

B2–C1 Worksheet: Holiday Expectations vs Reality

Article

For months, people look forward to a holiday as if it will fix everything. They map out an itinerary, binge travel videos and picture a break that will live up to the hype. Then the day arrives: you set off before dawn, queue for security and land already jet-lagged. By the time you check in, the room is smaller than the photos, and the view is of a car park. It is not a disaster, but it is not the dream either.

The gap between expectation and reality often comes from planning too tightly. Travellers run into delayed trains, closed museums and sudden downpours, and a meticulous schedule can unravel in minutes. Some wind up arguing over restaurants because everyone is hungry and no one is on the same page. Others feel let down by an overrated attraction that looked cinematic online. Yet the best trips usually involve compromise: you allocate time for one big plan, then leave space for wandering.

What helps is to make the most of what is in front of you. If the beach day is rained off, you call it a day early, find a quiet café and sleep on it rather than forcing fun. A break is not always glamorous, but it can still be restorative if you stop chasing perfection. In the end, the most memorable moments tend to be spontaneous: a chat with a stranger, a street band, a meal you did not expect. Holidays rarely match the fantasy, but they can still feel worth it.

True/False

Decide if each statement is True (T) or False (F).

1. The article suggests many people expect holidays to solve their problems.
2. The writer says travellers usually arrive rested and relaxed.
3. The hotel room in the article is described as bigger than expected.
4. The article argues that strict plans can collapse when delays or closures happen.
5. The writer implies online content can make attractions seem better than they are.
6. The article recommends filling every hour to avoid wasting time.
7. The writer suggests taking a break early can be better than forcing enjoyment.
8. The article says the best moments are often unexpected.

Phrase Match

Match the phrases (1-10) to the correct definitions (A-J).

Phrases (1-10)	Definitions (A-J)
1. look forward to	A. sharing the same understanding
2. live up to the hype	B. disappoint someone
3. set off	C. delay a decision until the next day
4. check in	D. start a journey
5. run into	E. use a situation as well as possible
6. wind up	F. arrive and register at a hotel or airport
7. on the same page	G. end up in a particular situation
8. let down	H. experience an unexpected problem
9. make the most of	I. feel excited about something that will happen
10. sleep on it	J. be as good as people said or expected

Synonym Match

Match the words (1-10) to the correct synonyms (A-J).

Words (1-10)	Synonyms (A-J)
1. itinerary	A. fall apart
2. jet-lagged	B. overpraised
3. meticulous	C. assign
4. unravel	D. luxurious
5. allocate	E. unplanned
6. overrated	F. refreshing
7. compromise	G. careful
8. glamorous	H. exhausted
9. restorative	I. middle ground
10. spontaneous	J. schedule

Discussion Questions

Student A

1. What holiday are you looking forward to next, if any?
2. When you set off for a trip, do you prefer early mornings or later starts?
3. Do you normally plan a detailed itinerary or keep it flexible?
4. Have you ever run into travel problems like delays or bad weather? What happened?
5. Do you take lots of photos, or do you try to stay in the moment?
6. What helps you make the most of a holiday when things go wrong?
7. Have you ever been let down by a hotel or attraction?
8. Do you usually sleep on it before booking something expensive?

Student B

1. Why do holidays sometimes fail to live up to the hype, even when the place is beautiful?
2. Should people aim for a glamorous holiday, or a restorative one? Explain.
3. How much planning is useful before it becomes stressful?
4. Does social media increase travel disappointment? Why or why not?
5. How can couples or friends stay on the same page during a trip?
6. Is it better to allocate budget to experiences or to accommodation?
7. When plans unravel, what makes a group wind up arguing rather than adapting?
8. What compromises are reasonable on a shared holiday, and what are not?

Answer Key

True/False: 1=T, 2=F, 3=F, 4=T, 5=T, 6=F, 7=T, 8=T

Phrase Match: 1=I, 2=J, 3=D, 4=F, 5=H, 6=G, 7=A, 8=B, 9=E, 10=C

Synonym Match: 1=J, 2=H, 3=G, 4=A, 5=C, 6=B, 7=I, 8=D, 9=F, 10=E