READING

Student's name: ..... Teacher's name : .....

Gender: ..... Room.....Time: ……..

Date: ..... Level: 7BC2

Reading Passage

Social Media and Holidays

Social media has changed our lives, and that also includes the way we choose our next holiday destination. According to some reports, up to 60% of us use various social media sites to find out where to go next. That figure rises to over 80% of us if we only look at people aged under 40. Social media not only introduces us to possible places that we could visit, but constantly keeps the idea that travelling somewhere is a good way to spend our time and money fresh in our minds.

After making a decision about where we want to go, social media plays a number of other valuable roles. It can act almost like traditional guidebooks used to do, with many people using it to make holiday plans and look up information both before and during a trip. Finally, social media is useful after a trip has finished. It gives people the chance to share their holiday experiences in the form of photos and blogs, and so on. In addition, it allows people to give their opinions about a holiday destination in the form of online reviews, and inspire future travellers.

There is no doubt that social media is an important part of many people's travel experiences. However, it also has a number of problems, some of them quite serious. According to Ulrike Gretzel of the University of Southern Carolina, one of these is 'overtourism'.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Huge numbers of visitors go to certain places because they have become 'must-see' destinations on social media. Many people visit destinations just because they have become known on photo-sharing sites as great places to get selfies. An example is Lake Elsinore, near Los Angeles in the US. In 2019, the area had unusually heavy rain. As a result, millions of beautiful flowers suddenly appeared. Thanks to social media, news quickly spread about the flowers, and 66,000 tourists visited the area in just one weekend to take photos. Many flowers were destroyed, and streets had to be closed to everyone except local people because the traffic problems in this normally quiet part of the countryside had become so bad.

One popular tourist destination has decided to do something quite unusual to deal with the problems caused by social media. Vienna is one of the most visited cities in Europe. In a typical year, there are over 17 million overnight stays in the Austrian capital. Around 14 million of those are from tourists coming from outside the country.

However, the city's tourist board recently started a campaign called 'Enjoy Vienna. Not #Vienna', with an invitation for tourists to put away their smartphones while they were there, and experience things through their own eyes rather than through a screen. Adverts were placed (in English) not only around Vienna, but in train stations and airports in places like the UK, meaning that they were especially aimed at tourists rather than locals.

In a study by Lauren Siegal and others of the University of Surrey, it was suggested that the Vienna Tourist Board was not especially worried about the problems of overtourism. Instead, it was honest in saying that Vienna was a city of culture, one that wanted to attract a more responsible type of tourist, the type that is interested in more than just taking selfies.

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The Tourist Board wanted to try and change tourists' behaviour, and encourage them to spend less time using technology, both for the city's benefit, and for their own.

To support the campaign, the Tourist Board invited some social media influencers (the type of person who posts a lot online about themselves, and has large numbers of followers) to come to Vienna and experience it with their phones switched off. A surprisingly large number of influencers enjoyed themselves, and because they didn't feel like they had to constantly take photos or post their thoughts, they felt a lot less stressed. As a result, when they later blogged about their time in Vienna, they wrote about it in a more positive way.

It is possible that, in the future, other tourist destinations might follow Vienna's example, and ask people to enjoy their holiday without using social media. However, what the results will be – for both visitors and the places they visit – remains to be seen.

Questions 1–8

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage ?

Choose

TRUE if the statement agrees with the information

FALSE if the statement contradicts the information

NOT GIVEN if there is no information on this

1. A large majority of people under 40 use social media for travel purposes. _____

2. More men than women use social media to plan a holiday.

_____

LIVEWORKSHEETS

3. People rarely use social media while on holiday. _____

4. Most people only write reviews of holiday destinations after a positive experience. _____

5. Social media is sometimes responsible for the problem of 'overtourism' _____

6. Because of social media, an area near Lake Elsinore improved. _____

7. Most people who spend at least one night in Vienna come from other parts of Austria. _____

8. More tourists come to Vienna from the UK than from any other country. _____

Questions 9–13

Complete the summary below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the passage for each answer.

Vienna – A Case Study

According to the Vienna Tourist Board, **9.** _____ is not a serious problem in the city. However, it wanted to encourage people to think of the city as a place where **10.** _____ could be experienced and enjoyed.

One aim of the Vienna Tourist Board's 'Enjoy Vienna. Not #Vienna' campaign was to help visitors enjoy the city more by changing their **11.** _____.

Some **12**_____were asked to come to the city and avoid using

LIVEWORKSHEETS

their smartphones while they were there. Apparently, they had a positive experience, and were **13_____than** they usually were.

Questions 14–23

Choose the best answer (A, B, C, or D).

14. According to the article, what does social media encourage many people to do?

A. Spend more money on technology.

B. Think about travelling more often.

C. Visit only famous cities.

D. Travel only with friends.

15. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as a way people use social media before or during a trip?

A. Looking up information about places.

B. Planning holiday activities.

C. Booking flights directly.

D. Learning about destinations.

16. What does the article suggest about sharing holiday experiences online?

A. It can help other people decide where to travel.

B. It usually encourages people to stay at home.

C. It is more popular than travelling itself.

D. It has replaced traditional guidebooks completely.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

17. Why does the writer mention Lake Elsinore?

A. To show that social media can sometimes harm tourist destinations.

B. To recommend it as a place to visit.

C. To explain how flowers grow after heavy rain.

D. To compare it with Vienna.

18. Which problem was caused by the large number of visitors to Lake Elsinore?

A. Hotels became fully booked.

B. Local businesses closed.

C. Roads became too crowded.

D. Visitors had to pay an entrance fee.

19. What was one purpose of Vienna's "Enjoy Vienna. Not #Vienna" campaign?

A. To reduce the number of foreign visitors.

B. To encourage tourists to experience the city without focusing on social media.

C. To advertise Vienna on more social media platforms.

D. To stop tourists from taking photographs.

20. According to the University of Surrey study, Vienna wanted visitors who _____.

A. stayed in the city for a longer time.

B. spent more money during their visit.

C. appreciated the city's culture.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

D. travelled in large groups.

21. Why were some influencers invited to Vienna?

A. To promote new hotels.

B. To test whether travelling without smartphones changed their experience.

C. To create more social media content.

D. To teach tourists how to take better photos.

22. What happened after the influencers returned home?

A. They decided to stop using social media.

B. They wrote more positive blogs about Vienna.

C. They encouraged people not to visit Vienna.

D. They deleted the photos from their trip.

23. Which statement best summarizes the writer's message?

A. Social media has only positive effects on tourism.

B. Social media should never be used while travelling.

C. Social media has both benefits and drawbacks for travellers and destinations.

D. Traditional guidebooks are better than social media.

Questions 24–30

Find words or phrases in the passage with the same meaning.

24. a very large number of tourists _____

25. based on _____

26. certainly true _____

LIVEWORKSHEETS

27. vacation spot_____

28. motivate_____

29. experience something yourself instead of through a screen

_____

30. organize your vacation _____

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