NEWS LESSON

When Your Holiday Starts to Feel Like a Job



BEFORE YOU READ

1 Warm up

Talk about these questions with a partner.

1. Would you enjoy a holiday with nothing booked?
2. What makes doing very little feel different on holiday?
3. Would you rather discover one place slowly or see several quickly?

2 Key words

These words are in the article. Write the letter of the meaning (A to H) in each box.

1	**itinerary**	☐	A	the reason why someone wants to do something
2	**fortnight**	☐	B	something you accept as true without proof
3	**aimless**	☐	C	a plan of the places you will visit on a trip
4	**attentively**	☐	D	the amount of money that is spent
5	**expenditure**	☐	E	without any clear purpose or direction
6	**genuine**	☐	F	a period of two weeks
7	**assumption**	☐	G	real, not pretended
8	**motivation**	☐	H	in a way that shows you are listening or looking carefully

3 Read

Read the article and underline the key words from task 2. The paragraphs are numbered.

A July 2025 Marist Poll found that 45% of Americans planning a summer holiday wanted rest and relaxation. It did not measure slow travel, and some travellers prefer a full itinerary.

1 The modern holiday is often organised around a fear of missing out. A break can turn into a rush between bookings, directions and photographs. Someone can come home with plenty to show and little sense of having rested.

2 An alternative is to travel more slowly: choosing fewer destinations, leaving unstructured time and allowing a place to become familiar rather than treating it as a collection of attractions. The appeal is easy to understand. A long lunch, an aimless walk or a morning spent reading beside the sea may provide a sense of freedom that a tightly managed itinerary cannot.

3 A July 2025 Marist Poll offers useful context. Among Americans planning a summer holiday, 45% identified rest and relaxation as their principal aim, while others prioritised visiting loved ones, adventure or cultural experiences. The survey did not directly measure slow travel, nor should its US results be presented as a global trend. It does, however, show that recovery is a major motivation for taking time away.

4 There is a subtle difference between travelling slowly and simply staying still. A visitor can explore a place attentively without rushing, while another may shut themselves away indoors for a fortnight and see very little. Slow travel can sometimes encourage more sustained engagement with local life, particularly when visitors move beyond the most photographed landmarks. Yet there is a danger in assuming that lingering somewhere automatically makes tourism more responsible. Transport choices, accommodation, visitor numbers and the needs of residents also matter.

5 The freedom to travel slowly is unequally distributed. People with limited annual leave or costly long-distance journeys may understandably prefer ambitious itineraries. For someone visiting a country once in a lifetime, seeing several remarkable places is not necessarily a sign of superficial travel. Perhaps the most liberating decision is to leave some hours unclaimed. A recommendation from a local resident or an unexpected change in weather can then become part of the experience.

6 The economics of leisure also influence how holidays are planned. International travel can require substantial expenditure and limited annual leave, making an ambitious itinerary a rational choice for somebody who may never return to the destination. Remaining in one area might reduce internal transport and encourage spending at local businesses, but a longer trip is not automatically cheaper or environmentally responsible.

7 Those outcomes depend on travel distances, accommodation and the wider tourism model. Slow travel is therefore most useful as a challenge to the assumption that value is proportional to the number of attractions completed. It invites travellers to consider what they genuinely want from a journey, whether that means time with family, a particular cultural experience or simple recovery from everyday pressures.

8 Perhaps the real problem is the expectation that holidays must be optimised. Restful and adventurous travel can both be rewarding when they reflect genuine preferences rather than pressure to tick off experiences. The most successful trip may be the one that leaves a person feeling they actually spent time somewhere, rather than merely passed through it.

Sources: Marist Poll. Picture: AI illustration.

4 True, false or not given

Circle **T** (true), **F** (false) or **NG** (the article does not say).

1. The poll's result supports the idea that many holidaymakers want to recover, but it cannot show that slow travel is growing. (T) (F) (NG)
2. The writer believes that seeing many places in a short time is always a sign of superficial travel. (T) (F) (NG)
3. Most of the Americans in the survey took their summer holidays abroad. (T) (F) (NG)
4. The writer accepts that a traveller who will visit a country only once may sensibly choose a busy schedule. (T) (F) (NG)
5. The writer treats travelling slowly and staying still as the same thing. (T) (F) (NG)

5 Vocabulary

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed.

negligible	**optimised**	**ostentatious**	**principal**	**rational**	**superficial**	**sustained**	**unclaimed**

1. Critics call the tour _____ because visitors spend ten minutes at each site and never speak to a local.
2. Given that she will probably never return, spending her whole fortnight in the capital is a perfectly _____ choice.
3. Local life only becomes visible through _____ engagement over weeks, not a single afternoon.
4. Rest was by far the _____ reason for the trip; every other motive came a long way behind.
5. Her diary was full, apart from one Sunday afternoon that she kept deliberately _____ .
6. Every minute of the two-day city break had been so tightly _____ that there was no room for a wrong turning.

6 Word forms

Use the word in brackets to make a word that fits the gap.

1. The _____ of tourists in the old town has left residents struggling to rent flats. (CONCENTRATE)
2. A rushed itinerary leaves only _____ memories of the places you saw. (FRAGMENT)
3. Many people consider an empty day wasteful, even _____ , in a culture that prizes busyness. (PRODUCE)
4. Local residents resented the _____ of visitors who treated their village like a film set. (THOUGHT)
5. It would be _____ to claim that one weekend can cure years of exhaustion. (REAL)

7 Language focus: phrasal verbs

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. A small word can change the meaning completely: turn out and turn up are different. Read the whole sentence before you choose.

away	down	in	off	out	through	up

1. How the day would pan _____ was anyone's guess.
2. Rather than book ahead, she preferred to turn _____ and see what was available.
3. It is tempting to cram too much _____ , but a trip loses its charm when every hour is booked.
4. The rain meant we had to call the whole outing _____ .
5. She finally managed to get _____ from email by leaving her phone at home.

SPEAK

8 Talk about it

Discuss in pairs or small groups. Give reasons for your answers.

1. Can an uneventful holiday still give you a good story?
2. What would you leave out of a trip to enjoy it more?
3. Would you need to travel at all to take the break you wanted?

9 Role-play: planning a week away

Work in pairs. Read your card, then have the conversation. Swap roles and do it again.

Student A · the planner

You want to see as much as possible on a week away. You've found six places and a list of tickets to book. Explain why it matters to you, and try to agree on a plan.

Student B · the slow traveller

You want a quiet holiday in one place, with nothing booked. Explain what you'd enjoy and why a busy week would spoil it for you.

Useful phrases

I'd love to see as much as possible.

I'm worried we'll be too tired to enjoy it.

What if we spend a few days in one place?

That's a fair point, but we've only got a week.

Could we plan two busy days and leave the rest free?

I'm happy to compromise if we both get something we want.

Afterwards, tell the class: what plan did you agree, and who gave way more?

ANSWER KEY

2 Key words

1 C · 2 F · 3 E · 4 H · 5 D · 6 G · 7 B · 8 A

4 True, false or not given

1 T · 2 F · 3 NG · 4 T · 5 F

5 Vocabulary

1 superficial · 2 rational · 3 sustained · 4 principal · 5 unclaimed · 6 optimised

6 Word forms

1 concentration · 2 fragmentary · 3 unproductive · 4 thoughtlessness · 5 unrealistic

7 Language focus

1 out · 2 up · 3 in · 4 off · 5 away

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