READING COMPREHENSION

Discovering Lille – A City Full of Surprises

B1 / B1+ | Year 9 / 3ème | Reading skills



PART 1 – READ THE TEXT

Lille: More Than Just a Northern City



Located in northern France, close to the Belgian border, Lille is a lively city with a rich history and a strong cultural identity. Although it is sometimes associated with cold and rainy weather, Lille has much more to offer than people might expect.

The **city centre** is **famous** for its beautiful *Flemish architecture*. In the Old Town, known as Vieux-Lille, visitors can admire colourful buildings, cobbled streets and traditional shops. One of the most impressive landmarks is the **Vieille Bourse**, a historic building surrounded by bookshops and small cafés. The Grand Place is another popular meeting point where locals and tourists enjoy the atmosphere.

Lille is also a great city for food lovers. The region is famous for its traditional dishes, such as **carbonnade flamande**, a beef stew cooked with beer, and welsh, a dish made **with melted cheese**, bread and beer. For **dessert**, visitors can try **gaufres fourrées**, delicious waffles filled with vanilla cream.

One of the biggest events of the year is the **Braderie de Lille**, which takes place every September. It is one of Europe's largest flea markets and attracts millions of visitors. People come to buy second-hand objects, discover local products and enjoy the festive atmosphere. Eating **moules-frites** (mussels and chips) is also a popular tradition during this weekend.

Lille is particularly popular with students because it has several universities and higher education institutions. It is also very well connected to other European cities. Thanks to its high-speed train connections, Paris, London and Brussels can be reached relatively quickly.

So, whether you enjoy history, shopping, food or cultural activities, Lille is definitely **worth discovering**. It may not have the sunny weather of the south of France, but its welcoming atmosphere and lively streets make it a special place to live and visit.

Exercise 1 – Choose the correct answer.

1. **Where is Lille located?**
   a. In southern France.
   b. Close to the Belgian border.
   c. Near the Mediterranean Sea.
2. **What is Vieux-Lille famous for?**
   a. Its modern skyscrapers.
   b. Its beaches and seaside restaurants.
   c. Its historical architecture and cobbled streets.
3. **What is a carbonnade flamande?**
   a. A traditional beef stew cooked with beer.
   b. A type of sweet waffle.
   c. A seafood dish.
4. **When does the Braderie de Lille take place?**
   a. Every December.
   b. Every September.
   c. Every summer.
5. **Why is Lille popular with students?**
   a. Because it has several universities.
   b. Because it is close to the sea.
   c. Because there are no traffic jams.

Exercise 2 – True or False? Justify your answers with a quotation from the text.

1. Lille is situated near the Belgian border. ☐
2. The Vieille Bourse is a modern shopping centre. ☐
3. Welsh is a traditional dish from the region. ☐
4. The Braderie is mainly organised in December. ☐
5. Lille has good train connections with other European cities. ☐
6. The writer thinks Lille is not worth visiting because of the weather. ☐

Exercise 3 – Answer the questions in your own words.

1. What can visitors discover in Vieux-Lille?
2. Why is the Grand Place an important place in the city?
3. What do people usually do during the Braderie?
4. Give two reasons why Lille is a convenient city to live in.
5. According to the writer, what makes Lille special?

Exercise 4 – Find words or expressions in the text that mean:

1. Full of energy and activity (paragraph 1).
2. Buildings or places that are historically important (paragraph 2).
3. People who live in a particular place (paragraph 2).
4. A person who enjoys eating and discovering food (paragraph 3).
5. Connected to other places easily (paragraph 5).
6. Friendly and pleasant towards visitors (paragraph 6).

Exercise 5 – Complete the sentences with words from the box.

although • located • famous • attracts • surrounded • convenient

1. Lille is ... in the north of France.
2. The city is ... for its Flemish architecture.
3. The Vieille Bourse is ... by beautiful historical historical buildings.
4. ... the weather is sometimes rainy, Lille is a lovely city.
5. The Braderie ... millions of visitors every year.
6. Lille is a ... place to live because of its transport connections.

Exercise 6 – Rewrite the sentences using the word given. Do not change its meaning.

1. Lille is rainy, but it is a very attractive city. **(ALTHOUGH)**
2. Lille has many universities. This is why students enjoy living there. **(BECAUSE)**
3. Paris is farther from Lille than Brussels. **(CLOSER)**
4. I started living in Lille five years ago. **(FOR)**

Exercise 7 – Write 80–100 words.

Imagine you are a teenager living in Lille. Write an email to an English-speaking friend who would like to visit your city. Include: Where Lille is located and what it looks like, two places or activities you would recommend, a typical local dish, and your personal opinion.

- *Use at least three B1+ structures: Although..., What I particularly like about..., One of the best things about...*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Understand a factual text about a French city.
- ✓ Identify specific information and supporting details.
- ✓ Develop vocabulary about tourism, food and city life.
- ✓ Practise B1+ connectors, comparatives and present perfect.
- ✓ Express personal opinions.

Suggested duration : 45–55 minutes

