

Reading: The Challenges and Dreams of a Modern Student

My name is Elena, and I am a final-year undergraduate student. For the last three years, I have been studying international relations, and I must say it has been an exhausting but rewarding journey. I often listen to music while I study to stay focused, although my flatmates are always making a lot of noise, which can be very distracting. As a student, I have to do many assignments and make important choices about my future career. I enjoy researching complex topics, but I avoid leaving my work until the last minute because I don't want to risk failing my coursework.

Before I started university, my life was quite different. I used to work as a junior assistant in a large travel agency. I would spend eight hours a day answering emails and dealing with the public. It was a permanent, full-time job, and I earned a decent salary, but I felt I wasn't getting ahead in my career. While I was working there, the company decided to downsize, and unfortunately, I was made redundant. However, I didn't let that put me off. By the time I lost my job, I had already decided to return to higher education. I had been looking for the right degree for months before I finally managed to find a scholarship that covered my tuition fees.

Now, I am more resourceful and self-confident than I was back then. In fact, the more I study, the more I realize how much there is to learn. I wouldn't say I'm a social butterfly, but I am certainly more outgoing than before.

Looking ahead, I have big plans for the summer. I am going to travel across Europe by train. I've already checked the route and downloaded a travel update app to avoid any cancellations or delays. This time next month, I will be waiting in a departure lounge, ready to start my voyage. By the end of August, I will have visited seven different countries. I hope I don't miscalculate my budget, as being unemployed makes me a bit insecure about money.

My goal is to become a researcher or a historian. I know that finding a high-pressure job won't be easy, but I believe that with the right qualifications, I will be able to find a position that is both secure and fulfilling. After all, studying is hard but it is the best way to reinvent oneself.

TASK 1 – QUICK CHECK (Multiple choice)

Elena is a...

- A. final-year undergraduate
- B. final-year undergraduate student
- C. postgraduate

She studies...

- A. medicine

- B. history
- C. international relations

Her flatmates are...

- A. quiet
- B. noisy
- C. helpful

In the past she worked in...

- A. a school
- B. a travel agency
- C. a hospital

Next month she will be...

- A. in a departure lounge
- B. in a lecture hall
- C. at home

TASK 2 – TRUE / FALSE

- 1) Elena always studies in silence. True / False
- 2) She was made redundant at her old job. True / False
- 3) She decided to return to higher education after she lost the job. True / False
- 4) By the end of August, she will have visited seven countries. True / False
- 5) She describes herself as a social butterfly. True / False

TASK 3 – READING COMPREHENSION (short answers)

Write 1–2 short sentences.

- 1) Current Situation: **What has Elena been doing for the past three years AND what helps her focus?**

Answer: _____

2) Past Experience: **Describe her previous job AND why she stopped working there.**

Answer: _____

3) The Transition: **What had she done before she actually lost her job?**

Answer: _____

4) Future Plans: **Where will she be in exactly one month AND what will she have achieved by the end of August?**

Answer: _____

5) Personality: **How has she changed since starting university?**

Answer: _____

TASK 4 – FIND IT IN THE TEXT (grammar & vocab “hunt”)

Write the exact words from the text.

1) Complaint present habit (present + always): _____

2) Gerund as subject: _____

3) Past Perfect Continuous (duration before past event): _____

4) Future Continuous: _____

5) Double comparative (The... the...): _____

6) Past ability (specific occasion: “managed to”): _____

TASK 5 – PREFIX POWER (choose the correct meaning)

- 1) **unemployed** = (has a job / does not have a job / studies at university)
- 2) **insecure** = (very confident / not confident / very rich)
- 3) **miscalculate** = (calculate correctly / calculate wrongly / calculate quickly)
- 4) **reinvent** = (repeat the same / become new/different again / stop learning)

TASK 6 – DO vs MAKE

Write DO or MAKE.

- 1) _____ assignments
- 2) _____ choices
- 3) _____ homework
- 4) _____ a decision
- 5) _____ an effort
- 6) _____ your best

TASK 7 – WORD BANK (fill the gaps)

Word bank: undergraduate / scholarship / redundant / departure lounge / route / qualifications / salary / distracting

- 1) Elena is a final-year _____.
- 2) Her flatmates are noisy and it is very _____.
- 3) At the travel agency, she earned a decent _____.
- 4) The company downsized and she was made _____.
- 5) She found a _____ that covered her tuition fees.
- 6) She checked the _____ before travelling.

7) Next month she will wait in a _____.

8) With the right _____, she can find a secure job.

TASK 8 – 10-SECOND RESET (self-check)

Rate your focus today (1–5): 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5

Rate your effort today (1–5): 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5

One thing I did well: _____

One word I will review: _____