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## YOUR PASSPORT TO THE WORLD - TEACHING ENGLISH ABROAD

Teaching English in a foreign country can be an incredible challenge... and it can also be one of the most fulfilling experiences you'll ever have. Living abroad, absorbing the culture of another people, and using your native English knowledge to enlighten your students are all wonderful aspects of this rewarding career.

But before you take the plunge and sign up for a job overseas, there are a few things you should consider about yourself and your intended path. Keep in mind... not everyone is cut out for a job like this!

Teaching English in another country is not just a job. It's also a lifestyle choice. Regardless of where you choose to teach (and sometimes, your choices may be limited by what areas are in need at a certain time), it can be a time-consuming and demanding project, and it will definitely test the limits of your sense of adventure. You will be immersed in a whole new culture and expected to follow it as a citizen. Contrary to popular belief, an English teacher in another country is a far cry from being a tourist.

A job teaching English won't be like a vacation. Depending on what type of school you choose to teach at and what country you're planning on working in, your life will be very different from what you have experienced in the past. Even if you've visited your country of choice before, unless you actually lived as a native you won't have a clear feeling of what it will be like to teach English there.

This isn't to say that teaching English is a grueling job that doesn't allow you to enjoy the native culture, however. You'll still have time to yourself to enjoy the sites, and you should certainly do so in order to gain a better understanding of your adopted life as well as your students. The key to enjoying this experience to its full potential is to keep an open mind. This should become your mantra during the entire duration of your job.

Having an open mind will allow you to experience life in your new country first-hand. If you don't expect special treatment, don't allow yourself to get caught up in feeling out of place, and don't waste your time comparing your new life with your old one, chances are good you'll feel at home before you know it.

You might love to travel, and that's fantastic. But love of travel isn't enough to make teaching English abroad the career for you. You must also possess a sense of independence and self-sufficiency that will allow you to adapt easily to the unexpected. Because your life isn't going to be just about teaching English and returning to a hotel room to await your flight home. Chances are good you'll be living in an apartment or rented home in your new country for at least a year, and you'll be doing everything from grocery shopping to taking public transit. You will become, for all intents and purposes, a working citizen of a place that could be vastly different from what you're used to.

Still sound like fun? Congratulations! You're one of a special group of people for whom teaching English abroad may just be the perfect career.

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