

Gapped text

I can understand the structure of a text using contextual, grammatical and lexical clues.

- 1 **SPEAKING** In groups, think of at least three reasons why somebody would want to study abroad.
- 2 Read quickly the main part of the article and find out why James wants to study abroad. Are his reasons similar to yours?

READING FOCUS Gapped text

- 3  Read the whole article. In your notebook, match gaps 1–6 with paragraphs A–G. There is one extra paragraph.

- A Mairi Wightman, twenty, is a University College London Geography student spending a year abroad in Singapore. She stresses that it should not be underestimated how much a different climate can affect day-to-day life and that as much admin as possible should be taken care of before getting on the plane.
- B However prepared you are, studying abroad is not for everyone and I am yet to discover whether or not it will suit me. I know plenty of people who regret not applying and almost nobody who has the same reservations about their decision to go.
- C In the face of all this familiarity, I have made the slightly impulsive decision to spend a term of my final and most important year studying in Germany, despite speaking absolutely no words of the language.
- D There is however a point to these ramblings, beyond giving you something to laugh at. I've travelled a fair amount, and as a result of this, I thought I was beyond prepared and that I would breeze through any culture shock and instantly acclimatise. As I discovered, this can be a risky attitude to take.
- E From a financial standpoint the ERASMUS programme in particular is a very attractive opportunity, particularly for London students used to high living costs. In addition to the regular student loan, students get a grant, which varies according to the living costs of the country in question.
- F But there are some administrative hurdles to get through first. Logistically speaking, it's very different to previous application processes that any student might have experienced. Universities have study abroad teams, host preparation talks and they tell you what you need to do, but it requires a lot of independent effort.
- G I'm sure that many students weigh up studying abroad as a series of pros and cons, or a question of whether the grass will be greener on the other side. I would argue that students should think less about whether heading abroad is going to be 'better' and simply view it as an unparalleled opportunity to step outside of their comfort zone.



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Study Abroad: Take a Leap into the Unknown

There is no better way to break the monotony of everyday university life than choosing to study overseas; a little bit of impulse can go a long way, says James Connington.

- 5 University so far has been a bit of a challenge but one that has become familiar with repetition. Heading into my third year, I am used to life in London, used to what is expected of me by University College London (I think) and used to justifying my **exorbitant** rent to my friends in different parts of the
- 10 country. Life has fallen into a comfortable series of routines; I go to lectures, work part time, write a lot of essays and muster the energy to go out when possible.
- 1 ?
- My modules are taught in English and many Germans speak it well, but according to the **ever-reliable** Wikipedia®, I will
- 15 be unable to communicate with around 36 percent of the population. I'm currently in the preparation phase of this adventure, with roughly six weeks to go until I fly out to the former German capital, Bonn. I have many justifications for this leap into the unknown. Like the thousands of other students
- 20 heading abroad from the UK this coming year, my reasons include life experience, a desire to travel and something to stand out from the crowd on a CV. The main one, however, is simply to break up what has become routine and to experience the excitement of a new city and a new university all over again.
- 2 ?
- 25 However, there are many students each year who let themselves get put off during the application stage. Of course, a lot of people simply don't want to study abroad, but for those who just get cold feet, I think a little bit of impulse can go a long way. Once you're committed to the process, dealing with the
- 30 prospect of living abroad becomes **substantially** easier and you **actively** look for the positives rather than any downsides.