VOLUNTEERING

"If our hopes of building a better and safer world are to become more than wishful thinking, we will need the engagement of volunteers more than ever."

Kofi Annan (1938 – 2018), former Secretary-General of the United Nations

1. Volunteering Discussion

1. If you could volunteer for a charity or a cause, what would you like to volunteer for?
2. Is it better to donate your money, time or skills to a cause? Why?
3. What motivates people to volunteer their time for free?
4. What are the benefits of volunteering for the volunteer?
5. Do you have any opportunities to volunteer through your work?
6. Where or when are volunteers needed the most?
7. What do volunteers do in your country?
8. Have you, or anyone you know, benefited from volunteers?

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2. Volunteering Vocabulary

- **(to) volunteer** (verb, noun) – *to give your time, labour or skills for free to help a cause or event; someone who volunteers.*
- **the voluntary / third / not-for-profit sector** (noun) – *organisations whose purpose is to benefit society rather than to make a profit.*
- **gap year** (noun) – *a period of time, often before or after university, when people participate in a personal experience such as travelling or volunteering.*
- **worthy cause** (noun) – *a cause that provides a lot of value to society, especially a charitable cause.*
- **to give (something) back to the community** (saying) – *to help or volunteer for a worthy cause as a way of repaying or acknowledging the contribution society has given to the volunteer.*
- **to pay it forward** (saying) – *to respond to a person's kindness by performing an act of kindness to another person.*

Using the vocabulary words above, complete the following sentences (remember to use the correct form of the word, e.g. verb conjugation or plural noun)

1. Every Friday night I volunteer to give food to the homeless people in our city; it's just my little way of **giving something back to the community**.
2. "Thank you so much! That's so kind of you; how can I ever repay you?" "Don't worry! It's no problem whatsoever; just **pay it forward**."
3. Helping victims of landmines is such a **worthy cause**.
4. Janet **volunteers** at the local children's hospital in her free time.
5. During my **gap year** after finishing university, I volunteered to help build a school in Zambia.
6. The government announced that it would abolish taxes for the **third sector**.

Volunteering vocabulary comprehension questions

1. Have you ever volunteered? If not, would you like to?
2. How is the voluntary sector in your country?
3. Do gap years for voluntary work really help or is it just a business?
4. What are some worthy causes you can think of?
5. Should everyone give something back to the community? What are the best ways of doing this?
6. Have you ever paid an act of kindness forward?

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3. Video: Who Benefits From Gap Years?

You are going to watch a TEDx Talk by Charlotte Baker Maher called "Gap year volunteering - Who Gains More?"

Watch the video here: ***https://yourenglishpal.com/blog/esl-conversation-lesson-plan-volunteering/***

While you watch the video, answer the following questions:

Multiple choice

1. How often does the King Alfred School organise trips to Namibia?
   a) once per year *b) twice per year* *c) three times per year*
2. How did the children in Namibia react when the volunteers left?
   a) they were angry ***b) they were upset*** *c) they were glad*
3. What did the Namibian children's diet mainly consist of?
   a) rice *b) meat* ***c) porridge***
4. Even though the volunteers were supposed to be helping, what existed between them and the Namibian children?
   a) animosity *b) suspicion* ***c) inequality***

Sentence completion

5. Helping out in a low-income developing country can be a transformational **experience** for the volunteer.
6. It is an imperialistic view to think volunteers are **doing good** by imparting their ideal lifestyle on others.
7. Westerners cause much of the problems faced in the developing world due to their excessive **consumerism** and causing of **climate change**.
8. 80% of international volunteers are performing **manual tasks** that locals could do themselves.

Short answer

9. What is the number one reason for volunteering abroad? **Professional development**
10. How long do volunteers prefer their trips to last? **Two to three weeks**
11. Volunteers are unqualified to do what? **Teach**
12. What are the students at King Alfred's raising money for? **A dining hall**

4. Volunteering Conversation Questions

1. Do you think volunteering would look good on your resume/CV?
2. Does volunteering deny paid jobs to local people? Why or why not?
3. Do some organisations take advantage of people who want to volunteer? If so, how?
4. Is it acceptable that some charities charge people to volunteer? Why or why not?
5. Should volunteers receive money for their work? Why or why not?
6. Could it be possible to have a career as a volunteer? Why or why not?
7. Should everyone volunteer at least once in their life? Why or why not?
8. Why do we need to rely on volunteers? Shouldn't this be the government's job?

5. Volunteering Writing Task

Write about your opinion of volunteering. Try to use some of the vocabulary you learned earlier in this lesson. In your answer, you could include some of the following topics:

- Your volunteering experiences or causes you would like to volunteer for.
- The benefits of volunteering.
- Any negative effects of volunteering.

Alternative exam practice question:

Some people say that volunteering helps the volunteer more than the people they are trying to help. Do you agree or disagree with this?

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6. Volunteering Answers

2. Vocabulary

1. giving something back to the community
2. pay it forward
3. worthy cause
4. volunteers
5. gap year
6. voluntary sector

3. Video

Intermediate

1. c
2. a
3. b
4. a
5. c
6. c

Advanced

1. One week
2. Excess consumerism, climate change
3. 80%
4. Professional development
5. Two to three weeks
6. A

d
i
n
i
n
g

h
a

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