



Sharing One Language

OPEN COURSES 2012

For smaller groups

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Our very successful English language and culture courses are now in their **21st year**. We have now welcomed over 38,000 students to them, almost all from Eastern Central Europe. All students come as part of a group with their regular teachers where pre-course consultation ensures that what we provide is what will most help the students! So... no individual students!

Since SOL started, we have run these courses for individual schools, or groups of schools, who travel together, usually by coach. These run throughout the year. Now that there are many other travel options and so for the summer period from June 21st to the end of August we are again running "open courses" for any size group. It means whatever size your group is, you pay the fixed price of **£455 for a 10day course, £390 for 8 days and £365 for 7 days**. The arrival dates are pre-set and are indicated below with all the other conditions.

The overwhelming feedback on our courses is outstanding. These are not the sort of courses language schools run. It is a total cultural and language experience and the main aim is simple – to give students confidence to use English naturally and at a level to suit each of them. The use of drama, fieldwork and observation is very important here. We maximise the time on our courses and the fieldwork on visits is aimed at giving students confidence when talking to people. Tasks are also given to them to do with the host family each evening. Families provide a lot of help with this and having things to talk about helps a great deal in building that important relationship. If a student only has a short time with us, we want that time to be used to the maximum, and those evenings are very important!!

The daytime is usually divided into two; one half in the SOL centre, the other short trips or other activities such as the Town Challenge. The time in the centre involves a great deal of practical use of language, dealing with real situations, and is mainly related to the time spent with the families or in the activities or visits undertaken, making it an integrated experience. The visits are to beautiful and interesting places, often at the coast. As well as some fieldwork tasks, the guides will further engage the students in using the language.

POINTS TO NOTE

- One teacher place is free for every 8 students (there may be a small charge if the group is smaller)
- These are the BEST VALUE quality English language experiences in the UK!!
- 10% deposit confirms the booking – early booking is essential for holiday periods!
- We are open ALL year! The climate is moderate, and winters are mild - the Atlantic Ocean is just a few km away!
- The price is FIXED and INCLUSIVE - no hidden extras, other than any special requests e.g. Youth hostels, or visits after leaving Devon.
- The course involves 10 days and 9 nights in England. Shorter courses are possible in 2012.
- There is a full 8½ hour programme each day except Sunday which is a family day
- Students will be placed in friendly and supportive families, where possible this is with a friend as we know they speak more English this way. Each evening is spent with the families.
- One half-price place is available for children of accompanying teachers if their own group has 15 or more students.
- We will cover any administrative expenses incurred by the organising teacher, so no teacher will be out of pocket organising a group.
- The number of teaching groups will depend on the number of students and their relative levels, but we will be working on a typical average ratio of approximately 1:16.
- The safety and security of students are paramount - and the small towns we are based in provide a safe environment. Evenings in town are discouraged however unless there is a special request from the visiting leaders.
- SOL is a small organisation and treats everyone personally before during and after the stay
- Teachers take back with them a CD of some of the guides' audio descriptions and transcripts of places visited so that, in school, they can add to the benefit of the experience at SOL.

LOCATION

All three centres will be the location for these courses. Barnstaple and Bideford are market towns in North Devon, 300 km due west of London and Tiverton is in mid Devon about 50Km nearer London! All are in the beautiful South West of England. This is the "REAL" England!!!

THE FAMILIES

All families have been carefully selected and are personally visited in their homes by SOL, to ensure that we only use good, supportive friendly hosts. They provide all meals (including packed lunch on course days), and take responsibility for getting the student safely to and from the SOL centre. If any problems arise, they are dealt with on a personal level.

Bedroom accommodation will provide necessary privacy for quiet reading, though we hope that much of the evening time and Sunday will be spent with the family itself. Many families enjoy welcoming more than one student at a time and we know that when friends are placed together they help and encourage each other to use English far more than when on their own. Occasionally it is possible to place students from different nationalities together in a family.

Students and teachers are asked to complete a simple personal information sheet in order to help us match families and guests as far as possible. These sheets need to be received by us **6 weeks** before the course begins but much earlier if visas are required.

TRAVEL

The price includes direct transfer from London (hostels or airports) and the return as detailed below. It is often possible to include visits en route if flight times permit. Our priority is to ensure flights are met, so coordinating of pick-ups and drop offs may require some patience. Groups wishing to spend time in London are advised to stay over in London for a night.

WHEN TO VISIT

The Open Courses are planned to run in the period June 28th to the end of August, although it is possible for one to form at any time throughout the year if needed. As the summer is very busy, we do urge teachers to discuss with their Head about a term-time visit if at all possible!! The educational value to a student of such a trip is unquestionable!! It benefits more than just their English and is perhaps the most significant experience of their school career.

As for the weather, the climate is moderate in all seasons, and the good sunshine record is one of the reasons why it is such a popular holiday area. Although it can be unpredictable, most groups find it much better than its image!! When it rains, it rarely lasts long, and, even in winter, day temperatures are always above 0°C. Bring something windproof though!

Arrival Date	BIDEFORD	TIVERTON	Leaving date
June 28	10 days/9 nights £455	10 days/9 nights £455	July 7
July 8	-----	7 days/6 nights £365	July 14
July 10	10 days/9 nights £455	-----	July 19
July 15	-----	8 days/7 nights £390	July 22
July 22	7 days/6 nights £365	-----	July 28
July 24	-----	10 days/9 nights £455	Aug 2
July 29	8 days/7 nights £390	-----	Aug 5
August 6	10 days/9 nights £455	10 days/9 nights £455	Aug 15
August 16	10 days/9 nights £455	10 days/9 nights £455	Aug 25

SOL will arrange to meet each group at a London location (airport or hostel) at an agreed time up to 14.30 before travelling to Devon via Stonehenge (if there have been no delays). Groups whose best flights arrive after 14.30 should fly the previous day and arrange accommodation in London (SOL can help with this if we know well in advance).

Departure from Devon will be at 06.30 on the leaving day and will be direct to London central or airport, as required. Return flights must not be booked before 13.00 from Heathrow or 14.30 from the other London airports on departure day. London accommodation should be booked so as to fly back the day after if the only flights back are earlier than these times.

We will do our best to minimise waiting times and for some small groups we may need to arrange for public transport to a meeting point. We can't guarantee to offer additional sightseeing at the time of booking. However once the make-up of the final group is known then it may be possible to offer this, possibly for a supplementary payment.

For full details contact your in-country coordinator _____ or SOL direct by e-mail: sol@sol.org.uk

Please visit our website: www.sol.org.uk