

# Travel - Distance work

## Answer the following questions.

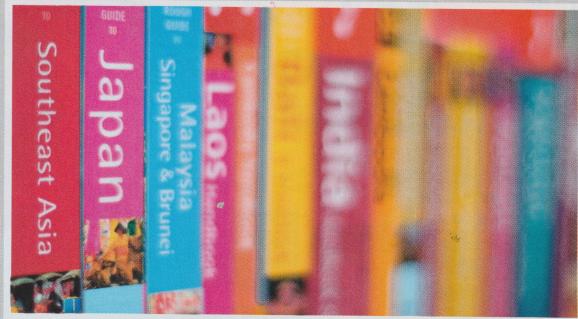
1. What do you think motivates people to become travel writers?
2. What qualities do you think you need to become a successful travel writer?
3. Do you think you have what it takes?
4. Read the text below and try to think of a suitable heading for each section A-E

### Successful travel writing

**A** One of the biggest temptations for someone new to the travel game is to look at everything through rose-tinted glasses, and this typically comes out in their writing. They paint everything to be magical and perfect, and their stories are laid out in romantic, flowery language. But the reality is that over time the road will lose its lustre, and any reader who knows that is going to see right through your prose. Not to mention that the harsh realities of a place are often just as interesting as the poetry used to describe it – probably even more interesting. Look over what you've written, and if it seems as if you've just written a brochure, you might want to have another look. It might be your limited perspective that is causing the issue – perhaps you're still caught up in the magic of the road. Or perhaps you are too caught up in selling the romance of travel.

**B** Although getting off the beaten track is always a good idea when travelling, travel writers nonetheless feel they need to capture the biggest sites that everyone comes to a specific country to see. So, even if they are the more adventurous type, they end up going to the same places that everyone else goes to. It may depend on what audience you're writing for, but the best advice is always to head in the opposite direction to everyone else and just see what happens. In another country, the seemingly mundane often creates the most interesting, humorous and exciting moments. If you are stuck to the biggest attractions by assignment, always look for another angle and point out things that others miss. Rolf Potts' story about trying (and failing) to crash the set of *The Beach* when it was being filmed in Thailand (featured in his book *Marco Polo Didn't Go There*) was far better than many other travel stories I've ever read.

**C** An extremely valuable habit for a writer to form, especially in this genre, is the habit of taking notes. Travel is exciting, and while you are caught up in the moment, it is easy to think to yourself that there is no way it will slip from the forefront of your mind. But as the day winds down, you will find yourself sitting in front of your laptop screen, trying your hardest to grasp the best details out of what happened. Carry a small notebook on you at all times.



And don't only take it out when you think you are going to do something worthy of a story, because you never know when good fodder for a story will jump out of nowhere.

**D** Writers always want to seem like an authority on their subject, but when you are a travel writer, always experiencing new places and new things, you will never be the complete authority on anything. Don't be afraid to reveal your awkward moments, your embarrassments and your mishaps. These are the things that other readers who have travelled can relate to and it makes you seem more human.

**E** Finally, if you want to produce good content on the road, you should be willing to take risks – if your idea of world travel is sitting in world-class resorts with a bottle of sunblock in one hand and a cold ice tea in the other, you will be waiting a long time for anything interesting to happen. Hop on the backs of motorbike taxis where death on the road seems a certainty. Eat eyeballs, barbecued rats, giant fried beetles and anything else they throw on your plate. Sample that home-made whisky from the dusty bottle some farmer hands you while touring through the middle of nowhere. Go hang-gliding in the Swiss Alps. In short, get out there and live the road. Bad things will happen here and there, but the same would be true if you never left your home. And all the other adventures you have in between, well, those are the dreams that good travel writing (and life) are made of.

Kimberly Juchnowski, Successful Travel Writing, April 18, 2011

Work through each section A-E, referring to the paragraphs

5. What does the writer mean by *travel game*? (A)
6. What does the writer mean by the phrase *look at everything through rose-tinted glasses*? (A)
7. What does the writer mean by *flowery language*? (A)
8. Which phrase means to become less appealing? (A)
9. Which word does the writer use to describe something which is apparently not very interesting or dynamic? (B)
10. Which word is used metaphorically to refer to source material or ideas? (C)
11. Which phrase does the writer use to refer to a remote place? (E)