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Maria: Hi, I'm Maria. I'm 25 years old and I've lived in New York City for more than four years. I love the city, but life here is very expensive. I have got my own apartment in Manhattan. That's where the life is. It's a really busy place, but that's how I like it. A city that never sleeps. There is always something going on and I like going out and meeting people or going to concerts or exhibitions.

I work as a tourist guide and I do all kinds of tours. I take visitors to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island and they ask me all sorts of questions. I like doing these tours because I have to keep up to date with what's happening. I've also learned a lot about New York and especially about immigration. My own great-grandfather came from Europe about 100 years ago. And I found his name on the computer they have on Ellis Island. In fact, it was only because a tourist asked me how he could find out about his own family that I tried it for out myself. So, working with tourists also showed me something about myself and my family.

Anyway, my favorite tour is the Harlem Gospel Tour. I take tourists from all over the world to Harlem. It's the borough with a large African-American population. I show them around different churches so they can listen to the music and the African-American church songs. I love that kind of music.

As I said before, living in Manhattan is very expensive, so I have another job too. I work in a burger bar. I've worked there for two years, but I've never really liked it so that's why I've got a new job at a café. I start next week.

Ben: Hi, my name's Ben. I come from Wyoming, a state in the west of the USA. I grew up on a farm and when I came to New York City last year, I was really shocked. Everything is so busy, there are so many cars, hundreds of taxis, it's quite amazing. But that's why I moved here. You know, living in the country can be quite boring and New York is so exciting. There's so much going on.

I want to be an actor and there are so many shows and plays and musicals here. I hope that one day I get a job in one of the shows on Broadway.

I lived in Manhattan for the first two months. It's much too expensive there so I moved to Queens. I share an apartment with two guys from the Caribbean. I really like Queens because it's very international and you hear all kinds of languages and can eat so many different kinds of food. New York still feels like a new thing, but I think it's great because you meet all sorts of people. I mean, you aren't friends with everyone, but you learn how to live with each other. I haven't had any problems so far and I'm not planning on leaving.