

[The Lake That Breathes](#)

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<Let's learn!>

- **a complex of …**
 - **what makes A special is B**
 - **If you were to A, you would B**
 - **as if …**
-

When people think of Cambodia, they often picture the ancient temples of Angkor Wat, a vast complex of stone ruins. But the country is also home to a unique natural wonder: the Tonlé Sap. This is the largest freshwater lake in Southeast Asia, and it is a center of Cambodian life and society, supporting millions of people.

What makes the Tonlé Sap special is its "pulse." During the dry season, the lake is relatively small and shallow. But in the rainy season, the mighty Mekong River pushes water backward up the Tonlé Sap River. This amazing reversal makes the lake grow to five times its normal size, flooding the surrounding forests and fields. If this natural event did not happen, the map of Cambodia and the lives of its people would look completely different.

This pulse supports a unique culture. Many people live in "floating villages" that sit right on the lake. If you were to visit, you would see houses, shops, and schools all built on high stilts or floating on

bamboo rafts. It is as if the whole community were breathing along with the changing water. People use boats to go everywhere, from visiting neighbors to going to the market. Some even grow vegetables in floating gardens. If they lived on dry land, their daily life would not be so connected to the seasons.

The lake is incredibly rich in fish, providing over half of the country's protein. However, this important ecosystem is now in danger from pollution, upstream dams, and climate change, which can make the seasonal pulse weaker. Many Cambodians look at the lake and wish it could be protected forever. If the lake were to lose its fish, the lifestyle of the floating villages would be in serious trouble. This "Great Lake" is more than just water; it is the living, beating heart of Cambodian society.

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Key Phrases 重要表現

a complex of …	…の複合体、…の集合体
what makes A special is B	Aを特別なものになっているのはB、 Aの特別な点はB
If you were to A, you would B	もしAするとしたらBだろう、仮にAしてみればBだろう
as if …	まるで…であるかのように

Key Vocabulary 重要単語・熟語

単語	発音記号	品詞	意味
picture	'pɪk.tʃə	動詞	想像する、心に描く、写真に撮る
wonder	'wʌn.də	名詞	驚異、驚嘆、不思議なもの
pulse	pʌls	名詞	脈動、鼓動、脈拍、波動
flood	flʌd	動詞	水浸しにする、氾濫させる

Others その他

単語	発音記号	品詞	意味
vast	væst	形容詞	広大な、莫大な、非常に広い
relatively	'rel.ə.tɪv.li	副詞	比較的、相対的に
mighty	'maɪ.tɪ	形容詞	力強い、強力な、巨大な
reversal	seɪ.və.i	名詞	逆転、逆流、反転、逆行
stilt	stɪlt	名詞	支柱、竹馬、杭
raft	ræft	名詞	いかだ、ゴムボート
incredibly	ɪn'kred.ə.bli	副詞	信じられないほど、非常に