
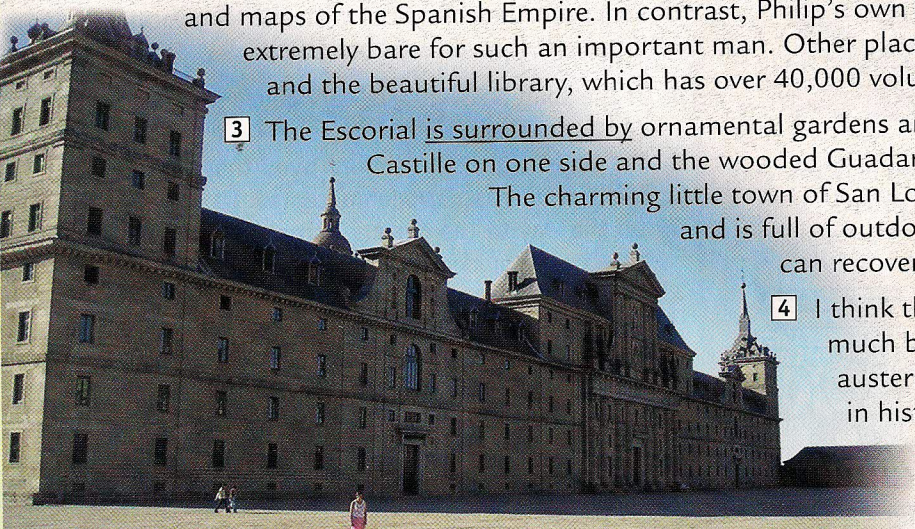


Writing

Before you start

1 Read the description. Match the topics (a–d) with the paragraphs (1–4).

a what to see inside b conclusion
c introduction d surroundings

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- 1 The monastery and palace of San Lorenzo del Escorial, thirty miles north-west of Madrid in central Spain is, without doubt, one of the most impressive places I have ever visited. It was built in the 16th century by King Philip II as a symbol of Spanish power and the scale of it is breathtaking. In fact, it has nine towers, 86 stairways, 88 fountains and 2,673 windows. You can see it from miles away and when you get closer, what strikes you is not only its size but also the austerity of its architecture.
- 2 Inside, there is plenty to see. There is an excellent collection of tapestries and paintings, including works by Titian and El Greco. The staterooms of Philip II are magnificent, full of paintings of glorious victories and maps of the Spanish Empire. In contrast, Philip's own bedroom and study are tiny and extremely bare for such an important man. Other places to see are the monumental church and the beautiful library, which has over 40,000 volumes.
- 3 The Escorial is surrounded by ornamental gardens and has views over the plains of Castille on one side and the wooded Guadarrama mountains on the other. The charming little town of San Lorenzo is also well worth visiting and is full of outdoor cafes and restaurants where you can recover from your trip to the monastery.
- 4 I think this building impressed me so much because of its size, grandeur and austerity. I have always been very interested in history and I can just imagine Philip sitting in his small study administering his vast empire before going to pray.

2 Match the underlined expressions with the meanings below.

had an effect on me, definitely, you should go there, what you notice, around it, with a lot of

3 Find the linking expressions *in fact* and *in contrast* in the text. Which adds and which compares information?

Describing a Place

Write a description of a place you have visited. Follow the stages below and refer to Writing Help 10 on page 144.

Stage 1

Decide what place you are going to write about (e.g. a historic building; a sports stadium; an art gallery). Find more information about the place and its history.

Stage 2

Write notes for four paragraphs like the description above.

- What is it/where is it/when and why was it built/what's special about it?
- What's inside?
- What are the surroundings?
- What do you think of that place?

Stage 3

Write the description and then check it for mistakes.

Talkback

In groups, read your descriptions. If you have been to the place, do you agree with the description? If not, would you like to go there? Give your reasons.