

Reading

3

Class discussion

- What do you think about swapping your home with another family as a holiday?
- How would you feel about having a stranger sleeping in your room?
- Would you leave all your personal possessions out?

- 1 Reading Part 2** You are going to read an article about home-swapping holidays. Seven sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences (A–H) the one which fits each gap (1–7). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Home-swapping holidays

In our increasingly busy lives, holidays have become more important than ever. We all need time out to recharge our batteries. However, not all of us have the spare cash to **fork out** on an expensive holiday. Next time you go on holiday, how much would you like to pay for your accommodation? How about nothing at all? **1** We're talking holiday swaps. Just hand over the keys to your **beloved** bungalow for a week or two, and move into a villa in Andalucia, or an apartment in Manhattan. It really is as simple as that to get the holiday of your dreams on a low budget if you are prepared to let strangers stay in your home **2** Many say they enjoy the experience of stepping into somebody else's life and feeling part of a community.

Sounds fun – How do I start?

Several agencies have websites which enable you to **browse** pictures of thousands of homes. Once you're sold on the idea, you pay a joining fee, which allows you to upload your own details and contact other members. The best are long-established operators such as Homelink International (www.homelink.org.uk), which has 13,500 members in 75 countries. It charges £115 a year and sends members a 700-page directory **annually**. Other solid bets include Intervac (www.intervac.co.uk) which has 10,000 subscribers who each pay £50 a year, and Home Base Holidays (www.homebase-hols.com), which has 3,000 members and charges from £29 per annum.

Where should I go?

3 Typically, you could swap a two-bedroom flat in London for a three-bedroom house with a private pool near Cape Town. Short breaks are becoming more popular with swappers. Try a weekend in Barcelona or Amsterdam without paying big-city hotel prices.

What sort of pads are popular?

All types, although places on the tourist circuit such as Bath, Edinburgh and the Cotswolds are always in demand. Don't be embarrassed if your place is small - many Americans **assume** that all British homes are tiny, and enjoy staying somewhere 'quaint'. The key is to find a swapper at the same stage of life, with similar attitudes. **4** They probably aren't going to have

the facilities that you are used to and may need for your family. So, be sensible when choosing your swap. I'm sure you wouldn't feel comfortable having your messy children in a perfectly decorated flat with expensive white carpets.

How do I prepare?

Give your place a thorough clean. We can't stress enough how important this is. After all, you wouldn't want to turn up on holiday to **grubby** accommodation would you? Empty the fridge, clear some wardrobe and drawer space, provide two sets of clean towels and bedclothes. Write down some useful phone numbers and instructions on setting the burglar alarm. **5** If you're also swapping cars, tell your motor insurer.

And if it goes wrong?

Mishaps are extremely **rare**, partly because swappers tend to build up a relationship over e-mail before they commit. The most common problems **stem** from differing standards of cleanliness. Americans and Germans are the chief complainers, but serious problems involving damage or theft are almost unheard of. Nevertheless, it's **wise** to sign an agreement covering accidental damage, international phone bills, etc. **6** You may be able to take out an additional policy to cover this (negotiate with your existing insurer). Don't forget that your existing insurance policy may not cover you having strangers staying in your home while you are not on the **premises**.

Case study

John and Rita Stephens live with their two children, Max, 7, and Louella, 5, in a four-bedroom semi-detached house in Finchley, north London. Rita says, 'We've swapped to the USA and Canada five times and have a sixth **lined up** for Texas this summer. **7** We've stayed in a house on a river in Colorado, and in a gated community with a private beach in North Carolina. As well as exchanging homes, we've swapped cars and even pets. We find that it's the best way to really experience a different culture and society and we've made friends with some of the neighbours, too'

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|---|--|
| <p>A If you want to trade up, the experts recommend South Africa, Australia, Canada and California.</p> <p>B Make sure to turn off all water and electricity supplies until your safe return from your holiday.</p> <p>C Don't forget to inform neighbours and your home insurers that strangers will be staying.</p> <p>D They have all been different but hugely enjoyable.</p> | <p>E Thousands of Brits exchange homes with families abroad, and not just to save the money.</p> <p>F No, we haven't gone mad.</p> <p>G And remember that your travel insurance won't refund your flights if your swappers pull out.</p> <p>H If you've got small children, you probably won't want to trade with a retired couple.</p> |
|---|--|

Reading comprehension

2 Decide if these statements true or false. Justify your answers by underlining the relevant parts of the text.

	True	False
1 You can learn more about a community by living in someone's house rather than a hotel.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Most agencies charge about the same amount to join.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 You can often swap for a property that is nicer than your own.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Americans prefer much bigger homes for their British holidays.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 You should consider whether your holiday home provides for your particular needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 You should tell your neighbours that your house is going to be empty.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Most swappers communicate regularly before the holiday.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 It is rare for somebody to seriously abuse a home in a house-swap.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 Most insurance policies cover every situation concerning house-swapping.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 The Stephens family have been to the USA six times so far this year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3 Match the words or phrases (1–14), which have been taken from the text, with the definitions or synonyms (a–n).

1 fork out	<input type="checkbox"/>	a home
2 beloved	<input type="checkbox"/>	b begin; start
3 browse	<input type="checkbox"/>	c accident; unfortunate incident or event
4 annually	<input type="checkbox"/>	d cared about very much
5 pad	<input type="checkbox"/>	e building; place
6 quaint	<input type="checkbox"/>	f cancel; decide not to do something
7 grubby	<input type="checkbox"/>	g have something ready to use or do
8 mishap	<input type="checkbox"/>	h yearly
9 rare	<input type="checkbox"/>	i clever; sensible
10 stem	<input type="checkbox"/>	j pay money
11 wise	<input type="checkbox"/>	k unusual
12 pull out	<input type="checkbox"/>	l having lots of character; attractive
13 premises	<input type="checkbox"/>	m dirty
14 line up	<input type="checkbox"/>	n casually look at something



4 Complete the sentences using the correct form of some of the words or phrases from Exercise 3.

- 1 It's about time you cleaned your _____ bedroom.
- 2 I hope he had a new job _____ before he left the old one.
- 3 His fear of dogs _____ from when he was bitten by one as a child.
- 4 The police arrested the man and took him off the _____ by force.
- 5 I _____ through a magazine while I waited to see the doctor.
- 6 How much money did you _____ for that new coat?
- 7 I'm afraid I've had a small _____. I broke a cup.
- 8 He had to _____ of the race because he hurt his leg.
- 9 I pay my car insurance _____.
- 10 My friend lives in a _____ little cottage in the countryside.

Writing

2

- 1 Writing Part 1** You have received an e-mail from a family that you are planning to do a house-swap with in the summer. Read the e-mail and the notes you have made. Then reply to the e-mail, using all your notes.

From: [Bob Daniels](#)
Sent: [12th February](#)
Subject: [house-swap](#)

Hello Simon,

I'm very happy that you've decided to swap houses with us in July. We need to arrange when the exact dates will be. We agreed on a fortnight, didn't we?

How would you feel about looking after our cat, Daisy? She just needs feeding twice a day, or we can ask our neighbour to do it.

Could you also recommend a good local restaurant? How do we get there? Can we walk?

Are there any local sights worth visiting?

Finally, what are your neighbours like?

Best wishes
Bob

Handwritten notes:
- 'give details' (next to cat question)
- 'give details' (next to restaurant question)
- 'yes - suggest 2nd-16th' (next to date question)
- 'No problem, and our goldfish?' (next to cat question)
- 'One friendly, one not!' (next to neighbor question)

Write your e-mail in 120–150 words. You must use grammatically correct sentences with accurate spelling and punctuation in a style appropriate for the situation.

Use of English

- 1 Use of English Part I** For questions 1–6, read the text below and decide which word (A, B, C or D) best fits each gap. There is an example at the beginning (0).

Example:

0	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>
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What's on TV?

Will the 'V-chip' protect children (0) _____ watching violence and crime on TV? The 'V-chip', a (1) _____ device, has been installed in new TVs manufactured (2) _____ the US since 2002. The 'V-chip' (3) _____ parents to automatically block out programmes that have been labelled as high in violence, sex or other unacceptable material. (4) _____ recent study showed that of nearly 2,700 shows, 57 per cent were said to contain at least (5) _____ violence. And much of this violence was the kind that, according (6) _____ the study, can desensitize kids and encourage imitation.

- | | | | |
|------------|----------|---------|----------|
| 0 A from | B to | C on | D for |
| 1 A much | B some | C any | D small |
| 2 A to | B for | C from | D at |
| 3 A makes | B allows | C lets | D forces |
| 4 A Any | B A | C The | D These |
| 5 A little | B much | C some | D any |
| 6 A for | B to | C about | D on |



- 2 Use of English Part 2** For questions 7–15, read the text below and think of the word which best fits each gap. Use only one word in each gap. There is an example at the beginning (0).

Example:

0 I S

With a little bit of help

The ozone layer (0) _____ becoming thinner all over the world. Seventy per cent of Antarctica's ozone blanket has already disappeared. (7) _____ means that people, plants and animals are in more danger of suffering (8) _____ skin cancers and diseases. Who is (9) _____ blame? Who is slowly destroying our only protection against the sun's dangerous ultraviolet rays? We are.

The destruction of the ozone layer is mostly caused (10) _____ man-made chemicals like CFCs, which are used as coolants in refrigerators and air-conditioning systems, or in sprays. Every time you (11) _____ on an air-conditioning system manufactured with CFCs, you are (12) _____ something to destroy the ozone layer. Every time you spray styling foam on your hair, you are making the ozone layer a (13) _____ bit thinner.

But there is a bright side to this. Many chemical companies are producing less CFCs. (14) _____ a few years' time, the amount of CFCs in the atmosphere will have started to drop, and if countries cooperate fully by not manufacturing more CFCs, the ozone layer will have fully recovered by the year 2050.

In some European countries, 'green' refrigerators are (15) _____ manufactured without CFCs, which have already replaced 50 per cent of the market.

- 3 Use of English Part 3** For questions 16–22, read the text below. Use the word given in capitals at the end of some of the lines to form a word that fits in the gap in the same line. There is an example at the beginning (0).

Example:

0 U N U S U A L

Gadget mania

Collecting gadgets isn't (0) _____. There probably isn't a (16) _____ in the land that hasn't got a drawer filled with an (17) _____ of small devices – ranging from egg separators to new and (18) _____ mousetraps. Gadgets promise short cuts, ease, efficiency and (19) _____. They are probably an inevitable outcome of a global (20) _____ society looking for new markets, but they don't always lead to real (21) _____ progress. Existing tools often do a better job, but collecting gadgets can become (22) _____.

USUAL / HOUSE
ASSORTED
IMPROVE
FREE
INDUSTRY
TECHNOLOGY
ADDICT

- 4 Use of English Part 4** ▶ For questions 23–27, complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between two and five words, including the word given. Here is an example (0).

Example: He managed to sail the Atlantic single-handed.

SUCCEEDED

He _____ the Atlantic single-handed.

0 SUCCEEDED IN SAILING

- 23** Mr Smith is free at the moment. Would you like to speak to him?

DOING

Mr Smith _____ the moment.
Would you like to speak to him?

- 24** Just add a pinch of salt to the soup.

LITTLE

Just _____ to the soup.

- 25** My father cooks every Friday evening.

DOES

My father _____ every Friday evening.

- 26** I'm having difficulty choosing between the red dress and the black dress.

WHICH

I don't know _____: the red one or the black one.

- 27** After having her hair dyed a few times, she noticed that she had less hair than before.

MUCH

After having her hair dyed a few times, she noticed that she didn't _____ before.