

English in Mind Second edition

Level 4 Unit 8

Lesson Plan

THE
INDEPENDENT**Why a productive gap year could help you choose a career****AIMS**

- to read extensively and study a text related to the Unit theme
- to scan for specific language and read for detailed comprehension
- to understand words in context and use idiomatic phrases
- to understand and use inversions with conditional clauses
- discussion
- (further work) online research and writing

Total time (approx): 1 hour 40 minutes

(Note: Some exercises can be set for homework)

Lead-in

- 1** To get students thinking and talking about the text they are about to read, show them the title and ask them what they think the article will be about. Ask them to read the quotation in Exercise 1 and give them a few minutes to discuss its meaning. Elicit opinions by asking whether students have considered a gap year and if so, why?

Time: 5–7 minutes

- 2** Ask students to look at the gap-year options in the box. Initiate a discussion by focusing on one of the options and asking how the experience might help develop skills that make someone more employable. Students should then work alone to complete the exercise before discussing their choices in small groups to try to reach agreement on the order. One student in each group should write notes using the blank space provided. Allow 8–10 minutes and then ask each group to give feedback on their preferences with accompanying reasons. Now distribute the article.

Time: 10–13 minutes

Reading comprehension (1): scanning

- 3** This exercise gives students an opportunity to practise their scanning skills. To stress the importance of speed reading, impose a time limit of

no more than two minutes. Views expressed by the author may differ from those offered by students in their pre-reading discussion, so ask them to read the complete sentences and consider the similarities and differences between the author's ideas and those noted down in Exercise 1.

Key: 1 para 4 2 para 5 3 para 8 4 para 10

Time: 4 minutes

Vocabulary (1): words in context

- 4** This exercise focuses on some of the less common phrases in the article. To promote language acquisition, students should try to work out meaning from context before trying to select the correct answer. Do the first example with them if necessary. The exercise can be done individually and answers compared in pairs.

Key: 2 reduce possibility 3 understanding afterwards 4 to be proud of 5 a lot 6 give proof of 7 a lot 8 possible to get 9 jump 10 the most important thing to do

Time 10–12 minutes

Reading comprehension (2): understanding detail

- 5** Before starting the exercise, ask students to consider which words they will focus on in each example to help them locate the relevant sentences. They should scan the text for these 'key' words before reading each complete sentence to establish correct answers. Impose a time limit to discourage painstaking translation. Evidence from the text should be noted down to support each answer. Only exact answers rather than copied chunks of text are acceptable. Answers can be checked in pairs.

Key:

- 2 over 310,000, maybe even £20,000 or more
- 3 an editorial assistant role at his local paper
- 4 his first day at work
- 5 they are changing career
- 6 taking the time to see the job in action in the workplace
- 7 His CV – long list of work experience placements and references attesting to his professionalism and work ethic

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- 8 He could contact a host of employers who already had knowledge of his abilities
 9 doctor
 10 if you are unsure about what to do with your life

Time: 15–18 minutes

Vocabulary (2): idiomatic expressions

- 6 Some common idiomatic expressions are highlighted in this exercise. The leader lines correspond to the number of words in each expression. Make sure they are noted in full. Some have been partially completed to help identify the whole phrase. Students can work in pairs to find the answers in the text.

Key: 2 doom and gloom 3 progress up the ladder
 4 knock out of the water 5 green 6 go head to head with
 7 the bottom line

Time: 5–7 minutes

Vocabulary (3): idiomatic expressions in use

- 7 Here students are given the opportunity to use the expressions learned in Exercise 6. This is probably best done individually, with peer correction then being done in pairs. Stress that verb forms may need changing.

Key: 2 progressing up the ladder 3 knocked ... out of the water 4 burst.....bubbles 5 doom and gloom 6 green
 7 the bottom line

Time: 4 minutes

Grammar (1): inversion with conditional clauses

- 8 Ask students if they can think of a way to start the example sentence that avoids using 'Had they'. Elicit or explain that 'Had they' is a way of rephrasing the *if*-clause in a conditional sentence, which is an example of inversion (putting an auxiliary verb before the subject of a clause, as, e.g., when forming questions). Tell students that in formal English this type of inversion is used for emphasis and for variety in sentence structure. Ask them to look at the three example sentences and to identify which

type of conditional is being used – first, second or third. They should then complete the rules below. Allow them to discuss these rules among themselves before checking their answers. Provide or elicit further examples if necessary.

Key: Rule 1 – *second* conditional Rule 2 – *first* conditional Rule 3 – *third* conditional

Time: 6–8 minutes

Grammar (2): using different forms of inversion

- 9 Students should work alone to change each sentence into a more emphatic inverted version. Answers can then be compared in pairs. For further practice, ask one of the students within each pair to say the conditional sentence with 'if', and the other to answer with the inverted version. Note that both *was* and *were* can be used for both first and third person singular.

Key: 2 Had they 3 were/was she to 4 Had she not
 5 Were we to 6 should you look

Time: 10–12 minutes

Discussion

- 10 To prepare for the 'Further work' research activity, ask students to plan and sketch out gap-year ideas individually, using the bullet points given to help them focus their thoughts. Students should then exchange their ideas and suggestions in small groups. Some of these ideas can then be developed in whole class feedback.

Time: 12–15 minutes

Further work

- 11a *Internet research.* Students use the www.gapyear.com website (or other websites) as a starting point for getting the information they need regarding their gap year, making notes as they go under each category, i.e. summer work with kids, travel planning.
- b *Report writing.* These headed notes will then form the basis for writing a report. For example, 'Find a Job' can be developed to include subsections on, e.g., 'Type of work', 'Location', 'Skills required/Skills

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to be learned', etc. Some formal language can be fed in too, such as, 'This report aims to look at ...' Ensure students understand how the report should be structured, i.e. that it should include an introduction, stating the topic of the report (e.g. gap-year option) and research source (e.g. www.gapyear.com), followed by the main body of the report where the various subsections present the main ideas and then further details (see example section below).

Location

Specialist furniture-making particularly centres on the Manchester area. It has a tradition of making and exporting pieces of furniture to order, and there has been an established infrastructure of suppliers and buyers for the last 150 years. It would perhaps

be best to contact one of the biggest firms first, to find out about the availability of voluntary work. e.g. Williamson's and Son or Sheersmith. Voluntary contracts tend to be agreed in September and carry through to the following summer.

A conclusion should then summarise the general findings so that students can decide whether the type of work researched would be a realistic gap-year option.

This article first appeared on Thursday, 26 June 2008, at www.independent.co.uk/student/gap-year/why-a-productive-gap-year-could-help-you-choose-a-career-461410.html.

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