

**Circle the response that most applies to you.**

❶**In making a decision about most things, I usually:**

(a) know my own mind and make decisions straight away

(b) take some time to make them

(c) try to avoid making a decision as long as I can

❷ **In my lifetime, I have travelled:**

(a) a great deal in many countries

(b) to some countries with my parents in the summer

(c) hardly at all

❸ **While at school, I have:**

(a) worked in a number of jobs whenever I had the time

(b) done some work but infrequently

(c) done little or no paid work

❹ **During my teenage years, I tend to:**

(a) often get involved in volunteering work in the UK and abroad

(b) do some volunteer work at home and abroad but not a lot

(c) get on with my studies and did little or no volunteer work

❺ **My parents tend to:**

(a) let me do as I please

(b) provide me with some space to do as I wish but create quite a few limits

(c) set very strict limits on my behaviour and provide me with little personal space

➏ **The expectations of my parents on my future career:**

(a) are minimal and they leave it up to me

(b) are moderate, with subtle pressure to do some kinds of jobs

(c) are very heavy, wanting me to do only certain types of job

➐ **I really know what I want to do for a job and career:**

(a) very much

(b) somewhat

(c) I don’t actually have a clue

**Scoring:**

If you circle :

(a) then give yourself 3 points,

(b) 2 points

(c) 1 point.

If you **score 18-21**, you probably don’t need a gap year unless you feel there is a particular need still unfulfilled. This brief test indicates that you have a clear idea of what you want to study and where your career may lie. You also seem to have gained experience, independence and some self-confidence through travel and work, which are the main benefits of a gap year. I see no reason for a gap year. It may be that after two years at university, you see an “experience gap” and may want to fill it before your final year.

If you **score 12-17**, there are some aspects of your life still unfulfilled and you might benefit from the right kind of gap year. It seems as if you have developed yourself in some areas but not others. If you have no clear-cut idea of what you want to do but have travelled, perhaps you could find employment in your gap year. If you haven’t travelled much, then travel may help to broaden you. If you feel you have had a “managed life” so far and want a challenge before university, you might consider volunteering in a developing country. The gap year you choose should reflect where the deficit is in your experience.

If you score **7 to 12**, you would probably benefit from a gap year. You don’t seem to know what you want to do or what career to pursue, nor do you feel you have a broad enough experience of life. I would suggest you prioritise which of your “experience deficits” you want to work on. You could combine them: for example, you may not feel you have enough experience of work or of other cultures, so you could kill two birds with one stone by working abroad.

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