

1 Rob's trip to New York City

Marcus: Hi Rob. Nice to see you. Back from the US already. How are you feeling?

Rob: Tired. New York is in a different time zone. When it's 4.00 am in New York City, it's 9.00 am here in London. My family has just travelled through five time zones. When we got on our plane this morning, it was 7.00 am in New York and 12.00 in London. After a seven-hour flight it's 7.00 pm here. For me, it feels like it's two in the afternoon.

Marcus: How was New York? Don't they call it 'the city that never sleeps'?

Rob: That's right. The city seems to be busy 24 hours a day seven days a week. The subway, that's what they call the Tube in New York, never closes. Lots of shops and cafés are also open all day every day. That's 24/7.

Marcus: It's not like London then.

Rob: No. There are also so many skyscrapers. Here in London, we've got some very tall and modern buildings, but in New York, at least in Manhattan, all the buildings seem to be skyscrapers. There is the Empire State Building that's 443 metres high. There isn't one in London that high, is there?

Marcus: Not really, I think the Shard is about 305 metres high and has 71 floors.

Rob: Not bad, but the Empire State Building has got 102 floors and there are 1,860 steps to the top. Did you know that there are competitions where people run up the steps inside the Empire State Building? I'm glad we could take the lift or the elevator as they say in America. The weather was just fantastic, and we could see Central Park from the top. Do you know that New York streets aren't like the ones in London? They were carefully designed and planned and they're very regular and straight. Only a few of them have real names like ours. Most of them have numbers, like 42nd Street or 5th Avenue.

Marcus: But what about Broadway. That's also a street, isn't it?

Rob: Yes, it is. A very long one, too. Actually, it's the longest one in New York. There are lots of big theatres showing all sorts of musicals and plays on Broadway. One evening we went to see West Side Story.

Marcus: West Side Story? Never heard of it.

Rob: Well, it's a musical about two street gangs in New York, the Jets and the Sharks. They hate each other, but then the leader of the Sharks falls in love with a girl from the Jets.

Marcus: It's a love story then, how boring.

Rob: Oh no, it wasn't boring. I really enjoyed it. We also went for a picnic in Central Park and tried to play baseball.

Marcus: Did you visit Ground Zero?

Rob: No, we didn't. It's not that we didn't want to go, but there was so little time, and we all wanted to go to Ellis Island. There was a computer there and we found out that about one hundred years ago, some of my dad's family went through Ellis Island as immigrants. It was new to my dad.