

Outline: Crumpled Text Reading

Thinking Skills: Creating; constructing, inventing, composing

Language Skills: reading, speaking

Time: 15-20 min

Level: B1-B2

Holidays can be good for your health. You lie on a beach and relax, and tensions disappear. But sometimes a holiday can change your life completely, which is what happened two years ago to Victoria Smith and Sally Gook.

Victoria Smith, six years ago, was working as a manager at Next, a British chain store. Then she went on holiday to Borneo...

‘It was a working holiday,’ said Victoria, ‘where you could study orang-utans in the wild – I have always been interested in apes, so I thought it would be fun.’ The holiday was wonderful, and when Victoria came home she found it very difficult to return to her old life. ‘Suddenly the problems in the store just seemed so trivial’. Although everybody told her she was mad, she decided to go back to university and study biology. Four years later she became a chimpanzee keeper.

For the last two years Victoria has been working at Monkey World, a centre in south-west England which looks after apes which have been ill-treated. Many have been rescued from laboratories and circuses all over the world. She works long hours, and the pay isn’t very good, but she loves it. ‘Apes are like a big family, each with their own personality. ‘I’m really happy now. Since I started working here I feel that I’ve been doing something important, not just wasting my life.’

Sally Gook wakes up every morning to a deep blue sky and blazing sun. For the last two years she has been living on the tiny Greek island of Lipsi, which is only 16 square kilometres in size and has a population of just 650.

But until a few years ago she lived in London. ‘I was working for American Express and I had a good social life and earned a lot of money. But I had to get up very early every morning, often in horrible weather, and get a train and the tube to work.’

Then one day she and a friend decided they needed a relaxing holiday, and they came to Lipsi. ‘I loved it – the people, the mountains, the sun, and the delicious food. Suddenly I knew there was a different life waiting for me here.’ A few months later she applied for a job at the travel company which had organized her holiday.

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Since then she has been living on Lipsi and working as a tourist guide. Her boyfriend, who is Greek, is a farmer. Sally said, 'I've only been back to London once, and I can't imagine ever living there again.'

1. Where did both women work?	1. Where did both women work?
2. What experiences made both women change their lives?	2. What experiences made both women change their lives?
3. What has Victoria decided to do after her return home?	3. What has Victoria decided to do after her return home?
4. What's the population of the place Sally lives now?	4. What's the population of the place Sally lives now?
5. What do both women do for a living now?	5. What do both women do for a living now?
6. What do they think about the changes now?	6. What do they think about the changes now?