

English in Mind Second edition

Level 4 Unit 12

Worksheet**How VSO can help you make the most of your gap year****THE INDEPENDENT****Lead-in****1 Discuss the following questions with your partner:**

- Have you ever done any work without being paid, for example for a charity? What work did you do? What was the charity? Why did you do it?
- What do you call someone who works without being paid?
- What organisations exist for people who want to work for a charity overseas?

2 Now look at the title of the article.

- What does VSO stand for?
- What is a gap year? When do people usually take gap years? How do they usually spend their year? Why do they do it?

Reading comprehension (1): gist task**3 Read the text quickly and say if the following questions are True (T) or False (F):**

- 1 VSO also organises holidays for teenagers. _____
- 2 VSO has two gap year programmes – Global Xchange and Youth for Development. _____
- 3 VSO programmes are free. _____
- 4 The 3 volunteers in the text are all in their twenties. _____
- 5 The 3 volunteers got some experience in the UK before they went abroad. _____

Reading comprehension (2): understanding detail**4 Read paragraphs 1–7 more closely and complete the following table:**

VSO programme	Cost	Duration	Aimed at	Requirements	Locations
Global Xchange					
Youth for Development					

Now read to the end of the article and make notes in the following table:

	Helen Parker	Farhaan Mumtaz	Sophie Lewis
Age			
VSO programme			
Main motives			
Experience			
Main area of interest			
Based in			
Highlights			
Negative comments			

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Vocabulary: words in context

- 5 a** Look at the list of words and definitions below and find their synonyms in the text. You can use your dictionaries if you need to. Paragraph numbers are given in parentheses.

stories (1)		the V-sign (2)	
British people (3)		stays (pl. noun) (3)	
a bargain (5)		be travelling to (9)	
done merely for show (10)		a person with the same function as another (13)	
place where you feel at ease (15)		involving serious and complicated ideas (17)	
fantastic (17)		a ban for religious or social reasons (19)	
a person who rejects established values (19)		oversentimental (20)	

- b** Ask your partner the following questions:

- 1 What kinds of *anecdotes* do people usually tell at the parties you go to?
- 2 What significance does the *V-sign* have in your country?
- 3 Have you bought anything recently that was *a steal*?
- 4 Where *are you off to* on your next holiday?
- 5 What books do you consider to be '*high-brow*'? Have you read any of them?
- 6 Are you *soppy* about anything?
- 7 In what situations do you feel outside your *comfort zone*?
- 8 Which subjects are still *taboo* in your country?

- c** **Fixed expressions.** Complete the following expressions taken from the text and then match them with their closest meanings (a–e):

- 1 To _____ *the most of* an opportunity (title) **a)** To be successful
- 2 To _____ *some good* (subtitle) **b)** To get the best out of a situation
- 3 To _____ *well* (para 6) **c)** To improve a situation through personal effort
- 4 To _____ *a difference* (para 8) **d)** To have good intentions
- 5 To _____ *well* (para 9) **e)** To change something for the better

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Grammar: uses of the gerund

6 The abbreviations below are used to identify some of the uses of the *-ing* forms in the text. Find the examples (paragraph numbers are given) and then write the appropriate abbreviations in the spaces provided to describe their use.

Prep.	dependent on preposition before it, e.g. <i>I'm good at driving</i>
Verb	dependent on verb before it, e.g. <i>He denied stealing the money</i>
Noun	verb used as a noun, e.g. <i>The best thing was swimming with dolphins.</i>
Cont.	verb in continuous tense, e.g. <i>He was going, I am going</i>
PP	present participle, e.g. <i>I saw a man swimming. Driving slowly, he finally arrived. I worked in an office, answering phone calls and writing memos.</i>

1 recruiting, offering, boosting (para 3) _____

2 working (para 6) _____

3 going (para 6) _____

4 chasing (para 8) _____

5 teaching (para 17) _____

7 **Whiteboard Pelmanism.** Listen carefully to your teacher's instructions for this version of the memory game practising *-ing* forms.

Discussion

8 Discuss the following questions as a small group:

- Have you (or anyone you know) ever taken time off from your studies or job in order to do something totally different? What did you spend your time doing? What did you learn from the experience? Was it worthwhile?
- Do you think students should be encouraged to take a year off before going to University? What advice would you give someone to make the most of their year out?
- Would you be a suitable candidate for a VSO programme? What qualities do you have (or not have!) that would make you a good volunteer? What do you think you would find difficult about working overseas as a volunteer?
- If money was not an issue, what would you do if you had a year to spend doing absolutely anything you wanted?

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