

§ 1. Tony and Maureen Wheeler have spent more than forty years travelling and recording their experiences in one of the world's most popular guidebook series. The Lonely Planet books were the first of a new type of travel guide. The appeal for young travellers was clear: expensive hotels were not mentioned, which attracted those managing on a limited budget. The books also emphasised the importance of spending time in a country and taking the time to get to know other cultures.

§ 2. So how did it all start? Tony and Maureen decided to drive from London to Asia in 1972, and bought a second-hand van which, with all the repairs it required during the trip, reflects their approach to life: a tendency to make decisions spontaneously and a willingness to cheerfully adapt to the highs and lows of travel. The couple started writing down tips on where to stay and how to survive, often in places far away from big cities. Eventually, they realised people might pay for such information, and so they produced their first book.

§ 3. In the early days, the main selling point was that they produced guidebooks to places nobody else investigated, but times have changed. 'We started doing guidebooks on Asian countries which in those days didn't get much attention. Today, when our writers cover almost everywhere, our size and experience are probably our main advantages,' Tony explains.

§ 4. Lonely Planet also relies on reader feedback. According to Tony, 'Complaints from readers are often beyond our control; prices go up, places close, standards drop (or sometimes improve). Keeping up to date is the key. If one of our researchers has been inaccurate, then we're going to have to improve that book. Complaints from hotels or restaurants may be because they don't like what we have written about them, although we try not to pull a place to pieces if we don't have to.'

§ 5. It is not surprising that the Wheelers have strong views on how to choose suitable holidays. 'First of all, ask yourself what your interests are. If you are interested in culture, this will affect where you go. Then you might consider how much time you have and what the options are for getting there and travelling around. I think you need to honestly consider what level of stress you can stand — do you really want excitement or moments of discomfort? Some people just want to relax! And keep in mind that it's not always necessary to take long trips; you should only travel for as long as you're happy to be travelling.'

Определите значение указанного слова в тексте.

feedback (§ 4)

- 1) response      2) payment      3) choice