LANGUAGE CENTER
A Mengly J. Quach Education School

Homework 13

Reading Passage: The Itinerant Architect

I have always favored an unplanned, organic approach to travel—one stripped of rigid itineraries and exhausting bucket lists. I prefer packing light and allowing serendipity to dictate my route. When I arrive in a bustling metropolis like Tokyo or Rome, I rarely rush through the iconic landmarks or queue up for crowded tourist hubs. Instead, I choose to wander through quiet residential quarters, pause at neighborhood espresso bars, and simply observe the cadence of daily life. In fact, that is how I ended up making my home in Kyoto; what was intended as a three-day stopover turned into a decade-long chapter of my life.

What continually astonishes me across all my global journeys is how deeply fundamentally similar human beings are, regardless of geographical or cultural divides. Before visiting Scandinavia, I half-expected an alien cultural landscape, yet upon arrival, I found people navigating the same daily anxieties, shared quiet moments, and universal routines. This realization dissolved my inherent hesitation as a traveler. I no longer feel self-conscious walking through remote villages in the Andes or West Africa looking like an unmistakable outsider. I have come to embrace that outsider identity with ease.

To document my journeys, I keep a meticulously written travel journal alongside a vintage mechanical film camera. Unlike modern digital photography—where travelers mindlessly capture hundreds of rapid snapshots only to bury them in cloud storage—analog film forces me to be exceptionally particular about my compositions. Because physical film

LIVEWORKSHEETS

rolls are scarce and costly, I pause and wait for scenes that convey genuine depth: light filtering through gothic arches, shadows cast across cobblestones, or local artisans engrossed in their work. Taking time to look up at architectural flourishes reveals a city's soul, a habit long forgotten by rushed commuters.

Through my essays, I aim to offer readers a fresh perspective on human connection. Many people lack the resources to travel internationally, relying on evocative travel literature to experience far-off cultures. Yet, I always remind them that transformative travel does not require crossing oceans. Exploring historical landmarks, forgotten railways, or heritage sites within one's own hometown can yield equally profound discoveries.

Looking forward, my ultimate ambition is to join an expedition to Antarctica. The continent offers absolute solitude, untamed nature, and uninterrupted time for reflection. Having explored six continents, setting foot on the frozen expanse of Antarctica remains the missing piece in my lifelong journey of world discovery.

Section 1: Assessment Questions

Question 1: Which of the following best captures the writer's underlying philosophy regarding travel?

A) Detailed pre-trip planning prevents unnecessary stress and waste of resources.

B) Authentic travel relies on spontaneous exploration and immersing oneself in local environments.

C) Visiting all top tourist landmarks is essential for understanding a foreign city.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

D) Traveling in foreign countries requires adapting entirely to local customs to blend in.

Question 2: What led the writer to settle in Kyoto for a decade?

A) A long-planned architectural contract with a Japanese firm.

B) An unexpected, unplanned choice during what was supposed to be a brief trip.

C) A desire to study traditional Japanese cafe culture.

D) An effort to escape the overwhelming crowds of Tokyo.

Question 3: How did the writer's realization about human nature alter their perspective when traveling in unfamiliar regions?

A) It motivated them to travel exclusively with local guides.

B) It made them feel comfortable and unbothered despite appearing as an obvious outsider.

C) It convinced them that language barriers are insurmountable without formal study.

D) It inspired them to avoid rural villages and remain in urban areas.

Question 4: Why does the author prefer using an analog mechanical film camera over digital cameras?

A) Digital cameras produce lower resolution photos than analog cameras.

B) Film scarcity and cost force a selective, thoughtful approach to composition.

C) Analog film automatically enhances light filtering through gothic arches.

D) Cloud storage is unreliable for preserving long-term travel memories.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Question 5: What point does the author make regarding city commuters in paragraph 3?

A) Commuters prefer modern architecture to historical gothic arches.

B) Rushed locals often miss the subtle architectural beauty of their own surroundings by forgetting to look up.

C) Commuters are more likely to use digital photography than tourists.

D) City dwellers frequently guide tourists toward hidden architectural gems.

Question 6: What advice does the author give to individuals who are unable to travel abroad?

A) Focus exclusively on reading travel memoirs rather than physical exploration.

B) Save financial resources until an international journey becomes feasible.

C) Seek out meaningful cultural and historical discoveries within their own local areas.

D) Purchase analog cameras to photograph nearby urban environments.

Question 7: Why does an expedition to Antarctica represent a significant personal goal for the author?

A) It is the final remaining continent needed to complete their exploration of all seven continents.

B) It offers an opportunity to test new film camera techniques in extreme cold.

C) It allows them to study endangered wildlife populations in solitude.

D) It fulfills a childhood dream of completing a nautical voyage.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Question 8: In paragraph 1, which word/phrase means 'done in an unplanned, chance, or fortuitous manner'?

A) Cadence

B) Serendipity

C) Stopover

D) Metropoles

Question 9: In paragraph 1, the word 'cadence' is closest in meaning to:

A) Rhythmic flow or speed

B) Architectural style

C) Geographical layout

D) Financial cost

Question 10: In paragraph 2, the word 'timid' could best be replaced by:

A) Adventurous

B) Hesitant or self-conscious

C) Hostile

D) Indifferent

LIVEWORKSHEETS