

Living Abroad



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Introduction

Would you like to live abroad?

If so, where would you like to live? And why this country?

If not, why not?

Do many people from your country move abroad? What are their reasons for doing so?

Living Abroad

Read Jake's story below.

I've been living abroad for the last 20 years. Being outside of my own country feels normal now.

I left England in the late 90s, and that was it. But I had no idea I would live in Asia all this time. I thought I would eventually move back home.

But I didn't. And now I don't think I ever will.

I first moved to Hong Kong in 1998. I stayed there for about two and a half years, then moved to China. After moving around the country, I then spent some time in Japan.

After that I was in Thailand, then Taiwan.

Now I am in Malaysia.

I am pretty settled here, to be honest. I like being in Malaysia and it feels like home to me.

I liked all the countries I lived in and I have great memories of each place.

Do I miss England?

Not really. I think about living there, but anytime I go back I just

think that life in Asia is so much better.

I miss English food sometimes. And I used to miss traditional English pubs — *but I stopped drinking a few years ago, so I don't even think about that anymore.*

The last time I went back, about two years ago, there was a bit of a family reunion. I saw cousins and aunts and uncles I have not seen for years.

Their lives don't seem to have changed much at all. They do the same jobs, live in the same streets where they have always lived, and do the same things day in, day out.

I talk about where I am living and the kind of things I do, and I can just feel that we are so disconnected. We just don't have the same lives at all.

The only thing that concerns me is getting older.

As I get older, I will need to think about medical care and making sure I am safe and secure.

But I wonder if it is any different in England? Maybe people my age think exactly the same thing.

I certainly could not bear another English winter. Where I live now, the weather is subtropical all year round. I am used to waking up and it is around 30° all day.

I never have to think about what to wear!

And I find I can talk to anyone now. I am not fluent in any languages as such, but by living in so many different places, I have found that people are pretty much the same wherever you go.

We all worry about the same things, and we are all happy about the same things too.

The world is actually not that big of a place. It's much smaller than I imagined it before I left England. I used to think it was this vast place.

But it's not really.

It's surprising how easy it is to get to see so much of it.

All you have to do is pack your bags and get on a plane.

Reading Comprehension Questions

How long has Jake lived abroad?

Where is he from?

When did he leave his country?

Did Jake plan to live abroad for so long?

Where did he first live? In which year?

How long did he stay there?

Name all the other places where Jake has lived.

Where does he live now?

Does he like it?

Does Jake miss England?

Which place is more comfortable for him — Asia or England?

What does he miss about England?

What happened during Jake's last visit back to England?

What did he think about his other family members' lives in England?

What is Jake worried about? Why?

What kind of weather does Jake like?

How has living abroad helped him when communicating with people?

What does Jake say about people around the world?

Does Jake think living abroad is easy?

Essential Vocabulary

abroad	the late 90s	eventually
Hong Kong	China	Japan
Thailand	Taiwan	Malaysia
settled	memories	traditional
pub	family reunion	cousins
aunts	uncles	day in, day out
disconnected	to concern	medical care
bear	subtropical	fluent
imagined	vast	pack your bags

Exercise

Write down all the words and phrases in your vocabulary notebook. Look in your dictionary and find the meaning of each word. Write the definition next to each word.

Then make up your own sentences using each word or phrase.

For example:

Abroad — *in or to a foreign country. Outside of your own country.*

“I have lived abroad for the last five years.”

Discussion Questions

What do you think about Jake's life?

What do you think Jake does for a living?

Do you think Jake is truly happy?

Would you like to live this kind of life? Why/why not?

If you could live in another country, where would you like to live? Why this place?

Do you know anyone in your life who has left your country to live abroad? What do they say about it?

What is one positive thing about living in another country?

What is one negative thing about living in another country?

What is culture shock?

Would it take you a long time to adjust to life in another country?

What countries would be easy to live in? Why?

What countries would be harder to live in? Why?

Would you prefer to live in a hot country or a cold one? Why?

What is homesickness?

Would you feel homesick if you lived abroad?

What would you miss about your home country?

What would your family think if you decided to live abroad?

Role Play

This is a role play activity. Work in pairs.

There are two characters in the role play:

A — this person wants to go and live in another country. They have a very clear idea of where they wish to go and why they are going there. They feel confident and happy about going abroad and starting a new life.

B — this person thinks it might be a bad idea for A to travel to another country. They have heard of reasons why they should not go. They try to convince A not to go abroad right now.

In your pairs, take some time to practice and prepare what to say.

When you are ready — show the class!

Debate

This is a debate activity.

Get into two teams — Team A and Team B.

Choose one student to act as chairperson for the debate. This person will make sure that each person has an opportunity to speak and to ensure there is proper order in the debate.

The Topic

The topic of the debate is Living Abroad. You will discuss the positives and negatives of starting a new life abroad.

Team A

You think that it is a great idea to live abroad. There could be many opportunities and the experience could be life-changing.

You should list all the reasons why you think living abroad is a good idea.

Team B

You think that living abroad is not a good idea. You think it could lead the person into a life of drifting and not doing good things with their life. And it is not a good idea to leave family and friends behind.

You should outline clearly all the reasons why someone should

not live abroad.

In your own teams, discuss all the points you wish to raise in the debate.

When both teams are ready — begin the debate!

Writing

This is a writing exercise.

You are living abroad in a different country and you are having a great life.

You have found an old friend on social media — ***someone you have not spoken to in many years.***

Write to this person and tell them about your new life. Where you are living, what you are doing, and why you decided to live in this place.

You can write this as a kind of letter or email.

When you have finished your writing, read it out loud in class.

Credits

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