

Section 2 is an introduction to some London parks.

Questions 11-15

Good morning everybody and welcome to the London park society. It's a lovely day so in half an hour or so, we'll go outside and start our tour of some of London's famous royal parks. But for the next half an hour or so, while we enjoy our coffee and biscuits, I'll tell you something about some of these wonderful parks. A brief history and some of their special attractions. I also have a few slides to show you. First, what do we mean by royal park? In short, the once belonged to or were established by the order of a King or queen of England or at least a member of the royal family. And it's a good job they did. They provide quiet and natural scenery, places that we might not be able to enjoy today if our former rulers had just put buildings everywhere. Let's start with the most famous – Hyde Park. This park offers some of London's finest scenery and covers 630 acres and a perimeter of 4 miles. I know we have friends from France here, so I'd better give it in metric. That's about 260 Hectares and 6.5kilometers. Hyde Park dates back to 1536 when Henry VIII got the land from the monks of Westminster Abbey. Much of the later design, its layout, was done by the architect, Decimus Burton, in the 1820s, who took full advantage of the areas high and low land. It was the original site of the crystal palace, built for the great exhibition of 1851. The original ancestor of today's world expos like the one that will

be held in Shanghai in 2010 I think. So, it's been popular for a long time and not only the people who live and work near the park like it, many famous rock bands like Pink Floyd and the Rolling Stones have put on big rock concerts here. I still remember the Rolling Stones concert there in err, I forget the exact year, and it was around 1968, when I was a university student.

Pause

I mentioned the architect Decimus Burton. He designed the very impressive grand entrance to the park. The whole front is about 107ft long. Look at the four magnificent pillars that support the central entrance and that carving on the wall. Here's a close up of naval and military procession and the gates made of iron and bronze with a beautiful Greek style flower design. One of the most popular sites in the park is "speaker's corner". In the northeast corner, where you can hear British people exercise their right to free speech. There may be a dozen or more at any one time each standing on soapbox and spouting usually controversial views on any topic you can think of. Religion, politics, foxhunting, trade unions, Europe, tourist etcetera. Lots of arguing. It's great fun. And south of the serpentine lake is the memorial to Diana, princess of Wales. It's an oval stone fountain that opened on July 06th, 2004. Another memorial in the southeast corner of the park is the Albert Memorial, Queen Victoria's monument to her husband of that name. I see the time is getting short, so I will be a bit briefer with the other parks that we'll see today and tomorrow.

Regents Park - It has a fantastic landscape and is known as the jewel in the crown. Regents Park covers 487 acres. That's 197 hectares including primrose hill and has the largest outdoor sports area in London. Rugby, basketball, soccer, netball, cricket, it's all here.

Saint James's park with its royal political and literary associations is at the very heart of London. It's overlooked by not one but three royal palaces. The most ancient palace is Westminster now known as the houses of parliament. Then there's St. James's Palace, which used to be the king or queen's residence. Despite the fact that the monarchs lived in the 3rd palace, Buckingham Palace, since 1837. There's so much to see here nor by St James's park. Bands give concerts twice a day in the park at weekends during the summer. And tomorrow is Saturday, so we're in luck. Then there is the changing of the guards. The Queen's life guards change daily at Whitehall just nearby, Monday to Saturday at 11am, an hour earlier on Sundays and at Buckingham palace, every day at 11:30 in April, May and June and on all alternate days in July and March if the weather is okay.

Finally, we'll visit Greenwich Park which is the oldest enclosed royal park. It's situated on a hilltop with impressive views over the river Thames to the docklands and the city of London. It contains several historic buildings including the Old Royal Observatory, the royal naval college, the national maritime museum and the queen's house. Well it's time to go. A 10 minute walk and we'll be at Hyde Park.

Question 11

Complete the following sentence with TWO WORDS

11. The parks in London were established by order of a King or Queen of England are called

Question 12

Choose the correct letter, A-C

12. King Henry VII got the land for Hyde Park from

- A. religious people
- B. his family
- C. the government

Question 13-14

Complete the following sentence with NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS.

Today's World Expos date back to the **13**..... in **14**.....

Question 15

Choose the correct letter, A-C

15. The speaker says people who like Hyde Park include

A. people who live near the park

B. visitors

C. university students

Question 16-20

Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** for each answer

16. What is the name of the place where people gather in Hyde Park to argue?

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17. What was the name of Queen Victoria's husband?

18. Westminster Palace is known today as the

19. At what time on Sundays does the Queen's lifeguard change at Whitehall?

.....

20. Greenwich Park contains the National Maritime Museum, the Queen's House, the Old Royal Observatory, and the