You are going to read an article about studying abroad for a year. For questions **1-6**, choose the answer (**A**, **B**, **C** or **D**) which you think fits best according to the text.

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A lot can happen in a year abroad

Like many students before her, studying abroad had a profound affect on Sarah Morrison

As I sat staring out at California's spectacular Big Sur coastline, I felt fortunate to have a sister who had persuaded me to spend a year of my degree abroad. It seems that there are not enough older siblings explaining just how easy it is to take part in an international exchange.

While most universities offer worldwide exchanges, where students swap places with others from all over the world for a semester or a year during their degree, the number and quality on offer, together with the cost and time spent abroad, vary dramatically.

A deciding factor for me in choosing to study at the University of Edinburgh was the fact it offered more than 230 exchange places at overseas universities in the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, China, South Korea, Japan, Singapore and South America.

Despite all this choice, I still found that deciding to spend a year abroad was something of a novelty, with most of my friends giving more thought to embracing Edinburgh than packing their bags to leave a city that had only just become their home. Yet, fortified by my sister's advice and a Californian friend who told me I would love the coast, I applied to spend my third year at the University of California, Berkeley – never guessing that this would affect almost every future decision I would make.

From the start of your exchange, you are aware that the time you have in your new country is limited and not to be wasted. Your experience is shaped by a predetermined start and end, which immediately increases the significance of the time in between.

From the first week I arrived, I started to work at *The Daily Californian*, Berkeley's student newspaper. I moved from an international house with more than 600 students from all over the world into a co-operative house where 60 of us shared responsibility for management of the building. I met people from Calcutta, Cairo and Chile, and learnt that holding on to any stereotypes I might have about Americans would be about as useful as assuming that all European people lived on farms.

The grades I earned at Berkeley didn't actually count towards my degree classification at Edinburgh. However, I studied under a Pulitzer Prize-winning poet, signed up for student-led seminars and took an African American literature class that shaped my dissertation in Edinburgh. Whether I was learning about contemporary poets on a tour of San Francisco or reporting on the President's speech in San Francisco for the next day's newspaper, my stay there enabled me to return to Edinburgh with an increased sense of awareness about what I wanted to gain from my English literature degree.

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While the expense might seem like an initial barrier to international exchanges, in reality they can actually save a student money. Visas, health insurance and flights to the chosen country will have to be bought, but a student will usually only be charged 25 to 50 per cent of their home university's annual fees. A student travelling abroad is entitled to a larger student loan, and grants are available at many institutions for students going on an exchange.

Taking part in an exchange may not appeal to all students. You have to research the options independently, apply almost a year before you go away and be aware of the grades required in the first year to qualify for a place on one. Even so, Edinburgh's (*line 64*) international exchange officer, Helen Leitch, says: 'If I had a pound for every time that students told me it was the best experience of their life, I would be a very wealthy woman indeed.'

1 One reason Sarah became a student at Edinburgh University was that
- **A** she could first study abroad and then move to Edinburgh.
- **B** her sister had previously studied at Edinburgh.
- **C** she could do part of her studies at a suitable university abroad.
- **D** most of the students at Edinburgh spend a year at an overseas university.

2 How did Sarah feel when she went to Berkeley?
- **A** She was pleased to find the people were exactly as she had expected.
- **B** She knew she wanted to make the most of her stay there.
- **C** She wanted to get a job rather than begin studying immediately.
- **D** She began to wish her stay there could be a little shorter.

3 What does Sarah feel she achieved at Berkeley?
- **A** She formed a clearer idea of what her long-term aims were.
- **B** She took the first steps towards becoming a teacher.
- **C** She developed her poetry-writing skills significantly.
- **D** She ensured that she would graduate with a first-class degree.

4 What does Sarah say about the cost of an international university exchange?
- **A** As a student you can get reduced rates for health insurance.
- **B** Your fees may be cut by half for every year of your course.
- **C** It can be cheaper overall than studying in your own country.
- **D** Taking cheap flights abroad can save you a lot of money.

5 What does 'one' refer to in line 64?
- **A** an international exchange as part of a university course
- **B** a research degree at a university in another country
- **C** a university course that is paid for by the government
- **D** the first year of a university course in your own country

6 What does Helen Leitch suggest in the final paragraph?
- **A** Students who do international exchanges often go on to become extremely rich.
- **B** Most students who've done an international exchange believe it was highly worthwhile.
- **C** Only students from rich families can afford to do an international exchange.
- **D** She should be paid a far higher salary for organising international exchanges.

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