

B2–C1 Worksheet: Giant Tortoises Return Home - 28 February 2026

Article

After nearly two centuries, giant tortoises have returned to one of the Galapagos Islands where they once roamed freely. Conservationists decided to carry out an ambitious rewilding programme after historical records revealed the species had been wiped out by human activity. At first, some experts warned the plan might backfire, but scientists refused to give up. Instead of brushing off the challenge, they worked around the clock to restore vegetation and create the right conditions for the animals to thrive.

The first group of tortoises were carefully transported and released into protected areas. Rangers kept a close eye on the ecosystem to make sure everything fell into place. Over time, the tortoises began to settle in, grazing on native plants and slowly reshaping the landscape. What once seemed out of reach was finally taking shape.

Researchers say the project shows what can happen when communities pull together and think long term. While restoring an ecosystem is never plain sailing, the return of the tortoises proves that damaged environments can bounce back. The success has sparked conversations about how humans share space with wildlife. For many islanders, it is not just about saving a species, but about protecting fragile habitats for future generations.

True/False

Decide if each statement is True (T) or False (F).

1. Giant tortoises disappeared solely because of natural causes.
2. Conservationists carried out a rewilding programme.
3. Experts were certain the project would succeed from the beginning.
4. Scientists worked around the clock to restore vegetation.
5. Rangers ignored the ecosystem after the release.
6. The tortoises gradually reshaped the landscape.
7. Restoring ecosystems is always plain sailing.
8. The project influenced discussions about human settlement.

Phrase Match

Match the phrases (1-10) to the correct definitions (A-J).

Phrases (1-10)	Definitions (A-J)
1. carry out	A. difficult or impossible to obtain
2. brush off	B. to happen in a satisfactory or organised way
3. work around the clock	C. to dismiss something as unimportant
4. fall into place	D. easy and without difficulty
5. settle in	E. to recover after difficulty
6. out of reach	F. to perform or complete a task
7. pull together	G. to remain strong or successful over time
8. plain sailing	H. to become comfortable in a new place
9. bounce back	I. to work continuously without stopping
10. stand the test of time	J. to cooperate and support each other

Synonym Match

Match the words (1-10) to the correct synonyms (A-J).

Words (1-10)	Synonyms (A-J)
1. ambitious	A. group of people living in the same place
2. habitat	B. natural home of an animal or plant
3. ecosystem	C. harmed or injured
4. reshape	D. to change the form of something
5. thrive	E. to grow or develop successfully
6. restoration	F. determined to achieve something big
7. long term	G. the act of repairing or returning to original state
8. future	H. a system of plants and animals in one area
9. damaged	I. time that is yet to come
10. community	J. continuing for a long period

Discussion Questions

Student A

1. Have you ever visited a protected natural area? What was your impression?
2. Why do you think some species get wiped out by human activity?
3. How important is wildlife conservation in your country?
4. Do people in your area feel connected to local wildlife? Why or why not?
5. What can individuals do to help ecosystems bounce back?
6. Would you volunteer for a conservation project? Why or why not?
7. How does seeing wildlife in its natural habitat affect people?
8. Do you believe education plays a key role in protecting endangered species?

Student B

1. Should governments invest more money in long-term environmental restoration?
2. Is rewilding always beneficial, or can it cause new problems?
3. How can communities pull together to protect local habitats?
4. Should tourism be limited in fragile ecosystems such as the Galapagos?
5. What balance should exist between economic development and wildlife protection?
6. Can damaged ecosystems truly stand the test of time after restoration?
7. Are humans responsible for repairing environmental harm they cause?
8. What might the future look like if conservation efforts fail?

Answer Key

True/False: 1=F, 2=T, 3=F, 4=T, 5=F, 6=T, 7=F, 8=T

Phrase Match: 1=F, 2=C, 3=I, 4=B, 5=H, 6=A, 7=J, 8=D, 9=E, 10=G

Synonym Match: 1=F, 2=B, 3=H, 4=D, 5=E, 6=G, 7=J, 8=I, 9=C, 10=A