ANSWER KEY – SCHOOL EXCHANGE TEST

Correction intégrée au sujet • Niveau B1 • 50 points

PART ONE — READING COMPREHENSION (20 points)

Read the text. You are preparing a presentation on school exchanges for your English class. You are reading Pelin's story, a former Turkish student who spent a year in the United States with the YES (Youth Exchange and Study) program.

Pelin Kalem, "Beyond 10 Months: The Lasting Impact of YES", AFS-USA blog, 26 August 2025.

When I was 15, I left Türkiye to spend a year in Florence, South Carolina, as a YES student. At the time, my English was very limited, I even had to spell words out for my host parents at the beginning of the year. But with their patience, warmth, and encouragement, I quickly grew more confident. By the end of the year, I was speaking fluently, with a little Southern charm "yes, ma'am".

I bonded with my host family in a way I never imagined. They loved adventure and family time, and they welcomed me completely as one of their own. I loved adventure, and I also wrote that I want to do bungee jumping on my YES papers, which is what made me be selected by this beautiful family. My host dad taught me how to ski on my very first trip to the mountains, and years later, I found myself teaching my friends in Türkiye how to ski, using the skills he had given me.

The program also gave me opportunities to connect beyond my host family. I made friends from around the world, volunteered more than 100 hours in my U.S. community, and shared Turkish culture with those around me. One highlight was being selected for the Better Understanding for a Better World workshop, where I met young people from many backgrounds who, like me, wanted to build bridges across cultures. That was when I truly realized the power of this program: it doesn't just change individuals, it makes the world better, one person at a time.

Vocabulary: Southern charm = the warmth and politeness typical of the southern United States • bungee jumping = an extreme sport in which you jump from a high point attached to an elastic cord • volunteered = worked without payment to help the community • Better Understanding for a Better World = the name of a specific AFS workshop for young exchange participants.

A. Choose the correct answer. /4

1. What did Pelin do when she was 15?
a. She spent a school year abroad. b. She went on holiday. c. She moved permanently.

Answer: a. She spent a school year abroad.

2. Why was communication difficult at first?
a. She was not comfortable using English. b. She did not want friends. c. She had problems with her host family.

Answer: a. She was not comfortable using English.

3. Why did Pelin learn to ski?
a. Her host father introduced her to an adventure activity. b. It was compulsory at school. c. Her friends invited her to a competition.

Answer: a. Her host father introduced her to an adventure activity.

4. What did Pelin understand about international exchange programmes?
a. They can bring people from different cultures closer. b. They are mainly for travelling. c. They help students avoid difficulties.

Answer: a. They can bring people from different cultures closer.

B. True or False? Justify with a quotation from the text. /6

1. Pelin spent an extended period experiencing everyday life in the United States.

TRUE — Justification: ""I left Türkiye to spend a year in Florence, South Carolina, as a YES student."."

2. Pelin had difficulties communicating at the beginning.

TRUE — Justification: ""My English was very limited, I even had to spell words out for my host parents at the beginning of the year.""

3. Pelin was treated as a real member of her host family.

TRUE — Justification: ""They welcomed me completely as one of their own.""

4. Pelin actively supported people in her community by giving her time to help others.

TRUE — Justification: ""I [...] volunteered more than 100 hours in my U.S. community.""

5. Pelin never shared her Turkish culture with others.

FALSE — Justification: ""I [...] shared Turkish culture with those around me.""

6. Meeting young people from different backgrounds changed Pelin's understanding of cultural exchange.

TRUE — Justification: ""That was when I truly realized the power of this program: it doesn't just change individuals, it makes the world better, one person at a time.""

C. Répondez en français à partir du texte. /10

1. Expliquez comment l'expérience de Pelin lui a permis de progresser et de s'ouvrir aux autres cultures. /5

Pelin a beaucoup progressé en anglais grâce à son immersion dans une famille américaine. Au début, elle avait des difficultés à communiquer, mais avec l'aide, la patience et les encouragements de sa famille d'accueil, elle a gagné en confiance et parlait couramment à la fin de l'année. Elle a également découvert une nouvelle culture, rencontré des personnes du monde entier, partagé sa propre culture et participé à des activités et à des projets internationaux. Cette expérience lui a permis de devenir plus ouverte aux autres et de mieux comprendre les différences culturelles.

2. Présentez deux expériences vécues par Pelin aux États-Unis et expliquez ce qu'elles lui ont apporté. /5

Exemple de réponse : son père d'accueil lui a appris à skier lors de son premier séjour à la montagne. Elle a ensuite pu transmettre cette compétence à ses amis en Turquie. Elle a également participé à un atelier international appelé « Better Understanding for a Better World ». Elle y a rencontré des jeunes de différentes cultures et a compris l'importance des échanges interculturels pour rapprocher les peuples.

Autres réponses possibles : elle a effectué plus de 100 heures de bénévolat dans sa communauté américaine, rencontré des amis venus du monde entier ou partagé la culture turque avec les personnes qu'elle a rencontrées.

PART TWO — LANGUAGE SKILLS (10 points)

A. Complete with one word per gap. /5

Last year, Lucas travelled (1) _____ the United States. He arrived (2) _____ July and stayed (3) _____ an American family. At first, he found it difficult to communicate (4) _____ people, but his host parents helped (5) _____ feel comfortable.

1. to the United States

2. in July

3. with an American family

4. with people

5. him feel comfortable

B. Rewrite using the word in brackets. /5

1. Emma began learning English five years ago. (FOR)
Emma has _____

Emma has been learning English for five years.

2. Emma is not as confident as her host sister. (MORE)
Her host sister _____

Her host sister is more confident than Emma.

3. The students are preparing a presentation about their cultures. (NOW)
What _____

What are the students preparing now?

4. Emma was unable to communicate easily at first. (COULD)
At first, Emma _____

At first, Emma couldn't communicate easily.

5. Emma had an amazing experience during her exchange year. (MOST)
It was _____

It was the most amazing experience Emma had ever had.

Note for the teacher – question 5: the suggested answer is possible, but the original sentence does not provide a clear comparison. The item would be more precise if the context were specified.

PART THREE — WRITING (20 points)

Write about 80 words, in English.
You are a French student who has been on a school exchange abroad for a few weeks. Write a message to your family in France about how you are settling in: your host family, your first impressions, a difficulty you faced, and something you have learnt.
Do not mention any real name (student, teacher, school).

Example of an expected answer (approximately 100 words)

Hi Mum and Dad,

How are you? I hope everything is fine at home. I'm having a great time here, although I sometimes feel homesick because I miss you so much! My host family is really kind and welcoming. They make me feel at home and we often have dinner together.

At first, I found it difficult to understand people because they speak very quickly. However, I'm making progress every day! I've also made new friends and discovered a different culture. I've learnt to be more independent and confident.

I can't wait to see you again!

Lots of love!

Elements expected in the student's answer

• Host family: friendly, welcoming and helpful; activities together; feeling at home.

• First impressions: discovering a new environment, school, people and culture.

• A difficulty faced: understanding English, feeling homesick, missing family and friends, or making new friends.

• Something learnt: new vocabulary and expressions, independence, cultural differences or new skills.

Useful language

Talking about feelings and family

• I miss you so much! = Vous me manquez tellement !

• I feel homesick. = J'ai le mal du pays.

• I sometimes feel a little lonely. = Je me sens parfois un peu seul(e).

• I can't wait to see you again! = J'ai hâte de vous revoir !

• I wish you were here! = J'aimerais que vous soyez ici !

• Everything is going well. = Tout se passe bien.

Talking about difficulties

• At first, I found it difficult to… = Au début, j’ai eu du mal à…

• I sometimes struggle to understand people. = J’ai parfois du mal à comprendre les gens.

• However, things are getting easier. = Cependant, les choses deviennent plus faciles.

Talking about what you have learnt

• I’ve learnt how to… = J’ai appris à…

• I’ve become more independent. = Je suis devenu(e) plus indépendant(e).

• I’ve discovered a different culture. = J’ai découvert une culture différente.

Linking words

• First of all = tout d’abord

• However = cependant

• Moreover = de plus

• As a result = en conséquence / par conséquent

• To conclude = pour conclure