

What is gap year and why we need it

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Taking a GAP year (also known as year abroad, year out, year off, deferred year, bridging year, time off and time out) refers to taking a year out of studying to do something else. Many people take a gap year before starting college or university, but it can be taken at any time. [1] History | This article's tone or style may not be appropriate for Wikipedia. Specific concerns may be found on the talk page. See Wikipedia's guide to writing better articles for suggestions. (December 2008)| [edit] 1960s: Where it all began

The origination of the 'Gap Year' concept came in the decade following the Second World War when youth travel and cultural exchange was discussed amongst Governments as a useful tool to create more of a global understanding to prevent future global wars. However, the first 'Gap Years' actually started in the UK in the 1960s when the baby-boomer generation in the midst of the 'Swinging sixties' headed off to India on the infamous Hippie trails, inventing the 'independent travel market'.

And in 1967 Nicholas Maclean-Bristol set up Project Trust, an Educational Trust, and sent his first three students to Addis Ababa, inventing the Gap Year Volunteer Placements market. These have been the two key elements to the gap year market ever since - 'independent travel' and 'volunteer placements' [also known more recently as 'Voluntourism']. Work Travel (or 'Work ; Travel') appeared as a third key element with the introduction of student work visas (or 'Working holiday visas') in the 1980s. [edit] 1970s: the pioneers and the growth

The demand for what was essentially new 'Independent Travel' continued through into the 1970s and resulted in the pioneers of the independent <https://assignbuster.com/what-is-gap-year-and-why-we-need-it/>

travel market establishing businesses to satisfy this demand. Australian Graham 'Screw' Turner based in London in 1973 loaded a double decker bus with the first paying customers and drove them to Kathmandu. They arrived 3 weeks late. Top Deck Travel, the company he founded, still exists today. In the same year a young Brit by the name of Tony Wheeler, headed off on an overland trip across Asia.

His need for basic travel information inspired the book 'Across Asia on the Cheap' and was the first title under his Lonely Planet brand, which became the world's largest travel guide publisher. With a tour company and self help travel advice, the independent travel market was born. In 1979, another Australian Dick Porter, founded STA Travel to bring in the final piece of the puzzle. A high street travel agent for students and 'youth' (those under 26), with which he was able to develop global youth travel as he opened student travel agents around the world.

Initially 'Student Travel Australia' it rebranded to the 'Student Travel Association'. Nowadays it is simply 'STA Travel'. Whilst the first uses of the actual term 'gap year' are hard to find, it was certainly helped along with the launch in 1973 of GAP Activity Projects, now known as Latitude Global Volunteering, a UK organisation facilitating volunteer placements for the 'Gap Year' in between school and university. Continuing on from where Nicholas Maclean-Bristol had forged the way 10 years earlier with Project Trust, GAP Activity Projects brought the gap year to the schools.

A year later in 1978, The Prince of Wales with Colonel John Blashford-Snell formed the basis of what we know today as Raleigh International, launching Operation Drake, the first ever Gap Year Expedition - a round the world

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voyage following Sir Francis Drake's epic route. In 1984 Operation Raleigh was formed, renamed Raleigh International in 1992, by which time gap years were becoming more popular as a pre-university option to the wealthy few in private schools around the UK. [edit] 1980s: steady growth

In the UK in the 1980s the baby boomers were settling into family life with their young children and so travelling less and the next generation were influenced by the obsession for money, careers and wealth generation. The housing market crash meant less funds available for parents to fund youth travel. Steady UK and global growth continued as STA Travel opened up branches around the world. Other businesses followed suit (Usit Campus / Usit World), round the world tickets were developed for this new breed of young gap year traveller and the scene was set for the explosion of the 1990s. [edit] 1990s: the boom A combination of the baby boomer's children reaching 18 (whose parents encouraged world travel as they did in their youth), the UK coming out of recession and new, exciting, colourful media channels to bring gap year products to market resulted in an explosion of activity in the UK as Gap Year Travel and Gap Year Volunteering took off pre, during and post University. Demand grew, prices for air travel fell and the roots of it becoming a 'rite of passage' were set. In Australia the first serious waves of young Australians heading to live and work in the UK started to appear. [edit] 2000-present: online developments, global growth, natural aging July 2005 Mintel Gap Year Reports show a market valued UK outbound at ? 2.2bn and globally at ? 5bn. The fastest growing travel sector of the Millennium, predictions are that the global gap year market will grow to around ? 11bn by 2010. The market demographic is split into those aged 18-

24 (pre, during and post university), 25-35 ('careergap', also known as 'Career Break' and 'Career Sabbatical') and 55-65 (pre and post retirement gappers).

Very much an option for all in transition between life stages, the effect on the entry into higher level Education, the changing travel markets and staff retention in businesses around the world is staggering. Gap Year growth is accelerating across all age groups in the UK, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. The US is expected to witness a boom in the coming years as the small percentage of those who have passports starts to rise. [edit] Activities Some students spend the time traveling, others spend the time working, and many combine these into an international working holiday.

A popular option for gap year students, also known as "gappers", is international volunteering. In the wake of the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake, a great number of the volunteers who helped in South Asia were on a gap year. [2] Many gap year students also earn money while overseas by working cash in hand, often in the hospitality industry. Another growing trend for gappers is to enroll in global education programs that combine language study, homestays, cultural immersion, community service, and independent study.

Such experiential opportunities exist in countries from India to China and Morocco to Brazil. [edit] Gap years by country [edit] Australia Australia currently has 19 reciprocal working holiday programs with countries, which include: Belgium, Canada, China, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Taiwan, and the United Kingdom. Typically, restrictions for <https://assignbuster.com/what-is-gap-year-and-why-we-need-it/>

the working holiday visas include: being 18-30 yrs, proof of access to funds, and holding a valid passport.

Work restrictions also apply to ensure that the purpose of the holiday is not to further an individual's career. The Australian Defence Force also runs a Gap Year program, where enlistees are only required to serve for up to a year. [3] The UK and Canada remain two of the most popular destinations for Australians to visit every year, with 35, 061 UK and 6, 517 Canadian working holiday visas issued in 2003/4. [edit] Denmark In the recent years the government have tried to limit the number of students who take a gap year.

The need to get students sooner into the work space and a wish to preserve the unique Danish culture have meant the students are punished if they complete their education too slowly by traveling abroad or working full time for a period, limiting the possibility of taking a gap year. [4] In 2006, it was announced that fewer students than before had taken a gap year. [5] In April 2009, the government proposed a new law which gives a bonus to students who refrain from a gap year. [6] [edit] Israel In Israel, gap-years are mostly used for travel.

A 3-year army service is compulsory - after which it is customary to travel. For the majority of Israelis, the first few months after dismissal are spent working and saving money for the trip. In order to spend as little time as possible working (rather than traveling) and as much time as possible on vacation, Israelis prefer traveling to the Far East, India or Indo-China due to the low cost of living there. Some who are drafted late use the time between high-school graduation and army service to travel.

Working holidays are also common practice, especially to Western countries such as the USA, Canada and Australia. Former combative infantrymen sometimes find jobs as weapons instructors or security personnel in various places around the globe, which can also be considered a sort of working holiday. In Jewish summer camps in the diaspora (particularly in the USA and UK), there is a tendency to hire Israeli staff in hope that through the interaction with them the camper's connection with Israel would strengthen. This is often arranged via the Jewish Agency.

Additionally, many Jewish teens in America take a gap year to Israel to study in Yeshiva or Midrasha (seminary) to learn more about their Jewish roots. Some popular choices for boys are Reishit Yerushalim, Sha'alvim, and Yeshivat Har Etzion while some popular choices for the girls are Michlelet Mivasseret yirushalayim, Midreshet HaRova, and Midreshet Lindenbaum (Brovenders). [edit] Japan Due to the employment practice known as Simultaneous Recruiting of New Graduates, a practice of a gap year is extremely uncommon in Japan.

Students in Japan have to find a job before graduation. Otherwise, they will have enormous hardship finding a job. [edit] Netherlands The most common form of gap year is work-holiday travel to another country, preferentially on another continent if the person taking it can afford the tickets. Australia and other English-speaking countries are among the most popular due to the high standard of Dutch high school courses in English, but culture/language immersion programmes in Spanish-speaking countries are increasingly popular, and are sometimes offered on all-in basis.

Most will leave the Netherlands for only half the year, spending the other six months working to finance the trip. [original research?] The Growth in popularity of the gap year concept in the Netherlands is evident by the formation of the first Dutch registered gap year company Xtreme Gap Year. The liberal arts college Academia Vitae offers a preacademic gap year in Deventer for young students to study liberal arts. This is not a common form of the gap year in the Netherlands. The Dutch gap year is also referred to as a tussenjaar. [edit] United Kingdom British citizens are able to take advantage of the European Union as well as the reciprocal arrangements that exist and live and work in an overseas country for an extended period of time. Australia, New Zealand and Canada remain popular destinations due to the cultural similarities and Commonwealth ties due to the British Empire. Prince Harry popularised Africa as a Gap Year destination when he volunteered in South Africa in 2004. Other opportunities available include working in ski resorts in Canada, camp roles in America and working in the Australian Outback. There are many gap year providers in the U. K. that provide opportunities for people of all ages. Many providers are listed on gap year directory sites. Popular gap year projects include Project Trust based on the Isle of Coll, Projects Abroad, Shumba Experience based in Brighton, Think Pacific based in Leeds, Latitude based in Reading, and Quest Overseas based in Hove. [edit] United States of America In the United States, the practice of taking a " gap year" or " year off" before entering college remains relatively rare.

This can be partially traced to the considerably higher cost of post-secondary education in the U. S. Many American students cannot afford to take a year

off. Another reason is that once American students finish high school, they will normally cease to be covered under their parents' health insurance unless they immediately continue with full time education. | This article needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding reliable references. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. (June 2010)| Taking a gap year would cause their health coverage to lapse.

In 2008, more than 65.6% of all undergraduate students relied on loans to finance their education, with an average debt of roughly US\$23,186 (excluding PLUS Loans but including Stafford, Perkins, state, college and private loans). Among graduate students in 2008, 56.4% relied on loans, with an average debt totaling roughly US\$40,297. [7] Some organizations have offered young Americans structured gap year programs. These include Dynamy, based in Worcester, Massachusetts. Another American gap year option is City Year, with locations in urban centers around the U. S..

Other companies also offer cultural immersion and community service travel programs around the world, including semester programs, residential community living and education in specific areas. Some companies offer structured service learning gap year programs which combine community service and cross-cultural learning experiences. Advantages and Disadvantages of Taking the Gap Year Edit Article | Comments: 0 | Views: 15,912 | Share Syndicate this Article Copy to clipboard If you have just graduated from high school or college you may be considering taking a gap year.

Gap year means taking a time off to go and have another experience in life before getting back to studies. The gap year practice is very popular in <https://assignbuster.com/what-is-gap-year-and-why-we-need-it/>

Europe and other countries where students are persuaded to break off from studies for sometime. Students can travel during their gap year. They try to search for and do something different before moving to the next level in their academic career. So, if you are graduating sooner, you may be looking for possible things you could do during your gap year. Taking the gap year will provide you with enough time to think about the next step in your career.

Either you want to become engineer or an IT expert, the gap year will be beneficial to you in many ways. You will think with a cooler mind especially when there is no stress at all. For this reason, gap year is positively regarded in many countries around the world. However, you should think well before taking the gap year. It therefore depends whether the gap year would be a good thing for you or not. One of the first advantages of taking the gap year, is, as said before, it offers time to think carefully about your career.

Besides, if you are not performing too well at school or at college, taking the gap year could be valuable as it might save you money. Gap year not only means travelling or going for vacations. It also consists of discovering different aspects of life. So, you may take the gap year to work and save some money. By doing this, you could be able to finance your education during the next step of your career. Another plus point of taking the gap year is that you might be able to travel to meet different people and know diverse cultures. This will help you improve as a person and as well ensure your personal development.

Moreover, taking the gap year could also be a drawback. Many people who have taken the gap year may find themselves struggling to get back to their

career afterwards. This is probably the most common disadvantage of taking the gap year. Assume you have started to work during your gap year. If you find yourself getting enough income, education might be something difficult to get back to. Furthermore, when taking the gap year, you may lose contact with important people such as your teachers. Teachers are vital in a student's life as they continuously push him towards getting the best education and also keep progressing in his academic career.

This shows that taking the gap year can be advantageous as well as disadvantageous. It is therefore imperative to think carefully before deciding to take the gap year. If you are unsure whether you have to take the gap year or not, ask for help. You may contact your teachers or take advice from your parents. Read more: [http://www. articlesbase. com/vacation-rentals-articles/advantages-and-disadvantages-of-taking-the-gap-year-567292.](http://www.articlesbase.com/vacation-rentals-articles/advantages-and-disadvantages-of-taking-the-gap-year-567292.html#ixzz0sLWeFNtZ)

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For those who are considering taking a gap year, it is wise to think just what the pros and cons of that decision may be. These are personal of course, but in general the following could be seen as clear advantages of taking a gap year before going on to university: - It is a chance for a break and to do something different after education has been essentially all that you've known all your life - Many people find that it helps with their self confidence, assertiveness and also helps develop personal skills, depending what they do with their time It can help you focus and work out just what you want to do at university if you apply during the gap year, where you will also know your grades with certainty - You could engage in fundraising to get money to help

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with HE, or work part time or full time during the gap year period - Some employers find it attractive when a person takes a gap year and does something productive with their time during that period - Once you enter the world of work and responsibility it can be hard to have the chance to take time out of your career again until retirement| Assessing the benefits of a gap year * Summary * Introduction Rising gap year participation * The development of soft skills * Benefits to employers * Accreditation * Reference Summary Gap year participation has continued to increase amongst young people before, during and immediately after university. In this article, Dr Andrew Jones from Birkbeck, University of London discusses the implications of his research into the gap year phenomenon. Drawing on a study carried out for the Department of Education and Skills (DfES) and current research into overseas volunteering projects, he assesses the benefits that well-planned and structured gap years can have for graduate skills and employability.

Key findings include: * gap year participation has increased year on year since the early 1990s amongst those taking undergraduate and postgraduates degrees; * initial evidence suggests this is likely to continue despite the advent of top-up fees; * gap years cover a wide range of activities and certain activities are far more beneficial to long-term education and employment success; * structured work placements (paid or voluntary) taken during a gap year can have significant benefits in terms of developing participants 'soft skills': interpersonal, organisational and communications skills; * employers highly value certain kinds of gap year experiences and the skills developed can be a key strength on graduate CVs.

back to top Introduction In recent years there has been a major growth in 'gap year' participation. Conventionally, the idea of the gap year has referred to a break in study taken by (normally) eighteen-year-olds between school and university.

However, the term is now used to refer to a much wider group, both in terms of age and in terms of what the 'break' is from. In the report for DfES [1], after much deliberation, I developed a much broader definition to encapsulate the diversity of people aged 16-25 taking gap 'years': 'a period of time out from education, training or employment of between three and 24 months'. Yet the evidence suggests that the university-related gap year remains one of the most important in numerical terms and the ongoing research into this type of gap year suggests that certain activities can be extremely beneficial in educational and career terms.

This article examines the evidence for rising participation in university-related gap years and assesses the range of benefits that participants gain from gap year experiences, in particular focusing on the advantages of undertaking some kind of structured placement as part of the gap year experience. It also looks at the issues surrounding accreditation of such schemes. back to top Rising gap year participation In 2004, over 30, 000 applicants to the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) deferred entry.

However, this headline figure is likely to represent only a fraction of the number of those who take a gap year between school and university. Initial evidence suggests that up to as many young people again do not apply to UCAS whilst still at school and apply to university during their gap year. In <https://assignbuster.com/what-is-gap-year-and-why-we-need-it/>

addition, it is difficult to quantify the numbers of graduates who take a gap year during or immediately after their degree. Evidence from the gap year industry and travel providers suggests that increasing numbers of graduates are choosing to take a gap year rather than immediate entry into the workplace.

There are also a smaller, but significant number, who take a 'mid-degree' gap year, either by taking a break in study or through more formal segments of their degree programmes. Those taking a year abroad with modern language degrees, for example, often only have six months of formal study and spend the rest of the time engaged in activities akin to those taking longer gap years. My current research indicates that this increase in university-related gap years is likely to continue, despite the advent of top-up fees.

In contrast to the stereotypes often portrayed in the wider media, the existing evidence strongly suggests that gap years are far from the preserve of upper-middle-class individuals from private schools. There is growing participation amongst young people from all backgrounds and the research suggests that most of those undertake paid work to meet most of the cost of taking a gap year. back to top The development of soft skills In preparing the review of gap year activity for DfES, little existing research came to light as to exactly what benefits young people gained from undertaking gap years in general.

Whilst most organisations and some universities admissions tutors had expressed anecdotal support for the wide range of benefits they perceived gap year participants as accruing, much centred on generalised statements <https://assignbuster.com/what-is-gap-year-and-why-we-need-it/>

of 'greater maturity' and improved 'life skills'. These benefits were associated more with activities that involved work, whether that was paid or voluntary. The issue of benefits has thus become the focus of the current research. The emerging argument is that certain kinds of gap year activities, undertaken as a significant component of the overall gap year, can greatly enhance a young person's skill base.

However, there are a huge range of potential activities that are undertaken as a part of a gap year. I developed a stylised model for the broad types of activity that were identified - shown in Figure 1. Of course, not all of these activities promote skill development, and some skills tend to be more relevant to future education or employment success than others. For example, many young people do engage in formal training during their gap year with common vocational qualifications including sports instructor (skiing, diving, rock-climbing) and teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) qualifications.

Whilst the acquisition of the specific dedicated skills is beneficial, in the longer term it is the development of so-called 'soft skills' that the research identified as being most likely to be important to future educational and employment success. Figure 1: Options in choosing gap year activities The DfES review identified initial research that suggested paid or volunteering work activities exposed young people to experiences that enhanced a range of soft skills. These are primarily interpersonal, leadership, communication, time management and organisational skills.

In this context, the current research has been following groups of young people through their gap years in a 'before, during and after' study of how

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the various experiences they undertake are beneficial. These cohorts of 'gappers' are all participating in structured volunteering projects overseas with a major gap year provider organisation as a significant component of their gap year. However, the study is also assessing the impact of other component activities - backpacking and independent travel as well as low-skill work in the UK - that also form the rest of their gap year.

The evidence suggests that these volunteering placements are promoting the development of 'soft skills' amongst the pre-university 'gappers'. Almost all of the 200 or so I have interviewed (twice, at this stage) emphasise how the voluntary work experience has improved their confidence and sense of maturity. When explored in depth this has arisen from the day-to-day exposure to new and often difficult social and workplace environments that these young people have not previously experienced.

For example, many related accounts of having to learn to 'get on with people' and experiencing 'having a boss' for the first time. Two groups I have followed in depth worked voluntarily as teaching assistants in Tanzania and Vietnam. Quite quickly after arriving in their placements, these young people were dealing with classes of teenagers and having to stand up and speak (and often teach). Many reported feeling much more able and comfortable speaking to new people, to large groups and dealing with difficult social situations.

They also had to help plan and organise lessons on a day-to-day basis as well as work unsocial hours when tired and discipline unruly children. Overall, the findings of the current project reinforce the initial conclusions of the DfES review: that structured (or at least pre-organised) paid or voluntary

work placements offer the participants the opportunity to substantially develop a range of soft skills. This does not mean that gappers spend their whole gap year in such schemes, but simply that as a component of a gap year these kinds of activities are extremely valuable. back to top Benefits to employers

The current research has also found that many graduate employers have a good understanding of the benefits that a 'value-adding' gap year offers. I interviewed several human resources staff who emphasised the advantages that a candidate has if their gap year has built these soft skills. In a graduate recruitment market where more and more applicants have degrees (and an increasing proportion have second class ones), structured gap year work placements mark out potential recruits who are likely to have the wide range of soft skills that employers want but which they do not feel universities teach adequately.

Employers, thus, are able to recruit young people who have experience of workplace environments, of dealing with people in a working environment and who have communication and organisational skills to deal with professional occupations. Many graduate-level jobs require these skills in equal measure with academic ability but formal qualifications do not give employers much indication of an applicant's ability in these areas.

Employers also benefit from new recruits who, to quote one HR director, have 'been out of their comfort zones' and are thus more likely to have the flexibility and improvisation skills to deal with the demands of the graduate workplace. back to top Accreditation A final emerging issue in the gap year sector is that of accreditation. The research I have carried out into the gap <https://assignbuster.com/what-is-gap-year-and-why-we-need-it/>

year providing sector found a large number of small organisations offering a wide variety of placements. This makes any general form of gap year accreditation scheme difficult for participants.

The DfES review recommended that accreditation schemes should be developed, but around specific programmes as it was not appropriate at the gap year sector-wide scale. Subsequently, there is growing evidence of moves by some of the larger providers to align their structured volunteering schemes, both in the UK and overseas, with schemes such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award. In that sense, the gap year sector itself is beginning to promote accreditation that will enable the easier identification of the kinds of structured placements that are most beneficial in terms of enhancing soft skills.

Disadvantages of a gap year? I didn't have a gap year myself, but a couple of my friends who did said it got really lonely as most of the people they knew had left. How much you enjoy it can depend what job you get as well - hopefully you can get something decent if you have good A-levels, but you might find you have to search a bit. And also you're older and wiser when you get to uni and all the drunken 18 year olds might annoy you a bit - they annoyed me, and I didn't have a gap year, and the people on my corridor who did really wanted to kill all the annoying "just left school" types!

Let be honest, quite a few people take a gap year and with the diversity of people going to university im sure you will find many people that are very mature and that you can get on with as well as the irritating just started drinking 18 year olds. One year is not massive in terms of a career and can infact be a very good think. For one you will be more mature when you leave <https://assignbuster.com/what-is-gap-year-and-why-we-need-it/>

university and for MANY careers you cannot have a gap year after leaving university due to competitiveness and such. Therefore a gap year leaves you the possibility of gaining valuable work experience that can give you the edge once you leave university.

Socially in the year off may be the most challenging, living at home presumably and such. I'm taking one however and i've got about 8 close friends staying in near proximity so that gives me options for the weekends and i'm sure i'll make new friends when I start a new job etc etc Also a year out should freshen you up and give you a new desire to get back into education and shore up any doubts you may have had. Overall I think a gap year is mainly positive but it kinda depends on the person that you are whether it is a success or not.

I'm not taking one, purely because I think I'd get out of the habit of studying, and really struggle when I got to university. Besides, I'd get used to having money and then end up in a right mess when I left home GAP YEAR Ever thought of doing a gap year? Even know what a gap year is? Well let us tell you! WHAT? A gap year is taking time off, typically between high school and starting college. Gap year can be a great opportunity for students to take a break from the rigors of academic pursuit to do something different.

Gap year participants generally take time to work or volunteer, frequently abroad, and take the opportunity to travel as well. While gap year is still considered strange by some, it is becoming increasingly popular among students who know they need some time before they are ready or able to commit to a full-time degree program in college. A gap year allows you to take that time while learning more about the world in a way that will almost

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certainly help you in college and later in life. WHY? While the potential benefits of a gap year are extensive and complex, three overall themes generally emerge: * Personal growth and maturity Broadening horizons and developing skills * Beneficial later in life Gap year can help you to grow and mature since you are taking on a level of responsibility you have probably never known before. Those who organize their own gap year experiences will have the challenges of planning where to go, how to get there, how to finance the excursion, where to live, where to work, etc. Even if you go with a structured program that provides assistance in placement and living arrangements, you will still have a number of responsibilities that you have never had to deal with before. Travel also provides a growing experience. Living with people of a different culture forces you to open your eyes and see beyond the assumptions that you can live comfortably with at home. Many students come back from gap year with a new sense of direction in life or a new perspective on what they would like to do with their time in college. In addition to all these benefits, gap year can also look impressive when you have graduated from college and are out looking for a job or applying to graduate school. Showing the type of initiative and perseverance required to pursue a gap year experience is impressive to employers.

Employers are also increasingly looking for culturally sensitive people in today's globalized marketplace. WHY NOT? Why would you not want to participate in a gap year? * It might be expensive * It might be dangerous * You'll be a year 'behind' your friends who went straight to college * It might be so much fun you'll never want to return to the old routine All of these objections might cross your mind (and these and more will certainly cross

the minds of parents, teachers, and adults when you discuss your hair brained scheme with them).

However, the evidence really does not support most of these fears. Granted, you will be a year behind your friends in school, but you will also have had experiences that they have not had, which will give ultimately give you far more of a head start on life than going to school a year sooner. While taking a gap year can be dangerous or expensive, school is also expensive and just walking down the street can be dangerous. Gap years often consist of working at least part if not full time to support your travels.

This helps you mature and learn the value of budgeting in order to accomplish the things you want to do during your gap year. And if your parents are worried, you can reassure them that studies suggest that gap year participants are statistically safer than college students. Gap year students also tend to return to college refreshed and with a greater appreciation for the possibilities that education can provide them in the world at large.