

This summer I disappeared for a while; you might have noticed(1). I left Wenatchee, with my children, on 22nd of July, and didn't return until 23rd of August(2). We escaped for a whole month! It was a trip that I had planned for a year, and what a trip it was!(3) We went to five places: London, Spain, Yorkshire, Scotland, and Iceland. I feel very privileged to have travelled so much, and to have done it with my kids. It was very memorable, and inspiring. Before we left, I had been feeling like a deflated balloon, but now that I'm back, I am totally inflated again, full of adventures and things to write about. Probably the place that I found most exciting was Iceland, because I had never been there before. I will certainly write some podcasts about that mysterious country. It made a big impression on me, and I definitely would like to go back. By the last week, my children were moaning(4) to come home and play with their friends. They had had enough(5) of traveling and of being with their mother 24 hours a day! However, I think, for the most part, they had a really good attitude. As we look back at the photos of our trip, they have plenty to say. This photo of London is one of the best that we took. I was so happy to visit all the places that are familiar to me, to walk along the Thames as the sun was going down and the historical buildings were being illuminated. It was the first place we visited, and so I will have several podcasts about that great city for you to listen to soon.

1. 'You might have noticed' is like saying, 'Maybe you noticed.' The meaning is the same. Here are some more examples:

- a. Your brother just left; you might have seen him leave.
- b. The neighbors were having a party last night; you might have heard the noise.
- c. The new teacher arrived today; you might have met him.

2. In this sentence I use the negative. I could have told you about my dates of departure and return positively though: I left on 22nd of July and returned on 23rd of August. So, why did I use the negative? I did it to add to the sense that I was gone for a long time: I didn't return until adds to the idea that I was gone for quite a while. You can use this with the time, as well as with dates.

- a. He didn't come home until 11:30pm. (The negative implies that he was late).
- b. She didn't renew her driver's license until 10 years after its expiration date!

3. 'What a trip it was!' is an exclamation that needs no adjective, though you can have one in front of the noun if you like.

- a. What an exciting trip it was! What a trip it was!
- b. What a crazy party it was! What a party it was!
- c. What a rude man he is! What a man he is!

4. 'My children were moaning to come home and play with their friends.' To moan is literally to make a complaining noise. We also use the verb to show that a person wants something.

- a. He's moaning because he's hungry.
- b. They've been moaning all day to go to their friend's house.