Exploration

1 Read the extract below and then answer questions 1-10.

Around five years ago, I had an interesting job in London, but had been doing it for around ten years and basically had itchy feet. I wanted to do something different. I considered various options: leaving my job and retraining to do something else, trying to get a promotion or perhaps going off travelling as an independent traveller. I decided on the latter, and then enjoyed spending two months on deciding on my itinerary and booking flights. My direction was going to be east to start with; London to Bangkok in Thailand and then around three months exploring that part of the world. I was then going on to Australia, and decided to leave my ticket open for the next nine months so that if I really had been bitten by the travel bug, I could travel on to wherever I fancied! I must admit, after the routine and security of my job in London, I initially felt quite apprehensive about venturing forth into uncharted territory. Would I experience culture shock? How would I feel travelling alone? I needn’t have worried as the trip turned out to be one of the best things I’ve ever done. At times I had to pinch myself to check it really was me enjoying wonderful new cultures, friendships, time to think and just wandering around new places. After Australia, I went on to South America where I just loved the local cultures and the dramatic Andean scenery. Now I am back in London retraining to be a physiotherapist - a decision I made during my travels! This means that I’ll be able to do my new job anywhere in the world - fantastic!

1 Did the writer want to leave her job because it was boring? Explain your answer.
2 What do you think the writer means by ‘retraining’?
3 The writer refers to deciding on the ‘latter’. What does ‘latter’ mean?
4 How did the writer enjoy the two months before her trip?
5 What does the writer mean by leaving her ticket ‘open’ do you think?
6 What were the writer’s feelings at first about venturing into uncharted territory?
7 Why do you think the reader had to ‘pinch herself’ at times during her travels?
8 In what way do you think the sort of travel that the writer enjoyed gives you time to think?
9 What did the writer like about South America?
10 Why do you think the writer is so pleased that her new job can be practised anywhere in the world?

2 Imagine that you are in a similar situation to the writer in Ex. 1. In pairs plan a round the world trip for a year and make notes on the following.

- which countries would you visit and why?
- would you get any work whilst you travel?
- would you travel independently?

3 In small groups compare and discuss your travel plans.
**TEACHER’S NOTES:**

**Aim:** to practise and consolidate key vocabulary; exploring. This warmer is designed to be used in conjunction with unit 6.

**Time:** 40 minutes  
**Materials:** photocopies of the worksheet for each student

1. Students read the extract and then answer the questions. Check answers with the class.

| Answers: | 1 No, the job was interesting but the writer had itchy feet.  
2 Learning the skills and knowledge necessary to do another job.  
3 the last choice listed (in this case - travelling as an independent traveller)  
4 She enjoyed deciding on her itinerary (where she was going to travel) and booking all her flights.  
5 An open ticket is one where a person can decide on the routes/itinerary at a later date - they do not need to decide before they start their travel.  
6 She felt quite apprehensive (anxious and worried) after the security of her London life.  
7 To check that it really was her enjoying these wonderful new travelling experiences and not some figment of her imagination.  
8 Possible answers: Perhaps being away from everyday life and worries, leaves the mind more rested and less busy, and thus able to think about things. Also the inspiration of new places can give people energy to think about things connected with home or new ideas.  
9 local culture and stunning Andean scenery  
10 She has evidently been bitten by the travel bug! She can go and work in another country if she wishes when she qualifies as a physiotherapist! |

2. Place students into pairs and ask them to create a similar scenario to the writer in the extract. They are going to take off work and together they decide on where they will visit and why.

3. Regroup students so two/three pairs are working together. Ask each pair to describe their travel plans and encourage the listening pairs to ask extra questions. Get feedback from the groups.