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ENG 336

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The London Experience

(1) London – the city of literary history, the home of William Shakespeare, Geoffrey Chaucer, and Charles Dickens. (2) It's basically an English Major's dream city. (3) I couldn't wait to walk the streets, to eat in the Museum Tavern – the same Tavern that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, George Orwell, and Karl Marx frequented. (4) I was so eager to walk the very same footsteps as so many of my literary heroes, to visit the British Library and see with my own two eyes the hand written version of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. (5) I was going to be awe-struck and feel like I was reliving their lives. (6) I was going to visit Jack the Ripper's murder sites late at night and scare myself half to death. (7) And even later at night, I would go out to pubs and bars and buy booze – legally – for the first time in my life. (8) And, naturally, I was going to meet a beautiful British boy who would sweep me off my feet and smile every time I would swoon at his gorgeous accent. (9) My trip to London was going to be the perfect adventure; I was newly single and ready for a journey of independence.

(10) Walking Abbey Road while listening to “Abbey Road” would be so surreal. (11) It was going to bring me full circle with my mother: I was going to visit all her favorite places in London from her honeymoon all those dozens of years ago. (12) I was going to relive her youth, fangirl over The Beatles for her, bring her the most thoughtful souvenir possible. (13) I was going to make up for all the fighting we used to do because

this trip was going to bring us both so much closer together, even though she was only waiting to hear all about it at home.

(14) Descending into London at night was the perfect introduction to the beautiful city – I saw Big Ben and the Eye and Parliament all lit up, welcoming me. (15) Riding on a bus on the opposite side of the road was new and exciting, keeping me on the edge of my cramped seat, eyes glued to everything out the window. (16) Walking with my professor on the first night over the Millennium Bridge to take in Big Ben and the Eye in person, to get a feel for the city streets, taking my first trip on the Tube, still feels like it was a dream. (17) I felt as though I had stars in my eyes, unable to fathom that I was actually there, in London.

(18) Consequently, I expected the rest of this trip to follow in this pattern of awe and excitement, but it didn't necessarily turn out that way. (19) I found myself fighting exhaustion, struggling to find motivation to walk the streets and take in as much as I could. (20) I felt rushed, like there wasn't enough time to do everything – and there wasn't. (21) It was a whirlwind of events, my professors whisking me from show to show while I tried to get enough sleep and find time to visit the places I wanted to visit, not to mention making time to write notes on the performances I was seeing so that I could write the required papers for the class. (22) Momentary highs dusted my experience; I loved the British Library and 22b Baker Street. (23) I loved walking through Hyde Park, taking in the fresh air and playing with the friendly squirrels. (24) But many things were anti-climactic: Abbey Road disappointed me...it was just an ordinary old crosswalk on a busy street. (25) Harrods was just another crowded, over-priced department store. (26) The Eye wasn't even open to ride and British boys weren't

enamored by my American accent. (27) In fact, they didn't even look twice at me. (28) Maybe I should take that as a compliment, though – maybe they thought I lived there, that I belonged there.

(29) But, despite the many disappointments, would I go back? (30) In a heartbeat. (31) I felt myself believing that I could live there; it was the most beautiful city I'd been to. (32) It was the craziest week of my life so far, but also the most incredible. (33) I learned about myself, I met and fell for a boy (from my own class, no less), and I had the opportunity to learn more than I ever thought I could about a city in one week. (34) It was just the adventure I needed, even if it didn't quite go the way I'd envisioned it to – I wouldn't have wanted it to turn out any other way.

- 1) Use a variety of sentence lengths and structures, being sure to include some complex sentences.
Sentences 19-21 were longer sentences followed by a shorter set of sentences. I wanted the flow of 19-21 to match the content in that they were long, whirl-winded sentences interrupted by the few positive aspects of the trip that made a lasting impact.
- 2) Use both active and passive voice.
Almost the entire third paragraph, sentences 14-16, is in passive voice. I switched up the voice because, up until this point in the essay, I had written in the active voice, making many I statements. I wanted to shift the focus from myself to London.
- 3) Vary sentence syntax by beginning with a construction other than the main clause. Consider prepositional phrases, expletives, clefts, participial phrases, absolute constructions
Sentence 7 does not begin with the main clause. I started it with a dependent clause because I wanted to emphasize that the event occurred later than the first.
Sentence 27 starts with a prepositional phrase to draw emphasis to the main clause that follows.
- 4) Maintain and/or shift verb tenses as appropriate.
I strategically change verb tenses several times throughout the essay. In sentence 2, I use present tense when I start the sentence with "it's" but then I switch in sentence 3 to simple past tense of "I couldn't" because of the content of each sentence. Later, in sentence 4 I switch from simple past tense in sentence 3 to past progressive. I do this because the things I talk about are things I had planned to do and wanted to do but that I did not necessarily get to do.
- 5) Use interesting adverbs and adjectives (or adverbial and adjectival phrases) in the most appropriate places within sentences.
Sentences 7 and 8 use adverbs in interesting locations. In sentence 7 it is set off by dashes to draw the reader's attention to it. It really is the main focus of the sentence. And in sentence 8, I set the adverb off with commas for similar reasons to sentence 7. It adds a lighter tone to the essay.
- 6) Use repetition effectively.
Sentences 22 and 23 effectively repeat the phrase "I loved" to highlight the few aspects of the trip that really stood out to me. They also contrast with the many more that I did not love so much.
I also use repetition several times within the first two paragraphs to draw parallels between all the activities I was excited to do and planned to do.

7) Use conjunctive adverbs effectively.

In sentence 24, I use the word “but” as a conjunctive adverb. I could have used the word “however” but it didn’t fit with the tone of my essay. I wanted a more casual voice.

I also start sentence 18 with “consequently” to transition from the previous paragraph.