**Structure of the text**

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| **Part I Introduction: Why we travel**  Para 1: An interesting opening: Travelling is burdensome  Para 2: Raise the question: Why we travel  Para 3-4: Two causes:  Para 3: We need to.  Para 4: We want to.  Para 5: Thesis statement: Travel can improve creativity (the surprising purpose of travel)  **Part II Body: Reasons why travel provides creative benefits.**  Three causes  Para 6: A bit of distance (Travel) helps loosen the cognitive chains.  Para 7: Travel expands the circumference of their "cognitive input s” (broaden horizon).  Para 8: This renaissance of creativity appears to be a side effect of difference.  **Part III Conclusion**  Para 9: Sum up the main ideas: Despite the drawbacks of travel (jet lag, get lost, lost of luggage, tired), we travel because we need to, because distance and difference are the secret cornerstones of creativity. |

**Reference Answers**

The surprising purpose of travel

1 It's 4:15 in the morning and my alarm clock has just stolen away a lovely dream. I almost return back to sleep before my eye catches my packed suitcase and I groan remembering that I'm going to the airport. The taxi is late and then lost and I'm getting increasingly nervous that I'll miss my flight. I run in when we arrive stagger through security and finally get to my gate. After all the trouble of this morning my flight is canceled and I'm stuck in this terminal for the next 218 minutes and my only consolation is a cup of complimentary airport coffee. This is traveling a burdensome series of running and waiting and after countless hours finally getting there.

*What is the main idea of this paragraph?*

The author gives us a vivid description of the imaginary travel experience, including how he struggles to get up in the early morning, how he gets to the flight gate after all the trouble and how he finally gets stuck in the airport.

*What is the function of paragraph one?*

Paragraph 1 is an interesting opening, attracting readers’ attention. Also the author starts with the opposite side of traveling to introduce the thesis question: Why do we travel despite all the trouble and tiredness？

2 Why do we travel? I don't mind the actual flying the wonder of being airborne in a dense metal bird. The rest of the journey however can feel like a tedious lesson in the ills of modernity from the predawn x-ray screening to the sad airport malls selling clusters of keepsakes. It's the result of a globalized world and it sucks.

*What do the highlighted parts refer to respectively?*

A dense metal bird refers to the plane. It is made of metal and is like a bird.

The ills of modernity refers to boring and tedious routine by going through the x-ray screening or shopping in the airport malls.

(旅程的其余部分, 从一大早x光检查到机场商场出售一大堆纪念品,感觉就像是一堂关于现代社会弊病的乏味课程)

*Why does the author say “ it's the result of a globalized world and it sucks?”*

As a result of globalization, you may see the stores at the airport are selling things from different part of the world and the same things that haven’t sold out for a long time. It is the same all over the world. The author implies travelling brings people convenience (you can go anywhere you want) as well as tediousness (x-ray screening to the sad airport malls selling clusters of keepsakes).

3 Sometimes of course we travel because we need to. Because in this digital age there is still something important about the handshake at a business luncheon. Or eating mom's special food on Thanksgiving. Or seeing your girlfriend on your 2-year anniversary.

*How do you understand this paragraph (Why does the author mention “handshake at a business luncheon, eating mom's special food on Thanksgiving, seeing your girlfriend on your 2-year anniversary”*)*?*

The author uses these specific cases to support the point that we travel because we need to.

Travel is compulsory for something important, such as business trips (shake hands with our business partners in person), family gathering (Thanksgiving Day) and celebration (anniversary day).

4 But most travel is decidedly optional. Only corporate travel about 30% of trips over 50 miles is truly compulsory. Instead we travel because we want to because the annoyances of the airport are offset by the thrill of being someplace new. Because work is stressful and our blood pressure is too high and we need a vacation somewhere tropical. Because home is boring. Because the flights are on sale. Because Paris is Paris.

*Please paraphrase the highlighted parts.*

But most travel is not compulsory. Instead it is optional.

We travel because we want to, because when we travel, the excitement that the new places bring to us will make us forget all the annoyances and unpleasant incidents.

Paris is there. It is unique. No other place can replace it. We travel because the greatness like the city Paris exists in the world. Therefore, we want to travel to witness the greatness. It is a so tempting reason that we can hardly resist.

5 Thanks to modern aviation we can now move through space at an inhuman speed. For the first time in human history we can outrun the sun and move from one hemisphere to another in a single day. Of course it's not enough to simply get on a plane. If we want to realize the creative benefits of travel then we have to re-think its overall purpose. Most people after all escape to Paris so they don't have to think about those troubles they left behind. But here's the irony: Our mind is most likely to solve our most stubborn problems while we are sitting in luxury in a Left Bank café. So instead of contemplating that buttery dessert we should be conscious of those domestic issues we just can't solve.

*How do you understand the irony? Why it is an irony?*

We travel because we want to relax our mind and escape from our daily problems. However, when we are truly relaxed, like when we are sitting in a café on the famous Left Bank in Paris, and enjoy our coffee, our mind is most likely to solve the problems, because some ideas just strike us and help solve the problems that haven’t been resolved for a long time. It is ironic, isn’t it?

6 The larger lesson though is that our thoughts are saturated with the familiar. The brain is a space of near infinite possibility which means that it spends a lot of time and energy choosing what not to notice. As a result creativity is traded away for efficiency; we think in finite literal prose not symbolic verse. A bit of distance however helps loosen the cognitive chains that imprison us making it easier to mingle the new with the old; the mundane is grasped from a slightly more abstract perspective. According to research the experience of an exotic culture endows us with a valuable open-mindedness making it easier to realize that even a trivial thing can have multiple meanings. Consider the act of leaving food on the plate: In China this is often seen as a compliment a signal that the host has provided enough to eat. But in America the same act is a subtle insult an indication that the food wasn't good enough to finish.

*Can you give an example to elaborate the point “our thoughts are saturated with the familiar”?*

For example, Chinese people take the act of leaving food on the plate as a compliment a signal that the host has provided enough to eat.

Other examples can be:

Chinese people seldom tip the waiter or waitress; most of us feel strange if asked to do so. We shake hands to greet the guests while people in other cultures may not. We share food even with strangers on the same table while people in other cultures feel weird.

*What point does the example of “ the act of leaving food on the plate” support?*

It supports the previous sentence: the experience of an exotic culture endows us with a valuable open-mindedness making it easier to realize that even a trivial thing can have multiple meanings.

7 Such multicultural contrasts mean that seasoned travelers are open to ambiguity willing to realize that there are decidedly different (and equally valid) ways of interpreting the world. This in turn allows them to expand the circumference of their "cognitive inputs" as they refuse to settle for their first answers and initial guesses.

*How do you understand “they refuse to settle for their first answers and initial guesses?” Give an example to make your point if you can.*

We travel because we want to explore instead of just accepting what other people tell us or what we think initially. As a result, travel broadens our horizon.

For example, if someone tells you that Lijiang is a wonderful place to visit, you must go there and experience by yourself. You may like it, or you may not.

Another example could be: you are told that Indian is not safe for female visitors. If you are settled for this answer, you may never go there as a female backpacker. If, however, you are an experienced traveler and you refuse to accept what you are told or read from the “Let's Go guidebook,” you may want to explore by yourself. Perhaps it is a totally different experience.

8 Of course this mental flexibility doesn't come from mere distance a simple change in latitude and longitude. Instead this renaissance of creativity appears to be a side effect of difference: We need to change cultures to experience the disorienting diversity of human traditions. The same facets of foreign travel that are so confusing (Do I tip the waiter? Where is this train taking me?) turn out to have a lasting impact making us more creative because we're less insular. We're reminded of all that we don't know which is nearly everything; we're surprised by the constant stream of surprises. Even in this globalized age we can still be amazed at all the earthly things that weren't included in the Let's Go guidebook and that certainly don't exist back home.

*How do you understand “instead this renaissance of creativity appears to be a side effect of difference?”*

It means that physical distance (travelling) is not the only way to build a flexible mind. Experiencing the culture differences by travelling awakens (renaissance) your creative mind. The result is not what you originally expect, but it just occurs as the side effect.

*Can you give an example to support the idea that “even in this globalized age we can still be amazed at all the earthly things that weren't included in the Let's Go guidebook and that certainly don't exist back home?”*

Because we are living in a globalized world now, we assume that we can see whatever we want without going outside home. Nothing will surprise us. However, by travelling, we can be amazed at something that the Guidebook does not list, or we are amazed at something that we don’t have in our own countries.

For example, the Let’s Go guidebook provides us information like which place is worth visiting, which restaurant attracts most foodies, or what kind souvenirs suit travelers. However, when you get lost on the way to these well-known places, you may discover an obscure cafeteria (not in the guidebook which lists one-star Michelin restaurant); a don’t-know-the-name lake (not in the guidebook which lists a famous holiday resort); you may be amazed by the way the locals spend their holidays (not in the guidebook which lists famous holidays); you may be amazed by a pebble on the beach(not in the guidebook which lists famous souvenirs). All these, however, provide you with a totally different perspective on the new culture.

9 So let's not pretend that travel doesn't have its drawbacks or that we endure jet lag for pleasure. We don't spend 10 hours lost in the Louvre because we like it and the view from the top of Machu Picchu probably doesn't make up for the trouble of lost luggage. (More often than not I need a vacation after my vacation.) We travel because we need to because distance and difference are the secret cornerstones of creativity. When we get home home is still the same. But something in our mind has been changed and that changes everything.

*What is the surprising purpose of travel?*

The purpose of travel is to experience the distance and difference that eventually endow us with a creative mind and improve creativity