resembles a radiant sun, while the western half curves gracefully into a crescent moon. Surrounded by mist-shrouded peaks and lush subtropical forests, the area attracts millions of visitors each year who come to admire its serene beauty.

The region holds profound cultural significance for the Thao, one of Taiwan's smallest indigenous tribes, who have **inhabited** the shores of the lake for centuries. According to Thao legend, ancestors discovered the lake while pursuing a magnificent white deer through the forested mountains. Today, the tribe continues to preserve its language, music, and ceremonial traditions, offering visitors an authentic glimpse into a heritage that predates Han Chinese settlement.

During the Japanese colonial era in the early twentieth century, engineers harnessed the lake to generate hydroelectric power, a function it still **fulfills** today. The construction dramatically raised water levels, submerging an island sacred to the Thao and reshaping the lake's ecology. This transformation illustrates the complex tensions between modernization and the preservation of indigenous cultural landscapes.

Contemporary tourism around Sun Moon Lake is remarkably diverse. Visitors can pedal along a scenic bicycle path repeatedly ranked among the world's most picturesque routes, ride a cable car soaring above the canopy, or board ferries that **traverse** the glittering waters. Lakeside temples, including the elegant Wenwu Temple, draw pilgrims seeking blessings from Confucius and the deified general Guan Yu.

Despite its popularity, the lake faces mounting environmental pressures. Overdevelopment, invasive species, and fluctuating water levels threaten its fragile **ecosystem**. Conservation initiatives now strive to balance economic growth with sustainable practices, ensuring that future generations can continue experiencing the breathtaking landscape that has inspired poets, painters, and travelers for generations.

A. Vocabulary

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|----------------------|---|
| 1. scenic ____ | a. covering completely with water |
| 2. inhabited ____ | b. community of living organisms interacting with their environment |
| 3. fulfills ____ | c. rising and falling irregularly in level or amount |
| 4. traverse ____ | d. able to continue without harming the environment long-term |
| 5. ecosystem ____ | e. carries out or performs a function or duty |
| 6. indigenous ____ | f. travel across or move through an area |
| 7. submerging ____ | g. originating naturally in a particular place; native |
| 8. pilgrims ____ | h. people who travel to sacred places for religious reasons |
| 9. fluctuating ____ | i. having beautiful natural views |
| 10. sustainable ____ | j. lived in or occupied as a home |

B. True or False

- ___ 1. Sun Moon Lake is the largest freshwater lake in Taiwan.
- ___ 2. The lake gets its name from two nearby mountains shaped like the sun and moon.
- ___ 3. The Thao people are one of Taiwan's smallest indigenous tribes.
- ___ 4. According to legend, the Thao discovered the lake while hunting a black bear.
- ___ 5. The lake is used to generate hydroelectric power.
- ___ 6. Japanese colonial engineers lowered the water levels of the lake.
- ___ 7. The bicycle path around the lake has received international recognition.
- ___ 8. Wenwu Temple honors Confucius and the deified general Guan Yu.
- ___ 9. Sun Moon Lake's ecosystem is currently free from environmental threats.
- ___ 10. Conservation efforts attempt to balance tourism with sustainable practices.

C. Fill in the Blanks

Word Bank: scenic, inhabited, fulfills, traverse, ecosystem, indigenous, pilgrims, sustainable

1. The Thao tribe has _____ the area around Sun Moon Lake for many centuries.
2. Ferries regularly _____ the lake, carrying tourists between scenic stops.
3. Pollution and invasive species threaten the delicate _____ of the lake.
4. The bicycle path is famous for its _____ views of mountains and water.
5. The lake still _____ an important role in generating hydroelectric power.



D. Comprehension Questions

1. How did Sun Moon Lake get its name?
2. What impact did Japanese colonial engineering have on the lake and the Thao people?
3. What environmental challenges does Sun Moon Lake currently face?

E. Discussion Questions

1. How should governments balance economic development and tourism with the preservation of indigenous cultures and sacred sites?
2. Is it ethical to alter natural landscapes for the sake of generating renewable energy like hydroelectric power? Why or why not?



Answer Key

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A. Vocabulary: 1-i, 2-j, 3-e, 4-f, 5-b, 6-g, 7-a, 8-h, 9-c, 10-d

B. True/False: 1-T, 2-F, 3-T, 4-F, 5-T, 6-F, 7-T, 8-T, 9-F, 10-T

C. Fill Blanks: 1-inhabited, 2-traverse, 3-ecosystem, 4-scenic, 5-fulfills

D. Comprehension:

1. The lake's eastern half resembles a sun and its western half curves like a crescent moon, giving it its distinctive name.
2. It raised water levels to enable hydroelectric power generation, but submerged a sacred Thao island and altered the lake's ecology.
3. The lake faces overdevelopment, invasive species, and fluctuating water levels that threaten its fragile ecosystem.

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