

Voluntary work

1 Talk about the statistics with your partner. Answer the questions.

- 1 Why do you think people volunteer?
- 2 What kind of voluntary work do people do?
- 3 Is voluntary work popular in your country? Why/Why not?

2a Read about the students' voluntary experiences. Why do these teenagers choose the voluntary work that they do?

62.8 million Americans volunteered in 2015.

They volunteered **7.9 billion** hours of work.

They volunteered a value of **\$184 billion**.

In the USA, 27% of volunteers have more chance of getting a job than non-volunteers.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

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Many students do voluntary work these days to help others, to improve their skills and gain a better understanding of the world, and to find out what kind of job they would like to do in the future. In the USA, for example, about 50.3% of teenage boys and 56.2% of teenage girls regularly volunteer. We interviewed three teens around the world to find out about their volunteering experiences.



Jiao

I'm from Changsha, a city of seven million people in central China. I want to be a teacher when I'm older, so last summer I volunteered to spend two weeks in a rural village in my province helping children at a primary school read and write. In my country, there are still about 54 million illiterate people, especially in rural areas, so this was a wonderful opportunity to help make a difference. I stayed in the local schoolhouse and taught the children literacy skills four mornings a week. In my free time I enjoyed exploring the local markets and visiting the children's families. Life in the countryside is so different from the city and it was a challenge at times, but it was an amazing experience and I made some great friends.

Eduardo

Bahía Magdalena is a region in Mexico. It's on the Pacific coast and it's very beautiful. A lot of sea turtles live there but the number of turtles on this part of the coast is really low, compared with 100 years ago. The turtles are legally protected but they need our help. I volunteered for a week with an organisation that helps protect turtles. July and February is when turtles lay their eggs in their nesting sites. Humans and other animals can damage the eggs, so we collected the eggs and protected them until they were ready to hatch. Then, we returned the eggs to their nests and helped the tiny baby turtles get into the sea. I loved working with these beautiful creatures. Now I definitely want to have a career in conservation in the future.



Taki



My mum told me about the Volunteer Project which helps disadvantaged children here in Cape Town, South Africa. So for the first month of my summer holidays I did some voluntary work for the charity and assisted in constructing and repairing school buildings and playgrounds for a local community. Our team helped create a more comfortable environment for these children and, although hard work, it was a very rewarding and enriching experience. Before this opportunity I didn't know what I wanted to do in the future, but now I'm certain I want to work outdoors and get my hands dirty helping others.

2b Read the texts again. Write *Jiao, Eduardo* or *Taki*.

- 1 Who found their voluntary experience difficult at times?
.....
- 2 Who did physical work for their volunteering?
.....
- 3 Who slept in local accommodation on their experience?
.....
- 4 Who helped animals on their experience?
.....
- 5 Who didn't know what to do for their career before?
.....
- 6 Who spent the shortest amount of time doing voluntary work?
.....

2c Read the texts again. Are these sentences True (T) or False (F)?

- 1 More than half of American teenagers frequently do voluntary work. T / F
- 2 Everyone in Jiao's province of China is unable to read and write. T / F
- 3 Jiao volunteers to help out at a school in her city. T / F
- 4 Eduardo's voluntary experience confirms what he wants to do when he's older. T / F
- 5 The organisation that Eduardo worked for protects turtles' nesting sites. T / F
- 6 Taki's experience allows him to give something back to his local community. T / F

Gateway to culture

3a Work with a partner and discuss the questions.

- 1 Would you like to do voluntary work? What sort of experience would you like to have? Perhaps you already have voluntary experience. If so, what did you do?
- 2 What are the benefits of voluntary work? How important do you think it is to have this kind of experience as a teenager?

PROJECT

3b Work in pairs. You are going to work on a presentation about a volunteer project for young people in your country. Read the points and prepare your project research.

- 1 Do some research on the Internet and find a project that young people can volunteer for in your country. Find out:
 - where the project is
 - what the work involves
 - who it helps
 - what the benefits are for the person volunteering
 - any other information that you think is valuable.
- 2 Decide who will talk about each of the points above. Add in any additional information to make your presentation more interesting.

3c With your partner, use your notes to give a presentation to the rest of the class on your volunteer project. Your presentation should be around two minutes long. Then pair up with others to discuss your projects and choose which experience is best suited to you.