

Studying English abroad

Many students want to learn English, as it is the business language of the world. One can blame the British Empire for that! Of course, there are 101 other languages out there to learn but where should one learn English? In England is the obvious answer! However, many students in non-English speaking countries enrol on local courses in their country. At each level - be they a beginner, pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper intermediate or advanced level they learn grammar, reading, writing, listening and speaking. Having a conversation in English is a vital part of the learning process. Many students will probably be taught by a non-native English speaker, as in some countries there is a shortage of native speakers. These teachers have themselves learnt English and are happy to pass their knowledge on to others. Some students however will get the opportunity to practice their English with a native English speaker.

For British English you might be lucky enough to get a real Englishman for that real English accent! Actually, not many English people speak the Queen's English. Most have their own regional accents. British English native speakers also include the many Scots, Irish and Welsh people living abroad - all of whom have their own localised tongue, dialect and accent. I mustn't forget the many Canadian, American, Australian and South African teachers; many of whom have ended up settling in a country that is not their own or for example who are travelling through Europe for six months to two years and earn a crust teaching. In fact, some even end up marrying a local!

These days there are many places to learn and study English. A good place is in an English speaking country. Probably one of the best places to learn British English is in Britain. Likewise American English in the USA or Canadian English in Canada. Every English speaking country offers English learners the opportunity to attend an English speaking course - whether it is in Manchester, Malta or Malaysia.

While some people might prefer a city like London or Bristol, others may opt for the countryside. Britain offers a wide diversity of choice. Of course some foreign students wishing to learn English may wish to be in a class where

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Level: Intermediate / Upper intermediate

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there is no one else from their own country. Why? Because this allows them to learn English with others who are therefore in the same boat as them. If there are two people from the same country in the same class this allows communication with one another in one's own language, which may not be what some students want.

Loneliness can be an issue when living abroad. Many students miss their family and friends; thus meeting and making new friends at the language school is a great way to avoid this. Some language schools offer accommodation to students. This can be in the form of a host family or renting a flat. Sometimes students share a flat together. Host families are a great way of being able to practise your English outside language school hours. Sometimes though you have to find your own accommodation. Watch out for dodgy landlords!

Sharing a flat can be risky but it can also be a great way of making friends with others. Everyone has their own needs and more importantly budget. Students either opt to pay for the course themselves or if they are very lucky their company will pay! Taking an English speaking course abroad in an English speaking country is an invaluable way of learning the language. After all, having a conversation in an English speaking environment – for example in a pub and speaking with the locals is surely putting your newly learnt language skills to the best possible test - is it not? By the way, mine's a pint!

EXERCISES

1. Studying English abroad: What do you know about studying English abroad? **EITHER** Have you ever studied English abroad? Where? When? How was it? **OR** Would you like to study English abroad? Why? Where? Go round the room swapping details.

2. Dictation: The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self correct your work from page two - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - you need to do some work!

3. Reading: The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

4. Vocabulary: Students now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

5. The article: Students look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?
- c) Would you like to study English abroad?

6. Let's think! Think of five reasons to learn English. Then add five places *and/or* countries where you might like to learn it. Write them below. Discuss them and compare lists with your partner. Why these?

| Five reasons to learn English | Five places <i>and/or</i> countries |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | 1 |
| 2 | 2 |
| 3 | 3 |
| 4 | 4 |
| 5 | 5 |

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

7. Let's chat! In pairs. One of you rings your fellow student who is in another country! Chat on your mobile about the best place to study English abroad and why? Remember you are on the telephone! Momentarily there is a bad line. *5-minutes*.

8. Let's debate: In pairs. Students A think English is the most important second language to learn. Students B think otherwise. Explain why.

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9. Let's do 'The Article Quiz': Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A

- 1) How many levels of English are mentioned?
- 2) Name the nationalities.
- 3) What do some teachers end up doing?
- 4) What does "earn a crust mean"?
- 5) Name the countries.

Student B

- 1) What can be an issue?
- 2) Watch out for 'who'?
- 3) Who will pay?
- 4) What does the writer drink?
- 5) Where can students stay?

10. Sentence starters: Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- a) Studying English abroad _____
- b) English _____
- c) British English _____

11. Let's talk! An online language school: *In pairs/groups/as a class.* Imagine you are online. One of you wants to improve your English. You have found a language school online and are speaking by video link to them. The other student is the language school representative who is giving advice to the student about the possibilities on offer. *5-minutes.*

12. Presentation: In pairs, groups or individually: Prepare in class or at home a 2 minute presentation on: **Studying English abroad.** Stand at the front of the class to give your presentation. The class can vote on the best presentation. Class – After the presentations go through the strong and weak points on each presentation. Learn from the results.

13. Studying English abroad: In pairs think of three advantages and disadvantages of studying English abroad.

| | Advantages | | Disadvantages |
|---|------------|---|---------------|
| 1 | | 1 | |
| 2 | | 2 | |
| 3 | | 3 | |

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

14. Let's write an e-mail: Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about: **Studying English abroad.** Your e-mail can be read out in class.

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) How would you describe your English accent?
- 3) How important is learning English?
- 4) Today, is it advantageous or not to speak good English at an interview?
- 5) Is going to an English-speaking country to learn the language a good idea or not?
- 6) What advice would you give someone wanting to learn English in a non-English speaking country?
- 7) Would you prefer to live in an English speaking country and work while picking up the language as you go along?
- 8) Would you prefer to live with a host family or would you prefer other accommodation when learning English abroad?
- 9) Would you consider learning another subject alongside English?
- 10) How important is location when choosing your language school?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS

- 1) What do you think about what you read?
- 2) Have you ever considered studying English abroad?
- 3) What benefits are there of speaking English?
- 4) What advice would you give to anyone wanting to learn English abroad?
- 5) In what country would you consider taking an intensive course in English? Why here?
- 6) Is it better to take an intensive or do a part-time English course?
- 7) What makes your language school better than others?
- 8) How important is the teacher when learning English?
- 9) Do you prefer a native speaker?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

SPEAKING

Let's brainstorm! Studying English Abroad

Allow 10-15 minutes – As a class / small groups / pairs / 1 to 1

Brainstorm some ideas about **studying English abroad**. Choose a spokesperson who can present your ideas to the class at the end of your preparation. Present it visually or use the board etc... Try to be imaginative! (The teacher can moderate the session)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Country and <i>town/city/other place</i> you would like to study together |
| 2 | Type and length of course. Who is paying? |
| 3 | Type of accommodation you might stay in and why |
| 4 | Food you might eat |
| 5 | What you might learn |
| 6 | Places you might visit |
| 7 | Your aims before you go |

GAP FILL: READING

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

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Many _____ want to learn English, as it is the business language of the world. One can blame the British Empire for that! Of course, there are 101 other languages out there to learn but where should one learn English? In England is the obvious answer! However, many students in non-English speaking countries _____ on local _____ in their country. At each level - be they a beginner, pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper intermediate or advanced level they learn _____, reading, _____, listening and speaking. Having a conversation in English is a _____ part of the learning process. Many students will probably be taught by a non-native English speaker, as in some countries there is a shortage of _____ speakers. These teachers have themselves learnt English and are happy to pass their knowledge on to others. Some students however will get the opportunity to practice their _____ with a native English speaker.

For British English you might be lucky enough to get a real Englishman for that real English accent! _____, not many English people speak the Queen's English. Most have their own regional accents. British English native speakers also include the many Scots, Irish and Welsh people living abroad - all of whom have their own localised tongue, dialect and accent. I mustn't forget the many Canadian, American, Australian and South African _____; many of whom have ended up settling in a country that is not their own or for example who are _____ through Europe for six months to two years and earn a crust teaching. In fact, some even end up marrying a local! These days there are many places to learn and _____ English. A good place is in an English speaking country. _____ one of the best places to learn British English is in Britain. Likewise American English in the USA or Canadian English in Canada. Every English speaking country offers English learners the _____ to attend an English speaking _____ - whether it is in Manchester, Malta or _____.

English

courses

grammar

enrol

native

writing

vital

students

Malaysia

probably

Actually

course

study

teachers

travelling

opportunity

PUT THE ARTICLE BACK TOGETHER

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SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings: **Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20**

| | | | |
|----|--------------|----|---------------|
| 1 | countryside | 11 | communication |
| 2 | tongue | 12 | risky |
| 3 | countries | 13 | invaluable |
| 4 | obvious | 14 | accommodation |
| 5 | knowledge | 15 | environment |
| 6 | probably | 16 | conversation |
| 7 | dialect | 17 | dodgy |
| 8 | themselves | 18 | though |
| 9 | regionalised | 19 | diversity |
| 10 | opportunity | 20 | therefore |

ANSWERS

GAP FILL: Studying English abroad: Many **students** want to learn English, as it is the business language of the world. One can blame the British Empire for that! Of course, there are 101 other languages out there to learn but where should one learn English? In England is the obvious answer! However, many students in non-English speaking countries **enrol** on local **courses** in their country. At each level - be they a beginner, pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper intermediate or advanced level they learn **grammar**, reading, **writing**, listening and speaking. Having a conversation in English is a **vital** part of the learning process. Many students will probably be taught by a non-native English speaker, as in some countries there is a shortage of **native** speakers. These teachers have themselves learnt English and are happy to pass their knowledge on to others. Some students however will get the opportunity to practice their **English** with a native English speaker.

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(This is a remodeled lesson from 2009)

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