1 READING

a Think of a time when you went to another country or another city / region in your country for the first time. Was there anything that surprised you?

b Read some posts on a forum. Which topic *don't* they mention?

clothes exercise food health money transport

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THINGS I DIDN'T KNOW UNTIL I GOT HERE

What was a surprise for you when you came to live in America?

LENA FROM UKRAINE

When I eat out with my husband or friends, we usually share, because food portions are huge and we don't want all that food. But you can take home everything you don't eat, and I like that.

In the winter, you often see people in the street or on the subway who are wearing just a T-shirt when it's really cold outside.



RAHIM FROM PAKISTAN

When people speak to their boss (and to their teachers) they call them by their first name. They do the same to old people too, even when they don't know them well. It doesn't seem polite to me.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

NATASHA FROM BELARUS

The American President's salary is about the same as a doctor's. He isn't the richest person in the country. That surprised me!

Some hospitals are like smart hotels – but a lot of people can't go there because they don't have medical insurance. Also, doctors don't always explain everything to their patients in my country. Here, they tell you everything.

TARA FROM INDIA

I couldn't believe the tipping system, for example, in places like the hairdresser's. You cut my hair and I pay you – a lot! Why do I need to give you a tip as well?

Public transport can be dangerous in India. But I was on the subway here in New York, going home late at night, when a group of people got on. They were very loud – I think they were drunk – and we were quite frightened. But at the next stop two police officers got on. The people stopped shouting when they saw the police. I felt really safe.

JULIE FROM CANADA

My husband is from Ecuador, and when he first arrived, he was really surprised by his salary. As a chef, he could earn enough money to pay bills, buy food, pay rent, have a good social life, and buy luxuries like our Xbox. In Quito, he worked 15 hours a day, and more at the weekend, and he earned half the money.

Adapted from the British press



LIVEWORKSHEETS

c Read the posts again. Match sentences 1–9 to the people who said them, **L** (Lena), **R** (Rahim), **N** (Natasha), **T** (Tara), or **J** (Julie).

1 ___ People can earn good salaries without working hard.
2 ___ Some people don't dress warmly in winter.
3 ___ The President isn't paid very well.
4 ___ People don't always speak politely to older people.
5 ___ People have really big portions when they eat out.
6 ___ Some hospitals are incredibly luxurious.
7 ___ You can travel safely on public transport.
8 ___ Doctors speak very openly to their patients.
9 ___ You pay people well to do their job, and then you give them more money.

d Look again at sentences 1–9 about the USA. Are they true in your country? If not, say why.

e Learn these words and phrases related to money. What do they mean? How do you pronounce them?

salary /'sæləri/ insurance /ɪn'ʃʊərəns/ tip /tɪp/
earn money /ɜːn 'mʌni/ pay bills /peɪ bɪlz/
pay rent /peɪ rent/

LIVEWORKSHEETS