

**Part A**

I was born in a small town and travelling has been my dream for a long time. When I was sixteen, I flew to London with a friend and it was so exciting! Such an enormous city, all the traffic, millions of people – incredible! We visited the London Eye, the Tower of London, and of course a lot of shops. ☺ We ate burgers in Jamie Oliver's restaurant, and I bought a cookbook for my Mum. The most fascinating experience, however, was seeing how the English language didn't just exist only in my schoolbooks, but that I could actually speak it with people – and they understood me!

**Part B**

When I came back from London, I decided that I wanted to live in an English speaking country for a while. I talked to friends who had been away in the USA and New Zealand, and I learned that I had several options. I could go as an au pair, do a gap year or get a working holiday visa. I love children and have been a babysitter for many years, so in the end I decided on a mix of au pair and working holiday. That way I could earn some money by doing something I was already good at and also be able to try out different jobs while visiting new places in a foreign country. The only question left was: which country?

**Part C**

My parents thought working as an au pair in England or Ireland would be great – it's not so far away, so they could fly over quickly if I needed their support. But I wanted to go to Australia! I wanted to see the sandy beaches, go snorkelling in the Great Barrier Reef, enjoy the sunshine and travel down its East Coast, like many of my friends had already done. ☺ Finally my parents agreed and we found an au pair agency which suggested some families. I skyped with some of them and found a very nice family near Brisbane – just the perfect place!

**Part D**

So last year I flew to Brisbane, where my new family picked me up and took me to their home. Working as an au pair was not as easy as I had imagined. Jill and Gary both worked full-time and I had to look after their three little children, Sarah, aged 6, Grace, aged 4, and baby Tom, aged 2. I worked twelve hours, six days a week. Another difficulty was cooking. I'm vegetarian and Australia is a country of meat eaters! As nice as Jill and Gary were, they didn't feel the need to pay me. So after three weeks I left and started to work and travel. In the end I met friends from my home town and we travelled down the East Coast together. It was a dream and I'll never forget those months down under!