

Contents

1. Relationships. Relatives.

2. Healthy lifestyle

3. Clothes and fashion.

4. Leisure. Entertainment.

5. Means of communication

6. Weather. Climate.

7. Studies

1.RELATIONSHIPS. RELATIVES.

Psychologists write about family life

A.

Family life can be difficult at times. You can't choose your family, yet they're with you for life so it's important to find a way to work through your problems. Whether you're having a difficult time sorting out family problems, or perhaps you're just not getting on well with your brother, sister or parents, there are things you can do to improve the situation. You need to think about what you do or say. In family gatherings, you need to be on your best behaviour so that you do not offend family members.

B.

Respect your parents. Do this not just by giving them respect, but by listening to what they say and doing your best to make them happy. Realise that you may be able to choose your friends, but you're born to your family. When you are talking or discussing a problem with a family member, you need to fully listen and understand what they are saying. Do not interrupt them, do not blame the person directly for the conflict. Instead what you need to do is address the act or event that leads to the conflict. When talking, make sure you use a normal tone of voice and talk to them in a loving and respectful way.

C.

Try to compromise whenever and wherever it's possible. When you see that the people who you love most are happy, you will have a feeling of great happiness. When dealing with family members you need to remember that you want to treat them the same way that you want to be treated¹. Make sure that you do not offend family members. Always be polite! Use words and phrases such as *please, thank you, I am sorry, I was wrong, I love you, you're welcome*, etc.

D.

You are not always going to agree with your family members, many times you and your family members are going to disagree about a variety of things. Make sure that you do not offend family members. Be careful when disagreeing with them. The best way to do that is always to be well-mannered. Always make eye contact when you are talking to them and avoid being rude and hard. And remember that no matter how old you are, you are still a child for them!

E.

Communicate! Show interest in what life was like for them when they were growing up. Try to relate their experiences to your own. Also, show the same interest in what they are doing now. Does your parent work? If so, ask about their work. Take part in family activities, such as birthdays or visiting elderly relatives. Doing things together makes relationships stronger. Eat together. Modern-day life makes this virtually impossible to do, however, it really does change your family life greatly - for the better.

Families and family life

A family may include parents and their children, grand-parents, aunts, uncles and cousins, as well as more distant relatives. But when British and American people use

the word *family* they often mean only a mother, father and their children. In a general social context *the family* is usually taken to mean this nuclear family.

The family unit

Society in Britain and the US is traditionally based on a nuclear family living in the same house and closely involved in each other's lives. Fifty years ago, the typical family was a husband and a wife, and two or three children. The father spent all day at work and made most of the decisions about how the money he earned was spent. The mother stayed at home to manage the house and look after the children. Children were expected to obey their parents.

Many modern families live rather differently, and because of this some people think that the family unit is dying and society is being weakened. Many couples still get married, but others live together without getting married. A few years ago, couples living together usually got married when they wanted to start a family (have children), but this happens less now. Another trend is for people to get married later in life and to have fewer children, so the size of the average family is shrinking.

Many families are disturbed each year as a result of divorce. In the US about half of all married couples get divorced. In Britain the divorce rate has more than doubled since the early 1980s. Many children are brought up in a single-parent families (a family in which children are looked after by their mother or father, not both) and only see the other parent occasionally.

Other children have two homes and divide their time between them. If their parents remarry (each marry other people) the children may have to fit into a step-family (a family in which the parents have been married before and have children from their previous marriages). They may later have half-brothers or half-sisters from the new marriage. Families in which some children are adopted (legally and permanently made part of another family) or fostered (looked after by another family for a period of time) because their own parents cannot take care of them are not uncommon.

Many mothers now have jobs, and young children spend part of the day being cared for by a child-minder or at a daycare centre. Some politicians and religious leaders, and many ordinary people, still believe that the traditional family in which the mother stays at home is best and criticize mothers who work. But most people accept that this is often not possible, and that other types of families can be loving and caring. In recent years fathers have become more involved in childcare, though the mother is still mainly responsible.

The extended family

Americans often move from city to city, so it is common for members of the extended family (=grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.) to live far away. Some grandparents see very little of their grandchildren. Families try to stay in contact with each other by writing and telephoning, by visiting occasionally, and some-times by holding big family reunions. In Britain members of the same family may live close to each other and see each other regularly, but many do not.

Family loyalty is still important, and many people feel they have a duty to care for members of their family when they need it. But it is not part of British or American culture for old people to live with younger members of their family. Most elderly

people live in their own home and, when they cannot care for themselves, move into an old people's home or a nursing home.

Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi families in Britain often have closer contact with their relatives and may live with them in the same house. In some of these families women play a more traditional role of mother and housemaker, though many have jobs.

Family life

Some families are very child-centred (put the children's interests first). The closest families eat meals at the same time and spend their free time together. Some families, however, only see each other for a short time in the evening, and though the children are still considered important, they have to fit in with the lives of their parents.

The average day for many families begins with getting the children up and ready for school. There is usually a rush for everyone to use the bathroom, find clean clothes, eat breakfast, and catch the bus. In the meantime the parents have to get ready for work themselves. Early mornings are a scramble for many families.

The school day usually ends at about 3 p.m. in the US and 4 p.m. in Britain, and the working day at 5 p.m. or later, so many parents have to make arrangements for younger children to be cared after school. They may go to an after-school club or stay with neighbour's children. Older children often do activities like sports or music at their school, or go home and do their homework. Children often also have to do chores (small jobs around the house).

In many families, the children eat when they get home and their parents eat later. In the evenings the children play or go and see friends. If everyone is staying in they may watch television together. Many parents make an effort to spend quality time with their children, an hour or so each day when they give them their full attention.

At the weekend families may go to sports games together, go shopping or go on trips to museums, parks, etc. In school holidays/vacations they may visit other family members or go to the beach.

American families are often criticized for the way they do things separately, though many people believe that it is good for children to learn to be independent. From an early age children are encouraged to decide what they want to do, eat or wear, and their parents try to respect their opinions.

On marriage

Marriage is different from love. It is a good institution but must add that a lot depends on the person you are married to.

There is no such thing as a good wife or a good husband — there is only a good wife to Mr. A or a good husband to Mrs. B. If a credulous woman marries a pathological liar, they may live together happily to the end of their days — one telling lies, the other believing them. A man who cannot live without constant admiration should marry a "God, you are wonderful!" type of a woman. If he is unable to make up his mind, he is right in wedding a dictator. One dictator may prosper in marriage: two are too many.

The way to matrimonial happiness is barred to no one. It is all a matter of choice. One shouldn't look for perfection, one should look for complementary half of a very imperfect other half.

If someone buys a refrigerator, it never occurs to him that it is a bad refrigerator because it cannot play gramophone records on it; nor does he blame his hat for not being suitable for use as a flower-vase. But many people who are very fond of their stomach marry their cook — and then blame her for being less radiantly intelligent and witty than George Sand. Or a man may be anxious to show off his wife's beauty and elegance, marry a mannequin and be surprised to discover in six months that she has no balanced views on the international situation. Another marries a girl only and exclusively because she is seventeen and is much surprised 15 years later to find that she is not 17 anymore. Or again if you marry a female book-worm who knows all about the gold standard, the laws of planetary motions, you must not blame her for being somewhat less beautiful and temperamental than Marilyn Monroe. And if ladies marry a title or a bank account they must not blame their husbands for not being romantic heroes.

You should know what you are buying. And as long as you do not play records on your refrigerator and not put bunches of chrysanthemums into your hat, you have reasonable chance of so-called happiness.

Friendship

Friendship is defined as mutual attraction between people. It can however be distinguished from merely liking someone (when the other person is "sympathetic"): it can also be distinguished from love, because love is basically the attraction that is based on differences among persons.

If a friendship is based solely on external similarities - that is, if two people are of the same race, colour, social background, or have the same hobbies, business interests, etc. — then it is a worldly friendship and it can easily be broken when the external similarities change and disappear. When a friendship is based on internal similarities (i.e. mental and spiritual ones) then it can be called a true friendship. This type of friendship recognises no differences in birth or status, possessions or position: the external similarities are of secondary importance. It is of course true that the development of friendship is helped by external factors. And it is probably rare to find friends of totally different backgrounds and interests.

Strangely enough — and in contrast to the position when one is "in love" — friendship always holds some trace of egoism in itself. A lover sees and admires his opposite qualities in the person he loves: a friend sees and admires the reflection of himself in his friend. Friendship breaks down when the people involved "grow away" from each other, and become too different in interests, opinions and beliefs .

Be slow at choosing a friend, but slower in changing them

If you ask for my piece of advice, I can tell you the following. I have read about a survey conducted by Get Connected, a telephone helpline for young people, according to which the main causes of anxiety for most young people are relationships with their friends. Nothing, as it seems to them, can be worse than falling out with best friends. By the way, people of all ages rely on their friends to talk through any problem they may have.

As you know, it's not an easy thing to find a real friend. In my opinion, a real friend is a person whom you trust and respect, who is "a friend in need" and who never lets you down.

There are no written rules of how to make friends. Usually friendship between people grows when they have common views and judgments on things and events, have common interests and ambitions. A real friend should treat me with understanding, sympathy and compassion, exactly the way he wants to be treated by me.

In my view, friendship is a unique thing that happens between two people. And it's a great gift. A lot of people say they have got best friends, but I wonder how many people actually have a best friend in the real sense of the word.

As for me, I'm a happy person as I have a true and reliable friend whom I can name my best friend. Her name is Leila. She is an energetic girl, good at sports, especially at volleyball and swimming. She has different interests, one of them is the cinema. There is no film she hasn't seen. She knows everything about famous actors and directors, about the plot of a film and when and where it was made. Leila has a good character, sometimes I even think that it's impossible to be such a pleasant person with everybody but then I realize this is some sort of tactics, Leila follows the rule: treat people as you want them to treat you. I try to borrow this quality from her. Leila is a very responsible person and what I really appreciate is if she promises anything, no doubt she will do it. Leila knows how to organize her time, in my opinion, she has time for everything. She used to plan her activities for a week, that's why she has time to go to the swimming pool, cinema and so on.

According to another American survey, young people today have large groups of friends. Having a close group of people to depend on seems more attractive and more secure than one exclusive relationship with one other person. I can't agree with people who think like that.

I can discuss anything with my best friend. I can walk into a room and she knows exactly what mood I'm in, what I need and if I ask for help or advice she will give me her helping hand immediately and never leave me at a loss.

To my mind, this is what real friendship means. I wouldn't change our friendship, our exclusive relationship for having two or three new friends.

It's up to you to decide whether to change your best friend or not. Think about what I've just told you and remember what the proverb says "Be slow at choosing a friend, but slower in changing him".

My family is the most important thing in the world

In my opinion, family is an emotional centre of a person's life, transmitter of culture, the place where children are being raised. The process of upbringing children is rather difficult because it requires much effort, mutual respect and tolerance. In happy families parents are frankly honest with their children without moralizing, and the children in their turn learn how to get on with other people.

The proverb says, "Men make houses, women makes homes". In my view, it means that the man provides for his family, pays attention to the problems of the members of the family. And the woman creates the homely atmosphere, encourages her husband and

her children to keep up family traditions and keeps the house. Together they bring up their children in the right way.

It is true to our family, I think. I like my family because it is very united. My family is rather big: parents, my two brothers and I. My brothers are twins, their names are Denis and Nick. They are younger than me, 10 years old, besides, they are very noisy and naughty. My mum is very loving and tender, and she bakes the best cookies I've ever eaten. My father is very understanding, gives us much of his time to go in for sports with us and he is the best man I know. My brothers are just my brothers and I love them very much but sometimes it is hard for all of us to communicate with each other. We quarrel rarely because we try to discuss all the problems and misunderstandings we bump into.

We like to go skiing and ride bicycles together. Besides every year we spend our holidays and have fun together.

Our parents participate in our lives, every minute we feel their support. In response we do our best not to worry them without a slightest cause, help them in each activity and never lie to them. I believe we are a happy family and I hope someday my own family will be the same.

To be a good friend is...

To be a good friend is not as simple as you may think. Friendship teaches you care, trust and respect. Firstly, parents give you all of it but with friends you learn give it back. Friendship like love: you never know the true face of the person you've chosen as your friend. Friendship is proved not by hours but by years. When you are young the type of friendship is a bit different than in later years: you are more open, consider your friend a part of your life and really depend on him. If you want to become a good friend, you should learn to listen. Your friend may not ask you for advice but he needs your support and understanding. Be sincere because true friendship can't be based on lies. Never refuse your friend in help if you are able to help. Keep in touch with his parents because they are important people for him. Never let other people tell bad things about your friend. If you have any misunderstandings, solve your problems right away without sharpening the situation. And the last but not the least: treat your friend the way you want to be treated.

My friend

My friend's name is Denis. He is a person that is very important in my life. I appreciate his help when I need it and his joy when I'm OK. He is very generous and kind, sincere and loyal. Denis is good at mathematics and can solve problems endlessly. Besides he loves languages and has a pen-friend from Germany. We have so much in common and sometimes we think of the same things. Denis supports me in my passion for football, so we can discuss football matches for hours. We try to avoid falling out, because we think that there is nothing in the world that can tear us apart. We get on well because we are of the same zodiacal sign Taurus. My mother thinks he is a good friend for me and I believe her.

The first time I met my best friend Denis, I didn't like him at all. He was so self-confident and serious that I hated him at the first sight. He smiled and sat down beside

me. I had problems with mathematics at that time, so he explained me how to solve the problem, and suggested his help me every time I need. Since then I realized that I was mistaken.

It was 5 years ago and since then a lot has changed. Now we are best friends, who have much in common: math (now I'm solving problems much better than he does), football (we are playing in the same football team), music (R'N'B and soul) and computer games. I hope that I am so much important to Denis as he is for me.

Why is my friend important to me?

I appreciate friendship because it is a special thing. It makes happiness glow brighter and grief less painful because I have a friend to share it. When I doubt my ability to fulfill my aspiration or to reach my secret goal it is my best friend who gives me a spark of assurance. And I trust my friend and I am very grateful. Friendship is a bridge between loneliness and fellowship, frustration and confidence, despair and hope, setbacks and success. That's why a true friend is a priceless gift. They are rich who have true friends, says a proverb and I agree.

My friend Denis is the one I can rely on at any moment. I know it for sure .because there were many situations when he proved to be a true friend.

What concerns me, I become sometimes selfish but I'll never betray my friend or deny my help to him. As for misunderstandings, they come up very rarely and mostly concern clothes and music. My own opinion is that you have to be absolutely sincere and selfless to your friend and he in turn will treat you the same way. I am absolutely sure that real friends show their true colours in difficult situations but not at parties. I appreciate my friend and give him as good as I get.

We like to spend time together. Usually we go in for sports together and attend rehearsals of our rock band. Sometimes we make parties at home or hang out in night clubs. But it happens not often because this year we have to study hard to get prepared for the exams.

Fortunately, I've got no experience in ending up friendship with a person which meant much for me. It is easy for me to become friends with people and we part easily too. But I don't want the same situation with my best friend Denis.

The way of spending time

Some people prefer spending most of their time alone; others like to be with friends most of the time. It is my opinion that the more time you spend with friends the better. Being with friends is electrifying. Spending time with friends is worthwhile for the following reasons: helping each other to progress in life, helping each other to relax, and sharing happiness or sadness with each other.

Firstly, spending time with friends is a way to help each other to progress. When we are with our friends, we can share our experiences in life with them such as work, study, relationships with all the people surrounding us, etc. Also, we easily learn good things from our friends. On the other hand, if friends have problems, it is a good opportunity for us not only to point out the friend's mistakes, but also to help them to become better and sort the problems out.

Secondly, hanging out with friends is just great. It's a perfect way to relax. Therefore, you feel great, which does a lot of good to your health. Besides, everyone wants to forget about work and studies for a while.

So, we can see that spending time with friends is both exciting and useful. It helps us not only to progress in life and have a wonderful time but also to share our feelings with everyone and be happy.

Finally, spending time with friends is a chance to share happiness or sadness with each other. People's lives can be both happy and sad at times. The more we share our happiness with our friends, the happier we are. For example, we can tell them about our success; together we can watch an exciting film, read a funny story or listen to our favourite music, etc. In contrast, when we feel low and need sympathy our friends will always be there to encourage us and help to overcome it.

Teens write about friendship

Read what some teens wrote about friendship on an Internet forum.

Brian, 14, York

Friends are fantastic - most of the time. They're there for us whenever we need them, and they share things with us, and let us share with them. Generally friends are easy to deal with. But on the other hand, friendship can be difficult because often people aren't as honest and open as they should be. Sometimes, people end up unhappy. I personally believe that responsibility is the best quality in friendship.

Andrew, 15, Edinburgh

Most problems with friendships come up because people are just too selfish to care about the things their friends need. They care about their own needs much more, which makes it hard for friendship to work. However, being selfish is a part of human nature. My own opinion is that people should take care of themselves and their own needs, and only then take care of the needs of other people.

Mary, 16, Melbourne

The best thing to remember when you are a friend to anyone is that you need to treat your friends the same way that you'd like to be treated. This is wonderful advice for a person who wants to make friends. And I want to stress that it's really the only way to make sure that you are giving your friends everything you would want to get in friendship. I'm absolutely sure that when-ever you have a question about how you should treat a friend, it is easy to find the answer simply by asking yourself what you would like your friend to do for you if he or she was in your shoes.

Sylvia, 14, Ottawa

There are misunderstandings that come up from time to time in each friendship, and it is important to understand how to deal with them so that you can build stronger and healthier relation-ships. What is more, moments when your friends get boyfriends or girlfriends and don't spend enough time with you, or even find new friends and leave you behind happen in each friendship and can be hard. That's why it's important to know how to deal with these changes so that you can keep your friends and make new ones.

How to be a friend

A. Be trustworthy. If they tell you a secret, keep it, never tell someone a secret your friend wanted you to keep. Don't let the cat out of the bag. A secret is a secret. Don't gossip about your friend, don't say anything that might turn into gossip, and don't do things that you know would upset them.

Care for your friends. If they're away from home, send them cards or e-mails to show that you care. If they're sick, call them and ask how they are doing. Best friends care for each other. Show them you appreciate them in your life. Write them notes to show that you care and are thankful to them, and ask about their lives.

B. Nobody likes a friend who just talks and talks, but never listens. If you're a chatterbox, it's OK if you're also a good listener. Whenever your best friend says something, listen carefully and say something. Don't just say "yeah" and move on. Don't constantly interrupt while they're talking to you. If they ask for advice, listen carefully and give them the best advice you can.

Spend time together. Hang out at weekends or plan activities together every now and then, do some homework together, and chat during breaks at school. You don't have to live in each others' pockets, but make sure you spend some quality time together with your friend to make the friendship grow and become stronger. Think about doing something together one day, like going shopping or something else. Share laughs. There is nothing like laughing and smiling to bring people together.

C. Be yourself. You are who you are, and your friend will accept that. Bear in mind that being fake could lead you to losing your friend. Trust each other. All you have to do really is make sure you can both trust each other with everything and you don't keep secrets. Being a friend means you talk about everything together and you have so much in common.

Be helpful. You also need to make sure that they know you are always there for them, whenever they need you and that they feel comfortable talking to you about any problems they have. Remember that everybody wants to feel secure and confident in friendship and sometimes needs a shoulder to cry on. Just come to help them when they need it... lending a helping hand to your friend really doesn't cost much.

Family

I believe that everything has its beginning in the family. Family is very important for every person, because it gives you a sense of stability and tradition, a feeling of having support and understanding. In happy families parents are frank and honest with their children, they treat their children with respect without moralizing or bossing them all the time and children in their turn learn how to treat other people, how to form relationship among their equals. In a friendly family people are gentle, respectful and loving. They always share joys and sorrows as well as domestic chores. That is the way I think all families should be. And that is how my family of three is built.

My family consists of my father, my mother and me, their son. So I am an only child in the family and I don't very much mind it.

I think I'd better start my story with my dad. His name is Ivan Petrovich. He is in his late forties, but he looks powerful and impressive. He is tall with dark hair and brown eyes and is of a strong built. When he was young he was enrolled as a member of the

all-Belarusian basketball team. But at that time he was more determined to make a good career so he had to sacrifice sports to his work. At present, he is director of a large plant. It goes without saying that he is very busy, always concentrated on his work and having very little time for private life. I like it very much when he finds time to talk with me about school and my interests. There is a lot of likeness between me and dad both in appearance and in character.

My mother's name is Larisa Ivanovna. She is an economist by education. Though there were no grandparents around to help my mother when I was small, she practically never gave up working. She is very interested in her work, she is a good professional and she enjoys respect from her colleagues. Mum's life is not easy, of course, because she has to keep the house in addition to her work. My mother is a quiet and charming person. She is very kind and she does a good job of being a mother. In fact, she means a lot to me. I know I can be a real pain sometimes and I do tend to blame her for everything that goes wrong with me. Mum understands me in the way no other person would, and she always finds proper words to comfort me. Sometimes I feel she is too bossy. My friends seem to have more freedom and independence, but I am not angry with her, as I know she means the best for me. At present my grandmother, who is my mother's mother, lives with us as well, so there are four of us sharing a three-room flat. But I must say we hardly have any serious problems with three generations under one roof. We are getting along all right and I think we are a united family. We have some family traditions. Apart from observing national holidays we celebrate the birthdays of each member of the family, give presents to each other on the New Year day and on some other special occasions. It's also our family tradition to spend summer holidays together either at the seaside or in the country, which I enjoy very much. Now I want to be more independent from my parents, but of course, in many ways I depend on them a lot.

I have many remote relations: two grandmothers, aunts, uncles and cousins. All of them live in Belarus and we get together from time to time, mainly on our birthdays or other holidays. My granny, who is my father's mother, is the closest to our family of them all. Though she is 78 she can travel to our place on her own and she even tries to help about the house. Of all my relatives I like my cousin Yulia the best. She is understanding and reliable. She lives in the same block of flats, and we see each other quite often. She works as an accountant. I enjoy the honest and open relationship in my family. I like it when parents trust their children, give them freedom, rely on them and respect them. These things in my opinion make family relations warm and pleasant. There is no «fathers-and-sons» problem in our family, though we often argue and disagree on certain issues. I can always bring my friends home and my parents are very positive about my friends although they don't always approve of our tastes, views and clothes. That's all I can say about my family.

2. HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Can we live longer?

Scientists say that in the future people will live longer. With healthier lifestyles and better medical care the average person will live to 90 or 100 instead of 70 and 75 like today. When the human genome is decoded, we'll probably live up to 150. Incurable diseases will be cured and "bad" genes replaced.

But that's tomorrow. And today, we continue to stuff ourselves with fast food — chips and pizzas, hamburgers and hot dogs. We are always in a hurry. We have no time to enjoy a home-cooked dinner with family and friends. We want to eat *now* and we want to eat *fast*.

What is tasty is not always healthy. Doctors say that chips and pizzas are fattening, cola spoils our teeth and coffee shortens our lives.

If we eat too much, we'll become obese, and obesity leads to heart disease, diabetes and other serious illnesses. But the world today is getting fatter and fatter. America is the world's leader in obesity, but Europe is quickly catching up.

Lack of exercise is another serious problem. We spend hours in front of our computers and TV-sets. Few of us do morning exercises. We walk less, because we prefer to use cars or public transport.

Research shows, however, that young people who don't take enough exercise often suffer from heart attacks.

It's common knowledge that smoking and drinking can shorten our lives dramatically. Cigarette-smoking, for example, kills about 3 million people every year. Many of them die from lung cancer. Some aren't even smokers. They are people who live or work with heavy smokers.

Yet many young people smoke and drink. Why? One answer is that tobacco and drinks companies invest enormous sums of money in advertising their products. For them cigarettes and alcoholic drinks mean money. For us they mean disease and even death.

We all know that the healthier we are, the better we feel. The better we feel, the longer we live. So why not take care of ourselves?

Healthy lifestyle

I'm John Doe. I'm a journalist with an important magazine. The other day I saw a white-haired man sitting in front of his house. I could see the wrinkles in his face and neck, and his wrinkled hands. Articles on the secrets of living to an old age are always popular with our readers so I decided to ask him some questions to find the secret of his long life.

JOHN: Is it all right, Sir, if I talk with you for just a moment? MAN: Sure. I'll be delighted! Until not very long ago I lived a full and active life.

JOHN: Well, I say, that a lot of activity helps one to live a long time.

MAN: That's true, very true. I still feel very well, though I walk more slowly now.

JOHN: Is it all right if I smoked a cigarette?

MAN: Sure, go ahead.

JOHN: I suppose you probably don't smoke, or drink...

MAN: On the contrary! I've always smoked my head off. Until a little while ago I went dancing every night. As for alcoholic drinks...

JOHN: You mean to say that you've done all these things all your life?

MAN: Of course. Why does that surprise you so much?

JOHN: I've always been told that doing those things is bad for the health.

MAN: I never thought about it!

JOHN: I suppose that you have another secret — a lot of fruit, vegetables, a lot of exercise in the fresh air.

MAN: Don't be silly! I hate exercise in the fresh air. I don't like any kind of vegetables.

JOHN: I can't believe it!

MAN: What do you mean? What are you talking about?

JOHN: It's just that I can't understand how you've been able to live like that and to have lasted so long. Tell me, how old are you?

MAN: Me? I am twenty-seven. Why?

The secret of long life is...

The world's oldest man, Walter Breuning, has died at the age of 114. He put his long life down to eating just two meals a day, working as long as he could, and always embracing change. He died of natural causes at a hospital in the USA. Walter Breuning was born on 21 September 1896. As a kid, Breuning had no electricity or running water — his mum had to bring water from an outside to give him a bath.

In an interview shortly before his death, Breuning said he wasn't afraid of dying.

He also said: "Everybody says your mind is the most important thing about your body. Your mind and your body. You keep both busy... you'll be here a long time."

Paul Bragg – a health legend

(Paul Bragg began his journey into physical fitness as a very sickly teenager and lived to the age of 95.

The following extract is taken from his book "Healthful Eating")

Hippocrates¹, the father of the natural healing sciences said: "Food will be your medicine, and medicine will be your food." "Strength, growth, nourishment result from the right food."

These statements are equally true today. We know that the only real cures come from food. As an example, let's take scurvy, the disease that kills thousands around the world every year. It can definitely be cured by massive doses of Vitamin C.

I could go on and on speaking about the importance of nutrition. Food is the magic doctor. Drugs cannot make such claims.

Travel the world over, and you will find the shelves full of every imaginable kind of food.

Yet with all this great variety of food, we are poorly nourished. Being overfed can be even more dangerous than being underfed.

Important nutrients are missing in the daily diet. Too much rich food — such as fatty meats, dairy products, eggs, sugary and salty foods — are just as dangerous to good health as too little food...

My early experience

My life was saved by the science of nutrition. At the age of 16, I had a terminal case of T.B². By the grace of God, I was led to Dr. August Rollier in Switzerland, a man who was ahead of his time in the science of nutrition. From a boy dying with a bad disease — for whom not one doctor in America could hold out any hope of recovery — I became a healthy young man.

Seventy years later

Ever since my recovery I have had a painless, tireless, ageless body. I have been an outstanding athlete in many sports. And today, as a great-grandfather, I am still an athlete — at the age when most men of my calendar years are old people with one foot in the grave or already in the grave.

I still jog, swim miles at a time, climb some of the world's highest mountains, play tennis. I write several books a year, and have a lecture schedule that takes me around the world.

I still have all my own teeth, and a scalp full of healthy hair. My blood pressure is 124 / 73, and I have a strong, steady pulse of 64. My vision is as keen as an eagle's, and my hearing as sharp as an alert animal's. It became possible only because of proper food and daily exercise.

Healthy way of life. Sport. Keeping fit

Our modern world makes a person be flexible and mobile, that's why people should be healthy and fit. Sport makes us strong. It quickens our reaction, teaches us to win and to lose. Sport helps us to have a healthy mind in a healthy body. For some people sport is a pleasure or hard work, even business, for others it's a lifestyle.

Many people do their morning exercises, jog in the morning, attend sports sections and clubs. Besides, physical training is a compulsory subject in our schools. We play basketball, football or table tennis. In winter we usually ski.

I personally can't imagine my life without sport. I jog in the morning and sometimes play sport games with my friends and go to the swimming pool. I also like to watch the Olympic games, especially figure skating competitions, on TV.

For me, sport is a source of exciting emotions and feelings. But I understand that not only sport helps us to keep fit. Healthy lifestyle is necessary. There is a wise saying "You are what you eat" or "An apple a day keeps the doctor away"; which means that a balanced diet is the best way to get a healthy body.

We should eat more fresh fruit and vegetables full of vitamins. We should cut down the amount of fatty, salty and sweet food. Scientists say that such food increases danger of cancer and heart diseases. We should limit the amount of fizzy drinks, alcohol and fast or junk food. It leads to health problems. I personally try to eat only healthy food. I don't eat a lot of meat or fried food. I try to eat porridge, fish, soup, salads, fruit and vegetables.

In conclusion I'd like to say that today people realize how important it is to stay healthy if they want to be active and successful in life.

I am absolutely sure that bad habits are dangerous. For example, smoking is the most common bad habit nowadays. Some people start smoking because they think it's a kind of relaxation. Others always mention peer pressure or a protest against parents.

But smoking is very addictive and very difficult to stop. Besides, smoking leads to lungs and heart diseases. And it shortens our life.

I'd like to say that it's sometimes difficult to give up a bad habit. If you have true friends and close relatives ask them to help you. They will support you in your desire to give up a bad habit. Then try to do sports and try to keep to a balanced diet. It will help you to feel better and to lead a healthier life. Good luck!

Sleeping

Sleeping is a necessity for our brain. Having little sleep can be harmful because important body functions and brain activity happens during sleep. Sleeping little can lead to difficulties in getting along with family and friends and getting good marks at school. When you don't get enough sleep, there is a danger of having an accident or illness.

Sleeping is as important to your well-being as the air you breathe, the water you drink and the food you eat. Teens need about 9 hours of sleep each night to function best. Besides teens often have irregular sleep patterns which affect biological clocks and hurt the quality of their sleep.

Not getting enough sleep can limit teens' abilities to learn, listen, concentrate and solve problems; add to skin problems; lead to irritating and weight gaining.

To solve this problem, you should make sleep a priority. To sleep sound you should make your room cool, quiet and dark. Besides, try to avoid coffee, tea, Coca-Cola and chocolate close to bedtime. You should remember that a good sleep schedule will help you feel less tired. Avoid eating, drinking or doing exercises within a few hours of your bedtime, otherwise you need quiet and calm activities. Teach your body signals that it's time for bed, try taking a shower or bath before sleeping.

You should sleep enough

One of the first duties we owe to ourselves is to keep our bodies in perfect condition. If our body suffers from any disorder, our mind suffers with it. And we are unable to make much progress in knowledge and we are unfit to perform those duties which are required of us in social life.

We should remember that sleeping is one of the most essential things. Late hours are very harmful to the health as they exhaust the nervous system which leads to quarrels and crimes. We need to go to bed early and get up early. It is a good rule to "rise with a lark and go to bed with a lark".

Having not enough sleep leads to exhaustion which is resulted in decreasing of the immune system. Sleep is necessary especially for teens because their organisms are constantly growing and therefore they need good rest. Sleeping more can help them keep fit, get along with their family and friends and get good marks at school.

Want to become a healthier person?

It's all about making gradual changes. Following the tips in this article offers several benefits for you: lower risk of several diseases, and the chance to live a long and happy life.

- Get lots of sleep. To be healthy you'll need 8-10 hours of sleep every day. This keeps you awake and attentive, so you don't have to drink caffeine and sugar-loaded energy drinks.
- Laugh and smile! Smiling and laughing a lot, as it has been scientifically proved, keeps you healthier.
- Do nothing for a short while. Staying in a dark, quiet place without having any stressful thoughts for about ten minutes will help you relax and feel better. Just do this twice a day.
- Eat more fruit and vegetables. Fruit and vegetables are an important part of a healthy diet. Try to get at least 2-3 portions of fruit per day.
- Drink water! Good old H₂O is key in making you work throughout the day. Try drinking 250-gram glasses of water three times a day. It helps you re-energize and keep going. Not drinking enough fresh water leads to headaches and other problems. Do this, and you'll stay in good condition.
- Get a little exercise every day. This will not only make you feel better, and make you look better, but help you to get through the day.
- Stretch! It feels great! From when you wake up in the morning, to your gym class, this easy form of muscle exercise warms you up and makes you more flexible.
- Run and jog! This doesn't necessarily mean run five miles every morning, just for about 10 minutes twice a week will keep you in shape. Don't *ever* run for an hour and then suddenly stop and sit on the couch for another hour. It will hurt to walk the next day.
- Challenge yourself. If you have 10 push-ups as your maximum, try going for 12! Little challenges like this keep your body nice and fit.
- Do something you love. Play with a pet, go swimming, ride a bike or go for a walk. If you had a bad day at school, doing things you love to do will keep you in a good mood and take out your anger. Not only is this fun, but it lets you be yourself for a while. Try it!
- Feel good about yourself! There is always going to be someone in the room who does at least one thing better than you, so don't compare yourself to other people! Find things you are good at, and use your talents!
- Positive emotions are healthy, prolong life and make living pleasant.

3. CLOTHES AND FASHION.

Choosing clothes

- What do you think about the checked blouse with short sleeves?
- What's number?
- 1 C, I guess.
- It looks good and very fashionable. Besides it matches the style of our shop: smart

but sporty clothes.

- You are right. Let's choose a skirt.
- I believe 2 C goes well with the T-shirt we ordered last week. What do you think?
- That's right. We'll take it. Besides, the jeans number 3 A and the trousers number 3B will renew our collection.
- Let's have done with the girls' clothes because we should set to the clothes for boys.
- You're right. What they have? We would take the checked shirt number 4B and a white T-shirt with a hood.
- Let me choose jeans and trousers. I think we should take number 5 B which is linen trousers with pockets and baggy blue jeans under the number 5 C.
- I agree. But I can't choose which item we can take between sweaters and jackets. I like all of them. Do you?
- I am sure we will take all of them. The sweater number 6 A looks so cosy and warm, the jacket number 6B will protect from windy weather and in the jacket 6 C anyone will look smart.

Calvin Klein

Calvin Klein is an American fashion designer noted for his womenswear, menswear, cosmetics, bed and bath lines, and other designer collections.

In 1962 he went to work as an apprentice designer for a coat-and-suit manufacturer in the New York garment district. Calvin Klein said that in 1968, when he opened his own company, the fashion industry was in a depressed period, with casual hippie style clothing and the miniskirt among the range of fashions. Mr. Klein told our newspaper that the direction he had taken was to provide simple, understated clothing. Though noted at first for suits and coats, he gradually placed more emphasis on sportswear, particularly interchangeable separates.

Calvin Klein added he had been the first designer to win three consecutive Coty Awards for womenswear (1973-1975) and had been the youngest designer of ready-to-wear clothes ever elected to the Coty Hall of Fame (1975). Klein thought his design philosophy could be expressed as the making of simple, comfortable but stylish clothes - but nothing overscale or extreme. His clothes were relatively expensive, classic, elegant, and easy to wear, and they struck the responsive chord among buyers in the United States and other countries. His achievements were said to represent not only the triumph of his particular brand of classical styling but also the maturation of the American fashion industry.

Clothes. Fashion

Clothes are very important in our everyday life. People choose clothes according to their personal style. Fashion reflects the social and economic status of each person. TV, music, magazines, our friends and even our parents influence our style. The style is like a language because it can tell much about a person. There are many reasons for our manner of dressing: physical attraction, emotions, religion, traditions.

For example, at school we wear formal uniforms. I think that everybody has the freedom to choose the clothes he/she likes, but we should be appropriately dressed for the occasion. School is a place where students get knowledge, it's not a playground. So,

in general I like my school uniform, but when the school is over I wear my favourite clothes: jeans and sweaters. I am sure casual clothes are more comfortable than formal clothes.

I should also mention that in our modern society fashion models, singers, actors and sportsmen are like idols for teenagers who try to copy their style, hair-do, even walk. You can see the lifestyle of celebrities on TV, in magazines and in the Internet. Their lifestyles play on our feelings and emotions. Some young people spend a lot of money to buy fashionable and expensive clothes. But I'm not a person of that kind. Of course, I like good and attractive clothes, but I try to think twice before spending money on clothes. Besides, the world of fashion is always changing.

Many people think that those who have expensive clothes are much happier in their lives because being attractive is like being rich. That's why we often judge people by their clothes. The clothes we wear tell a lot about us. For example, people in expensive clothes are called wealthy, rich and beautiful. And, on the contrary, we think that people in old and dirty clothes are ugly. I'm sure it's better to have your own style in clothes and your own hairstyle to show your individuality. In conclusion I should say that the best thing is not to worry about your clothes, but just try to be an interesting person.

To my mind, things that a person wears should be comfortable. It's better to remain true to yourself. Fashion is not the most important thing in my life, but it helps me to be in harmony with the world I live in. I can't say that I am a fashion fan, but I always try to keep up-to-date. So I can say that I prefer fashionable but comfortable clothes.

When you want to buy clothes it's necessary to try them on. You need to know the size and the colour of the clothes you want to buy. But the main thing is to know if they suit you. When I do the shopping I always ask a shop-assistant to help me. And I always use a fitting-room. Besides, our parents' or friends' advice can be very valuable.

Fashion

Today fashion is a very popular industry which influences millions of people around the world. Every year more and more people start to follow fashion trends in order to be stylish and attractive.

Quite a number of people believe that other people judge a person first by his looks and only then by his inner qualities. That's why they are convinced that if you follow fashion trends you have more chances to make a good impression on others. Such people suppose that fashionable clothes help them to stand out from the crowd and then often say that when they are dressed fashionably they feel more confident.

Certainly there are opponents of the necessity to follow fashion trends. They confirm that at present one can meet many people in the street who look like mannequins in a shop window. These people consider that every person should have his or her own style and it has to be unique. One shouldn't blindly follow fashion trends, because becoming a fashion slave is ridiculous. Moreover it's rather expensive and it takes a lot of time and effort to keep up with new styles. I personally pay attention to fashion in small doses and I'm sure that this is the only healthy way of approach. I think it's mainly about being confident and comfortable. I can't say that I am a fashion fan, but I always try to keep up-to-date. Fashion is not the most important thing in my life, but in some way it helps

me to be in harmony with the world I live in. Sometimes I'm interested in the latest trends of Belarusian fashion. Twice a year Minsk hosts the International Fashion Week - Belarus Fashion week.

Belarus Fashion Week is an international event aimed at popularization of ready-to-wear designer clothes in Belarus. BFW draws public attention to the development of fashion industry as a whole. The majority of the participants of Belarus Fashion Week are the Belarusian designers who actively work and develop their business in Belarus, forming the modern image of the Belarusian fashion. As the organizing committee wants to demonstrate the international character of fashion, so they always invite foreign designers to take part in the event. BFW always welcomes special guest designers from Russia, Ukraine and other foreign countries.

But frankly speaking I prefer comfortable clothes to fashionable ones. I always choose clothes according to my personal style. I think the style is like a language because it can tell much about me like a person. I'm sure it's better to have your own style in clothes and your own hairstyle to show your individuality. In conclusion I should say that the best thing is not to worry about your clothes, but just to be an interesting person.

As I have just said I prefer comfortable clothes to fashionable ones. I think that everybody has the freedom to choose the clothes he or she likes, but we should be appropriately dressed for the occasion. For example at school we wear formal uniforms. But when the school is over we wear our favourite clothes. My favourite outfit consists of blue jeans and *a* red checked shirt. To my mind it's a nice outfit for warm spring days. The shirt doesn't have many decorations -just small buttons and long sleeves. The jeans are very comfortable, that's why I can skateboard or dance in them. One more detail of my outfit is that I can put many useful things into my zip pockets, and I know that I won't lose them. Black sunglasses help me protect the eyes from sunlight and be more stylish on hot days. In conclusion I want to say that a person should wear comfortable clothes. I believe it's better to remain true to yourself.

If I were lucky to have a meeting with fashion designer I would like to ask him *the following* questions. For example: 1) When did you start to follow fashion trends? 2) Which decade of fashion do you like best? *Why?* 3) What style of clothes do you prefer? 4) What is your favourite accessory? 5) Have you ever made mistakes in what clothes to put on? 6) When did you understand that you will be a fashion designer? 7) What is more important: fashion or style? 8) Could you tell us how you make your style individual? 9) Do you wear the clothes you create?

Clothes, fashion

"Clothes Make the Man" Clothes have always carried messages about social status, personal taste as well as individual self-expression. You can't but agree that clothes are really important because they tell people a lot about us and sometimes we judge people by what they are wearing. So people dressed in expensive clothes are thought to be wealthy and if a man is shabbily dressed he's obviously poor and probably homeless. Clothes can tell us about people's nationality. So, a man wearing a tartan kilt, a black long-sleeved velvet jacket, knee-length socks and a small black hat is surely a Scotsman.

Sometimes clothes tell us about people's occupation. If you work as a nurse, a doctor, a police-officer or a fire-fighter you have to wear a standard uniform. I personally think that the main thing about clothes is to be appropriately dressed for the occasion. When I go out with my friends at the weekend I prefer to wear casual clothes. I feel more comfortable in, such as jeans, a T-shirt or a loose shirt with flat shoes or trainers. When I go for a meal in a restaurant or to a wedding party I like to be smartly dressed in something elegant and stylish and to look very classy and chic. And if I had to attend a formal occasion such as a job interview I would wear a smart fitted costume. There is much discussion nowadays about a school uniform. Some of my classmates want to abolish the uniform at school. But I think that we have to accept the fact it is necessary to wear it. School is a place where students acquire knowledge. It's not a playground, a beach or a ballroom. And it's better for the students to spend time listening to the teacher and learning something than examining the latest trends of fashion.

Everyone in my class is really fashionable. They spend a lot of time talking about the clothes and jewellery they are going to spend money on. Some of my classmates have cut their hair into strange shapes, pierced their ears. They wear a lot of cheap jewellery. They say they show off their independence, feelings and values. I don't know if they are right.

Fashion does play a part in my life, but I'm not really obsessed with it. I do want to look smart but I wouldn't describe myself as a fashion victim. Fashion comes and goes and looking clean and tidy is more important than looking stylish. I hate it when people dress alike because they buy clothes in chain stores. I prefer hand-made or design clothes, in these clothes you really feel you are an individual and you can look really extravagant. The main factor which influences me when I go shopping for clothes is the price; I also pay attention to the colour of the garment I want to buy and try to match it with clothes I already own.

By the way, most people are influenced by fashion in a number of ways. For instance, they decorate their houses according to fashion; go on holidays to fashionable places and so on. Everyone wants to be attractive. What is your idea of being attractive? One of Chekhov's characters said that everything must be beautiful in a person - appearance, dress, spirit and mind. We always want to impress people. But the first impression we make almost fully depends on what we wear and how we wear it. Manners and speech are noticed next and character only later. So it's quite natural that clothes are really important. They say —clothes make the man. But we don't mean good looks alone when we speak about someone's beauty. We want also to see as Chekhov wrote, a beautiful spirit and mind in a person. His / her character and actions are extremely important.

But what is to be done if the face isn't so beautiful? Should we take this fact too seriously? Of course not! Besides, as an American proverb goes: "Beauty is a very fine thing, but you can't live on it". On the other hand a modest, kind and honest person is respected and liked by everybody. One good deed deserves another, says an English proverb. I don't think there is beauty in a person who has good looks but doesn't respect old people. And those who wear fashionable clothes are not beautiful at all if their conduct in the street and other public places isn't good. There is an old English proverb about such people: "Clothes don't make the man". Real beauty means much more than a

perfect body and nice clothes. To my mind such traits of character as diligence, humanity, respectfulness, sincerity courage make a person attractive. And besides you should be modest of course.

A modest man never talks much of himself. He doesn't try to have special privileges and rights, he is always critical about his own shortcomings and respects people around him In conclusion I'd like to say that a man is a creator of his own happiness, fortune and personality. All of us are born sinless with a crystal soul like a blank sheet of paper, but with different levels of potential. Probably most of us are full of drawbacks because we all are humans and nothing human is alien to us. But every day you should work on yourself. You should develop a positive attitude to life and people. The efforts which you make to become better will no doubt pay off. Your life will brighten and there will be new colours.

Teens speak about clothes

Sally: I enjoy wearing stylish clothes. I like to look smart and attractive. We can't go through life with the same hairstyle or make-up. It's very important to follow fashion. I hate it when people dress alike, because they buy clothes in chain' stores I prefer hand-made or design clothes. My classmates say I'm materialistic, but it's not a sin, is it? Sometimes I turn up in something really extravagant. When you are up with fashion you feel you are an individual.

Tracey: I don't care what other people wear. More than that I don't care what I wear. My mum buys clothes for me in a chain' store or a car boot sale. She says that only the rich can afford following fashion and wearing trendy clothes. I prefer casual things- jeans, T-shirts, home-made sweaters. And it's a problem for me to get out of jeans into something more stylish, but I don't care.

My elder brother's friends have cut their hair into strange shapes, pierced their ears and wear a lot of jewelry. They say they show off their independence, feelings and values. I don't know if they are right. If I were older I would probably do the same.

Kate: Everyone in my class is really fashionable. They spend a lot of time talking about the clothes and jewellers that they are going to spend their money on. Many friends of mine think I'm boring and untrendy and I feel out sometimes.

But frankly speaking fashion is not very important to me. Fashion comes and goes and looking clean and tidy is more important than looking stylish. I prefer clothes which are traditional in design that I feel comfortable in. I think that following fashion does not necessarily mean having good taste. If I had a lot of money I would buy clothes which are classical in design because they never go out of fashion, though I would rather buy video cassettes or some interesting books

4. LEISURE. ENTERTAINMENT.

Leisure time

Bonsai Trees

Bonsai means "tree in a pot" (or tray) in Japanese, and refers to growing trees in small pots in such a way as to look old, interesting and artistic. The art is believed to have originated in China thousands of years ago, and is now practiced all over the world, e.g. in Japan, where traditional examples are known for their more formal designs, and in present day China, Vietnam and other south Asian countries where they are less formal, but may include more of a landscape feel, with large rocks simulating mountains, pools of water and tiny ceramic figures called 'mudmen' (many of which are fishermen, or storks - a symbol of luck in the far east).

While bonsai may be decorative, they are very much living things and should first and always be regarded as such rather than conversation pieces. It can take decades to produce a beautiful bonsai, weeks to finish it off through lack of care and experience.

However, if you have the time, interest and vision to want to grow bonsai, and it doesn't have to be hard, the rewards are terrific, and you'll never be sorry!

Volunteering

They say in order to help yourself, you should do something to help others. Volunteering involves giving work to an organization for free. The time can range from an hour to several thousand hours a year. Volunteering as a hobby can be as rewarding and enjoyable as the individual decides to make it. Some ideas for volunteering include reading to the elderly in the hospital, playing with children in an orphanage, helping a child with homework, working in a soup kitchen, taking a pet into a nursing home to cheer up the residents, shopping for an elderly neighbour and knitting for charity (There's always a need for warm blankets, hats and gloves.) Start slowly with these and before you know it, you'll find yourself doing more and more and loving it.

Gadgets

Gadgets of any type are the new trends in hobbies, especially among the young people. Gone are the days when children innocently collected stamps or match boxes or even buttons. Most teens will be happy to collect electronic gadgets such as cell phones, iPods, cameras, video cameras, voice recorders and more. If you are thinking of a present, you really can't go wrong with these. As soon as one gadget hits the shelf, another newer model is already in production and on its way. New gaming systems and games are also a big hit with teen guys.

Children and young men enjoy remote control toys, guns, boats and aero planes that provide thrill and realism in outdoor hobbies. Even competitions are held at various levels where young people demonstrate their flying and driving skills. Besides, in daily life, the cellular phones, TV remotes, i-Phones and EBook readers are the newest trends in hobbies and pastimes of the younger generation. Without these gadgets, one seems to be totally lost and helpless. The excessive use of cellular phones in messaging (SMS) and using these as mini computers is the hobbyists' best pastime toy.

Beatboxing

Beatboxing is the art of producing drum beats, rhythm, and musical sounds using one's mouth, lips, tongue, and voice. In classic beatboxing, there are 3 main sounds plus the beat. You have to train very hard to become able to make the sounds and beats faster one after the other, which has the effect of sounding as though the sounds and beats are made at the same time. Listen ... (beatboxing)

After a lot of practise the beats sound like drums (with a bad bass) and additional melodies. Actually, it's quite easy to create some simple beats to begin, but afterwards it's hard to make them clear and strong.

"Human beatboxing" originated in 1980s. Today beatboxing is connected with hip-hop culture, being one of "the elements", although it is not limited to hip-hop music.

Beatboxing is practised all over the world and also in European countries where it's growing in popularity.

Scrapbooking

One of the greatest things about taking up scrapbooking as a hobby is that anyone can do it. It doesn't matter what your budget is, how much time you have to dedicate to it, or even how artistic you are. Beginners can start slow and on a small scale with simple, inexpensive projects. Those who are more enthusiastic have just the sky as their limit when it comes to creating scrapbooking memories.

Scrapbooking is taking things like photos, printed pictures, decorations, and colourful paper and arranging them artfully in an album to create a sort of memorabilia. A scrapbook in itself can be considered as an extra fancy photo album. The size of a scrapbook will vary depending on the person making it and the event they are covering.

Scrapbooking can be a very personal experience. Some eventful occasions to scrapbook for include: love stories, milestones in a child's life, graduations, travels and holidays.

Scrapbooks can also be made in a more general sense as a tribute to a favourite activity like fishing and bowling or to pay homage to an occupation like nursing, firefighting, teaching, and more. It doesn't take talent to create a good scrapbook. All you need is a little creativity, as few or as many supplies as you like, and a desire to have some fun.

At the Theatre

The 20th century brought great changes into the theatre. Cinema, radio, television, video altered the course of the major performing arts and created the new ones. But still there are hundreds of puppet theatres, conservatoires and philharmonics, musical comedy theatres, drama theatres and opera houses where the audiences are excited at the prospect of seeing a play and the actors are most encouraged by the warm reception. But before going to a theatre you should book a ticket at a box-office. The most expensive seats are in the stalls, boxes and dress-circle. The seats in the balcony, pit and the upper circle are less expensive, they are cheap. Then at the entrance to the theatre the attendant tears your theatre ticket in half. He gives you your half back so that you can find your seat by its number. Another attendant shows you to your seat and sells a programme that will tell you which parts the actors are playing and how many acts there are in the play. Then you take your seat and may enjoy the play.

I have always envied the dwellers of large cities. They have so many opportunities to enjoy themselves. Theatres, cinemas, variety shows, circus, conservatoire, concert halls, etc. are at their disposal. In provincial towns like mine is we have only amateur

dramatics. That's why I always take the smallest chance to go to a theatre when in a city.

Hobbies. Free time

What is a hobby? It is what you like to do when you have free time. We choose a hobby according to our character and taste. When we have a hobby our life becomes more interesting. There are hundreds of personal interests and ways of spending free time. It's difficult to describe all hobbies known in the world.

Hobbies are divided into four large groups: doing things, making things, collecting things and learning things. Doing things is the most popular kind of hobbies. It includes different activities: sport, gardening, dancing, photography and many others.

The results of *Eurostat survey* show that in Belarus most people spend their free time watching TV or socializing. Belarusian people like to watch TV programs about cooking, health and gardening. Many people in Belarus have a dacha where they grow vegetables or just have a rest.

Nowadays teenagers all over the world are fond of playing computer games. They sit in front of a screen with a mouse or a joystick and do different things: build farms or castles, fight enemies or just play cards. This hobby is becoming more and more popular. But I think computer games can be bad for our health, especially for the eyesight.

I should say that I don't have much free time because I am leaving school soon and getting prepared for my exams. But my hobby is music. It appeals to my heart and helps me stay cheerful and active. Pop music and rap are very popular with teenagers because of the influence of mass media and mass culture. As for me, I prefer rock. It is full of force. Rock music has a lot of positive effects. It unites people all over the world, makes them a part of a global family.

In conclusion I should say that it doesn't matter what kind of hobby a person has. It is good to do something pleasant during your pastime.

Hobby

I think that nowadays theatre, cinema and books are becoming less and less popular. People don't need to go to the cinema or to buy books. They can do this with the help of the Internet. The Internet provides us with different kinds of entertainment. It's cheaper, more comfortable and you don't need to go out. But I think it can be very useful to go to the theatre or cinema with your friends or to read the same books because later you can discuss what you have seen or read. And I am sure that personal contact with art or books is more useful and pleasant than surf the Internet.

Spending your free time depends on your personal interests and tastes. If you are tired or just lazy you may stay at home and watch your favourite film or listen to your favourite music. If you are an active and energetic person you should call your friends and go somewhere together: to a football match or to the concert. If you love your family you should spend your free time with your relatives: do the shopping together or just chat. In any case I advise you to have a rest.

Nowadays parents and children don't often understand each other. Children don't want to spend their free time with parents because they have different interests and

tastes. Teenagers don't want to read books or play outside or do sports because they prefer to surf the Internet, playing computer games. Many teenagers think it's the best way to spend their free time: they can play games in the Internet, watch videos, listen to music and even read electronic books (e-books). But I think computers can be bad for health, especially for the eyesight. Teenagers should be more active, they should spend more time with their relatives and friends.

Nowadays teenagers are fond of fantasy books. I can advise you one book which is both classic and one of the most popular books nowadays. It's "The Lord of the rings" by R. Tolkien. This book is a bestseller. It is full of action, mystery, folk legends and real heroes. I think this book gives us an example of real friendship, love to Motherland and heroic behaviour. It will be useful for everyone.

I think there are a lot of ways of having fun without spending much money: taking photographs, playing sport games, reading a book and many others. But I think the best way to enjoy yourself is to spend your free time with your best friend. You can walk and discuss anything you like, you can go to the park and just enjoy nature together. You can do whatever you like without spending money.

Russian avan-gard in Tretyakov Gallery

A rather unusual exhibition was opened in Moscow in 1986. It's long title — "Exhibition of works received as gifts by the Tretyakov Gallery". A question may arise quite naturally: under what circumstances did the valuable, talented works by recognized masters find their way into private collections by passing state museums? You see, museums are academic institutions. They collect only the -items which, at the given time, enjoy a solid and stable reputation and do not arouse any doubt as to their artistic value.

That is why the creations by young artists who worked in unusual or experimental manner do not get into museums for quite a long time or don't get there at all. Therefore, it's hard to say what would have happened to the works of these masters if it were not for enthusiasm of private collectors.

Nearly 300 works of most different types and chronology were displayed at the exhibition of gifts to the Tretyakov Gallery. It is necessary to dwell on one group of the presented pictures from Georgeos Costaki's collection, the very fact of whose appearance within the Tretyakov Gallery constitutes the phenomenon of great importance and a sensation, to a certain extent.

It is composed of really high-class works which belong to that trend in the 20th century Russian art that is as little known and has been appraised with objective historic clarity in our country. It is so-called Russian avant-garde.

Russian avant-garde enjoys world-wide fame and even sometimes served as the source for foreign masters. But in our country the Russian avant-garde art is known very little and is practically not represented in museums.

The collection is on display. Some parts in the content of this collection are already the property of history but many of them are extremely up-to-date. This art has important features of the spiritual know-how of the 20th century. It will serve as a bridge leading to humanity's artistic future. The 21st century will glance back at its predecessor with respect and gratitude on the art heritage left by Russian avant-garde.

Kazimir Malevich

The name of Kazimir Malevich (1878—1935) is inseparable from a number of experimental trends in the twentieth-century art.

The artist was born in the Ukraine in the family of Polish emigrants. In 1895—1896 he attended the Kiev School of Drawing. At that time he was fascinated by the art of the Peredvizhniki. In 1905—1910 Malevich studied at the private school of F. I. Rerberg in Moscow. In his paintings Malevich then followed the Impressionist traditions. By the end of the 1900s he became close to a group of neo-primitivist artists and their leader M. Larionov, who were exploring new ways in Russian art.

It's necessary to say that at that time Malevich worked in Cubofuturistic style. This term, widely used in the artistic world of the 1910s, was indicative of the attempt to combine the basic features of Analytical Cubism and Futurism.

Kazimir Malevich developed a new trend in art, which he called "suprematism". In his booklet *From Cubism to Suprematism, The New Pictorial Realism* he attempted to demonstrate the natural development of painting to non-figurative art. The new artistic principles were manifested in his famous picture *Black Square*, in which the artist, as he put it, "transformed the forms into nought."

Malevich was interested in different arts, experimented with suprematist forms of tableware, made posters, textile designs.

His art had a profound influence on contemporary painting, architecture, scenography and design. Malevich's concepts of art and teaching were far ahead of his time.

Marc Chagall

Marc Chagall was born in 887 in Vitebsk. He came to St. Petersburg in 1907 and found his way to Paris in 1911, returning to Russia before the Revolution. Already, he was closely involved with many of the greatest painters and poets of his time. Throughout his life, he continued to recall and then, transmute, with an ever increasing intensity of colour, the memories of his youth in Russia. These as if in a dream, have been combined in his work with the experiences of his life in France and elsewhere. It is perhaps now, more than ever, that we can fully realize the significance of Chagall's achievements. In addition to his paintings there are his extraordinary contributions in other media, in the areas of print-making, drawings and watercolours, in his designs for stained glass, mosaics and in particular perhaps his work for the theatre. His indeed has been a full and enriching lifetime's work.

M. Chagall honoured the Royal Academy in 1979 by acception Honorary Academicianship and is represented by distinguished works in the permanent collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. It only remains for us to express our gratitude for his having enriched the world with the fruits of his imagination.

My going to the theatre

I should say that it is impossible not to love theatre. It shows us how beautiful, strong and clever people are, how wonderful and interesting life is. That's why it is almost impossible to get tickets when a good play is on. You have to buy tickets beforehand either at the box-office of the theatre itself or at one of the agencies.

When you go to the theatre you should know that the best seats are those in the stalls, the circle and the upper circle. Then comes the pit and last of all the gallery where the seats are the cheapest. Boxes, of course, are the most expensive. It is true to every theatre where you can see opera, ballet, comedy, drama, musical comedy or a variety show. Most theatres and music-halls have good orchestras with popular conductors. So if you have chosen a good play you will enjoy it thoroughly from the moment the curtain goes up to the end of the last act.

Frankly speaking, the same was with me when I saw «Swan Lake» by Pyotr Ilyitch Chaykovsky, the great Russian composer. I had heard a lot about the «Swan Lake» and was eager to see it. Once I learnt that the ballet would be on at our Opera and Ballet House. But I was in doubt whether I could get tickets as the house is usually sold long before the performance. Luckily, I managed to get two tickets to the evening performance.

Long before the performance I and my friend were at the theatre impatiently waiting for the beginning of the ballet. The audience came and all the seats were engaged though the house held very many people.

Soon the lights went down, the curtain rose and we caught our breath when we saw a lake in the moonlight and tender sounds of music touched our ears. From that time on we couldn't take our eyes off the stage where delicate, charming «swans» were flying in their wonderful dance. I was absolutely thrilled with the dance of the «black swan», treacherous and beautiful. It goes without saying, that the actress dancing the leading part was at her best and captivated the audience. We couldn't help admiring the selfless fight of love against evil and witchcraft

When the final curtain fell and the lights went up the theatre burst into stormy applause. Curtain call followed curtain call. The performance was a success indeed and it left an unforgettable impression on me.

Chaykovsky created «Swan Lake» in 1876. And there is no one who is indifferent to this masterpiece. Perhaps, it is because the musician of genius Chaykovsky had a rare gift of responding with his heart to sufferings and joys of all people.

The history of The National Opera and Ballet Theatre

The National Opera and Ballet Theatre was opened on May 25 1933 with the performance “Carmen”. But its history began in 1920s on the stage of the National Drama theatre that had the opera and ballet troupe and a small symphonic orchestra in its structure. Already then musical-drama performances, parts of operas and ballets were staged and national music was played.

In 1920s the future stars of Belarusian opera and ballet were trained in Minsk, Vitebsk, Gomel technical schools. And also in the National Studio of opera and ballet, founded in 1930, that was headed by a famous singer Anton Bonachich, who had worked as Shalyapin’s partner in Mariinsky Theatre St Petersburg. Three years later the operas “Golden Cockerel”, “Carmen” and “Eugeny Onegin” were staged.

The theatre building on the Trinity Hill was opened on May 10, 1939 with the night of the opera “Mihias Podgorny” by a Belarusian composer Eugene Tsikotsky. The new building was constructed by the project of a famous Belarusian architect Iosif Langbard. The first ballet performance, shown in 1939 on stage of a new building, was

“the Swan Lake” in production of Muller, who graduated from St. Petersburg’s choreographic college and danced the leading parts in the biggest theatres of the country.

The young ballet group set themselves a task to create a national ballet repertoire. The production of the first national ballet “Nightingale” (from a book written by Zmitrok Biadula) 1940, was a meaningful event for the theatre. The success of the theatre depended on a successful integration of a classical dance and a national Belarusian folk dance.

Of course, classical ballets and works and, above all, the immortal creations by Peter Tchaikovsky, never leave the stage; they are an excellent school of mastery for the dancers of all generations.

During World War II (1941-1945) many actors of theatre left to fight on the front or have joined guerrilla movement. The theatre was evacuated to the Volga region Russia. Actors of different genres created front concert brigades and acted before the soldiers of the Soviet Army. Right after the liberation of the capital the team returned to Minsk and in December, 1944 a new season was opened with a premiere of an opera by Evgenie Tikotsky "Alesya". This event marked the revival of the Theatre. After the renovation and reconstruction of the building damaged by bombs, theatre activity has renewed.

The theatre repeatedly went on tour on the most prestigious stage of the former USSR – in the Bolshoi theatre in Moscow. Successful tours of 1940 have brought to theatre an honorary title "Big", 1964 – "academic".

In 50th years considerable achievements of the Belarusian ballet are connected, basically, with an embodiment of ballet classics – performances "Esmeralda" on Caesar Puni, "Giselle" and "Corsair" music by Adolf Adana's, "La Bayadere" by Ludwig Minkus. All ballets by Peter Tchaikovsky ("Swan lake", "The Sleeping beauty", "Nutcracker") were also staged at that time.

Since that time the repertoire was greatly enriched. The most famous operas staged in this theatre include Boris Godunov by Modest Mussorgsky, Otello and Don Carlo by Giuseppe Verdi, Jacques Offenbach's The Tales of Hoffmann, Sadko and The Golden Cockerel by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov.

The development of national tendencies in ballet is connected with the works of Evgenie Glebov. Three ballets by this talented composer have been staged in the theatre: "Dream", "the Alpine ballad" and "the Chosen one”.

The national operas created by the Belarus composers, are devoted to the pages of history of Belarus: "the Star Venus" and "New land" by Jury Semenjako, "Grey legend" by Dmitry Smolsky, "the Way of a life" by Henry Wagner, "Visit of the lady" and "Anniversary" by Sergey Cortess, "The wild hunt of king Stah" by Vladimir Soltan," the Master and Margarita" by Evgenie Glebov, and a number of others.

The basic theatre repertoire also includes operas from the treasury of the European and Russian classics, and first of all – Italian masterpieces belcanto: "Nabukko", "Masquerade", "Aida", "Othello" by Juseppe Verdi, "Madam Butterfly", "Melancholy", "Bohemia" and "Turandot" by Dzhakomo Puccini. The most favourite performances of the Belarusian audience are an opera by Alexander Borodin "Prince

Igor", George Bizet's "Carmen", "Traviata" by Giuseppe Verdi and, certainly, Russian opera smash hit "Evgenie Onegin" of Peter Tchaikovsky.

The theatre building, which is a historical monument today, was renovated and it reopened in 2009. Many sculptures were added around the theatre, its stage was slightly moved and audience space expanded. The latest lighting and motion equipment was added still sticking to the original design.

For the last 15 years the theatre troupe has visited more than 30 countries of the world: from Portugal and Spain to Japan and China, from Norway and Great Britain to Turkey and Thailand – everywhere the theatre has found the keen admirers.

The best museum/art gallery in the world

This was the question put on Facebook and Twitter. Unsurprisingly, the most popular tourist destinations in the world came out on top. None of the top ten museums were outside North America and Europe. Well, the top ten most popular museums were:

1. The Louvre

The Louvre may be the world's greatest art museum – but it's also the one most avoided by visitors to Paris. Discouraged by its size and richness, many people head to smaller galleries. But if you have even the merest interest in the fruits of human civilisation from antiquity to the 19th century, then visit you must. The most famous works from antiquity include the Jewels of Rameses II and the armless duo – the Winged Victory of Samothrace and the Venus de Milo. From the Renaissance, don't miss Michelangelo's Slaves, Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa and works by Raphael, Botticelli and Titian.

2. British Museum

The British Museum was established in 1753, largely based on the collections of the physician and scientist Sir Hans Sloane. It is widely considered to be one of the world's greatest museums of human history and culture. Its permanent collection, numbering some eight million works, is amongst the finest, largest in existence, illustrating and documenting the story of human culture from its beginnings to the present. There are galleries devoted to Egypt, Western Asia, Greece, the Orient, Africa, Italy, the Romans, prehistoric and Roman Britain and medieval antiques.

3. Musée d'Orsay

Housed in the former railway station, on the left bank of the Seine, in Paris, the Gare d'Orsay holds a spectacular collection of French Art, making it a must-see for any art lover. The museum displays France's national collection of paintings and sculptures, furniture, and photography, and is probably best known for its extensive collection of impressionist and post-impressionist works (the largest in the world) by such painters such as Monet, Manet, Degas, Renoir, Cézanne, Seurat, Gauguin and Van Gogh.

4. Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) New York

Its grand reopening in 2004, following the most extensive renovation project in its 75-year history, created a genuine art universe of more than 100,000 pieces. You could easily hole up for a couple of days and still not properly see it all. Most of the big hitters – Matisse, Picasso, Cezanne, Rothko, Pollock – are housed in the central five-storey atrium. The sculpture garden – returned to its original, larger vision – is a joy to sit in.

5. Metropolitan Museum of Art

What can you say about this beautiful behemoth? Its size, and the depth and breadth of its collection is simply terrific. More than five million come a year for special exhibits, or just to see the Great Hall entrance, the Tiffany windows in the American Wing, the collection of African, Oceania and other works. Also great is the famed European Collection on the 2nd floor – it's a city within a city, really, and it's easier to get lost here than in Central Park outside.

6. Galleria degli Uffizi

The Galleria degli Uffizi, home to the Medici family's private collection, was passed to Florence in 1743 by the last of the family, Anna Maria Ludovica, on condition that it never leaves the city. Housed inside the vast U-shaped Palazzo degli Uffizi its sheer size alone impresses (don't dream of viewing the 50-plus rooms and 1555 works of art properly in one visit – preselect which artists or period of art interest you most). In high season (particularly in July), waiting times can be up to five hours. Visitors who reserve a ticket in advance have a much shorter wait.

7. Museo del Prado

Welcome to one of the best and most important art galleries anywhere in the world. Converted in 1819 from a natural history museum to a gallery of Spanish art held in royal collections, the Museo del Prado hosts over 7000 works. The strongest collections are the 17th- and 18th-century Spanish paintings featuring the likes of Velázquez, Goya and Ribera. It's an artistic feast that is many visitors' main reason for visiting Madrid. Spend as long as you can at the Prado or, better still, plan to make a couple of visits because it can all be a little too much if you try to take it all at once.

8. Vatican museums

Vatican museums in Rome, inside the Vatican City, are display works from the incredible collection built up by the Roman Catholic Church throughout the centuries, including some of the most renowned classical sculptures and outstanding works of Renaissance art. The museums are huge and you'll never manage to see everything in one go – you'd need several hours just for the highlights. Each starts at the domed Quattro Cancelli area, near the entrance, and finishes at the Sistine Chapel, where Michelangelo's famous ceiling frescos are found.

9. Smithsonian museums

There are 18 Smithsonian museums in Washington DC. The Portrait Gallery's permanent collection contains more than 4000 images of known faces from all walks and eras of life. The presidential portraits are particularly notable. Look for Gilbert Stuart's famous portrait of George Washington and a carefree bust of a first-term Bill Clinton. The sports and performing arts paintings and photographs are also fascinating. The Museum of American Art has the largest collection in the world. It is a bit of a holding facility for the Smithsonian's 38,000-odd pieces of art, from sculpture to photography, folk art, crafts, prints and drawings.

10. Tate Modern

5 million visitors make it the world's most popular modern art gallery, and London's most visited sight. The critics say, though: this 'Tate Modern effect' is really more about the building and its location than about the mostly 20th-century art inside. Famous Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron won the Pritzker, architecture's most

prestigious prize, for their reconstruction of the empty Bankside Power Station. Leaving the building's single central chimney, adding a two-storey glass box onto the roof and using the huge Turbine Hall as a dramatic entrance space were three strokes of genius. Then, of course, there are the wonderful views of the Thames and St Paul's, particularly from the restaurant-bar on the 7th level and coffee bar on the 4th. Still, be sure to explore the Tate's vast collection of Surrealism paintings and specifically Salvador Dali's work.

Art. Music

There are different forms of art. They are theatre, cinema, music, sculpture, literature, and painting. They all are an integral part of our daily life. Art enriches our life emotionally, it makes people kind. Art helps us to appreciate beauty and to solve the eternal problems of good and evil. Through art we can gain a deeper understanding of human history and the meaning of life. Many people find art to be psychologically healing.

My favourite form of art is music. Charles Kingsley, a famous British novelist, wrote many years ago: "There is something wonderful in music. Words are wonderful enough; but music is even more wonderful. It speaks not to our thoughts as words do; it speaks straight to our hearts and spirits, to the very core and root of our souls. Music soothes us, stirs us up, it puts noble feelings in us, it melts us to tears; we know not how; it's a language in itself..." One can't say better about music. I personally think it's really a universal language of the world, the mirror of our lives and life problems. It's a supreme mystery, which helps people to cope with the frustration and grind of the day. Music isn't a combination of pleasant sounds only. It is an art, which reflects life. Music reflects people's ideas and emotions.

Music is also a weapon. It fights for light against darkness, for freedom against tyranny, for humanism against barbarity. You can't think of a day without music. There is music everywhere: at home, in a concert hall, in parks, at the seaside. People can't live without music. They listen to music, they dance to music. They learn to play musical instruments. Mothers sing lullabies to their babies to comfort them while they go off to sleep. People listen to music when they are in high or low moods. Some people listen to music on some rare occasions. But there are people who can't live a day without music simply because it's a part of their life.

When speaking of different forms of music I'd like to mention classical music first. Classical music gives me a keen sensual delight and pleasure. It creates a special spiritual world, which enriches my inner state and makes me happy. Classical music is always a complex of emotions, excitement and at the same time love for others and a desire to do something for them. When listening to classical music I have to combine all my feelings into one and to give it name it will be happiness. To my mind classical music has a strong ethical effect it ennobles the listener, makes him better and more humane.

Most young people nowadays are gravitating towards new rhythms, which are full of vigor and force. They prefer going to pop and rock concerts. This sort of music appeals to them because the tunes are happy and easy caught, the words of the songs deal with the teenagers' world, their hopes and dreams, disappointments and joys. I think that

most grown-ups are against rock music. My mom says that the tunes are mostly primitive and as easily forgotten as caught. She says that rock music lacks variety, it's the same monotonous beat again and again.

Besides medical research has proved that the volume of sound produced by powerful music does great damage both to the senses of hearing and to the nervous system. I don't know. But sometimes I go to the disco and enjoy dancing to pop and rock music. I feel pleased and happy and don't mind my nervous system. But I do agree that the words of some songs are absolutely senseless.

My favourite English song is "Do you want to be famous?" I think that the word "famous" has a wide meaning. If you ask me if I want to be a star or a celebrity, I will definitely say - no. Of course pop stars enjoy a luxurious style of life. They earn vast sums of money and spend their holidays in exotic countries. They are transported in their chauffeur-driven Rolls-Royces. Wherever they go people turn out in their thousands to greet them. The crowds go wild trying to catch a brief glimpse of their smiling colourfully dressed idols. So it may be dangerous for them to make unscheduled appearances in public. They must be constantly shielded from the adoring crowds which idolize them. That's why they are always surrounded by a group of bodyguards. They are no longer private individuals but public property. Practically every even of their private life is a sensation and is widely discussed in the Mass Media. Sometimes these real life stories don't seem to contain a grain of truth. I think that people who envy the success and rewards of others should remember that the most famous stars represent only the tip of the iceberg. For every famous star, there are hundreds of others who struggle to earn their living. And a man who attempts to become a star is taking enormous risks. He knows that only a handful of competitors ever get to the very top and that years of concentrated effort may be rewarded with complete failure. Personally I wouldn't like my private life to be the centre of everybody's attention. But the word "famous" has a different meaning. You can be a famous teacher, a famous surgeon and what not. You can be famous for your character and your deeds...

5. MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

Means of communication

Communication is the ability to share information. We need communication. Communication keeps businesses and factories running. It helps people in trouble to contact police, fire departments, ambulances and doctors. Our armies would be useless, and our government would not work without it. We would lose contact with our families and friends that live far away. There would be no radio or television stations to entertain us, or films to see.

The word 'telecommunication' comes from Greek and means 'communication at distance'. Now it is a general term for systems or technologies that are used in sending and receiving messages over a distance electronically. Mobile and satellite phones, radio, television and networks are a few examples of telecommunication. It is

sometimes hard to realize that as you sit at your computer clicking on keys it began with primitive and even ancient forms of telecommunication.

There was a time when cave drawings were painted on the walls of caves and canyons to tell the story of people's culture. But real communication began with language. Story-telling was used to tell stories before there were books. Town criers shouted their messages across short open spaces. People ran to deliver messages faster. When running with a message, to deliver it in spoken form, it is safer to do it oneself. Sending anyone else is unreliable, as the game of Chinese whispers demonstrates.

So a system of writing was necessary. When writing appeared, messages on stone columns communicated very well across time, but they were an inefficient method of communication across space. The system became more efficient when it was the message that travelled. People ran with the written messages, rode horses to save time. For example, the network of Persian roads in the 5th century BC made communication faster and more reliable. New men and fresh horses were available at posting stations. A message could travel the full distance of the road from Susa to Sardis (3200 km) in ten days. What helped to make communication even more efficient was the Aramaic language as a Lingua Franca used in Ancient Persia.

There were forms of long-distance communication not based on words. The smoke signals used by American Indians are of this kind. So are fires which usually meant 'danger' or 'victory'. Drums in the jungles of Africa and Asia were one way to send signals to neighbouring groups. Ancient Egypt was the first country where birds - domesticated pigeons - were used for sending messages. Genghis Khan saw their potential and pigeons carried news of each new victory to his homeland in Mongolia. Ship's flags and semaphores - mechanical devices on towers - were other forms of telecommunication.

The true 'jump' came with the electricity leading to the telegraph and signal lamps. 1843 was the year when Samuel Morse proposed a way to give every letter and number a special code (point, line and space). It was Morse's Symbol code, which we can still find used today.

Seven years later, Antonio Meucci and Graham Bell independently managed to build an early telephone. Since Meucci didn't have the money to patent their invention (the cost was \$250 at the time), it was Bell who managed to register it first.

Many other innovations were soon to come: in 1895 Guglielmo Marconi invented the 'wireless telegraph' - radio. Alexander Popov from Russia whose invention of the radio came before Marconi's, did not patent it.

In 1923, the television was invented, in 1947 the invention of transistors gave birth to the field of electronics, in 1969 the first microprocessor was invented. The rest of the story is widely known: in 1983, the military project Arpanet became available to universities and research centres, which finally gave birth to the Internet. Email began to take place of snail mail.

In the 20th century, telecommunications also reached beyond our planet. Radio waves have already travelled to the planet of Neptune and back. In short, telecommunication has come a long way from cave paintings and smoke signals.

Maybe someday, we will have telephones like wrist watches... or, televisions with only interactive 3D programming... or, we will have a mental connection with things so

all we have to do is think, and it is done... or, computers will be able to visually connect with anyone in the world, without cameras...

Only the future will tell... after all, hundreds of years ago no one would have dreamed of all the things we have today.

Modern means of communication

Let's talk about mass media: TV, newspapers, radio and the Internet.

They are one of the most characteristic features of modern civilization. People are united into one global community with the help of mass media and learn about what is happening in the world very fast. So, they get information which is everything. Having information today means being successful.

Mass media are basically TV, radio, newspapers, magazines and the Internet. I think they are a vital part of our everyday lives because they inform and educate, question and entertain. Moreover mass media also influence the way we see the world. First of all I'd like to tell about newspapers and magazines. They are the most traditional media of delivering news to the people. Every day millions of newspapers and magazines are published all over the world. There are different national and local papers, dailies, weeklies and monthlies. They satisfy different interests and tastes. The press informs the readers of the news at home and abroad. There are also articles about sports, art, music, culinary.

Mass media of the United Kingdom also consist of several different types of communications media: television, radio, newspapers, magazines and the Internet. They all provide British people with the news. The most traditional medium of delivering the news to the people is, of course, the newspaper. The press is very important for people in the UK since they read a lot. It is a tradition for them to start a morning with a newspaper in their hands. A great amount of newspapers are sold in Britain daily. But there is no subscription. You may buy any at newsagents.

National newspapers in the UK were traditionally divided by format, between serious, intelligent, quality newspapers - broadsheets - and the sensational, popular or red-top tabloids. They focus more on celebrities and human-interest stories rather than political or economic news. I can name such tabloids as The Daily Express, The Daily Mail, The Sun, The Mirror, The Daily Star, The People, The Daily Express.

Let me tell more about broadsheets or 'broadsheet style' newspapers. They are The Daily Telegraph, The Times, The Sunday Times, The Guardian, The Observer, The Independent. By the way, both The Independent and The Times have changed in recent years to a compact format, not much bigger than that used by tabloids. The Guardian moved in 2005 to what is described as a "Berliner" format, slightly larger than a compact. All the major UK newspapers have websites, some of which provide free access.

If to speak about Belarus, a variety of print media and electronic media of different forms of ownership is operating in our country. Foreign media are widely represented in the national media space, too. According to the statistics of the 2012, 678 newspapers and 676 magazines were published in Belarus. More than two thirds of them are private. Printed press is available mainly in the Belarusian and Russian languages, though there are some newspapers in English, Polish, Ukrainian and

German. The most influential newspapers include Belarus Segodnya and the Respublika. Local editions of major Russian newspapers Komsomolskaya Pravda and Argumenty i Fakty are very popular in Belarus, too. All in all, more than 4,000 print media outlets are distributed throughout the country, including those from Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, the USA, the UK, Germany, Italy, France, the Netherlands, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia.

I would like to say that radio and TV are also the types of mass media that inform people. They give us possibilities for education and broaden our horizons. Radio in the United Kingdom is dominated by *the BBC*, which is broadcast in 33 languages globally. There are also a lot of commercial local radio stations. There are four main radio channels. *BBC Radio 1* broadcasts a mix of new music and entertainment for young adults. *BBC Radio 2* covers a diverse mix of live pop and rock concerts, comedy, documentaries and religious content. *BBC Radio 3* is best known for its classical music performance and programmes dedicated to jazz and world music, as well as speech programmes, documentaries and drama. *BBC Radio 4* offers in-depth news and a wide range of drama, comedy and magazine programmes.

Television in the United Kingdom is made up of two public broadcasting companies, *the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)* and *Channel Four Television Corporation*, and two commercial television companies. The BBC's international television news service, *BBC World News*, is broadcast throughout the world on commercial subscription basis over cable and satellite services.

I should say that there are more than 150 radio broadcast stations and 81 television broadcast stations in Belarus. The majority of public radio stations are run by the local authorities. I think the most popular radio stations in Belarus are Radius FM, Radio Unistar, Radio Brest and others. There are 5 national TV broadcasters in Belarus: Belarus 1 TV Channel, Belarus 2 TV

Channel, Belarus 3 TV Channel, ONT TV Channel, CTV and the international satellite channel Belarus TV. I'm glad to say that Belarus is now switching from analogue to digital TV broadcasting. Today digital TV is available to practically most of the country's population.

So, all these means of communication have also become an essential part of the life of our family. If to speak about newspapers, I and my dad prefer sports sections in newspapers. I always tend to read the sports section first because I enjoy sports. I love doing sports, watching sports and reading about sport competitions, championships, successes and achievements of my favourite teams and sportsmen. And since I live in Belarus, I am also interested in the Belarusian section, which gives a lot of useful information about the news of our country and *keeps me up to date on* our local news. That's why we subscribe to the local newspaper "Районные будни" and we get it twice a week: on Wednesday and on Saturday. To my mind it's got quality to the articles and it's not sensational. When we get our newspaper, I start reading with the front-page articles on top current local news, and then I look through some entertainment news. My mum and dad also start with the front-page articles, but they also read the weather forecast and *check* the currency exchange rates. Naturally, we find our newspaper informative, useful, interesting and entertaining.

We also like TV. We watch it a lot, especially my parents. TV gives us information, which is everything. It educates and entertains us. When we want to know what's happening in the world, how things are working, how nature operates or how buildings are made we just turn on the TV.

But the importance of the Internet for each member of my family can hardly be overestimated. It gives us an ability to do and to have whatever we want. We use it at home for personal usage or at work for professional usage. Whatever you are looking for you'll find it. You can put your own information there, create your own homepage and tell other users your interests, opinions. You can discuss problems on different forums. You can create new social contacts, find new friends, chat with them, watch videos and do homework. You can do whatever you want. All in all, it is mostly the Internet that we use to communicate and get information. We think it brings the world to our living-room.

Is there any means of communication you can't live without?

I'm absolutely sure that we cannot live without communication. But today people don't need a personal contact to communicate. We have the Internet. I think the Internet is the most powerful and popular means of communication. Nowadays many people, especially my classmates, can't live without the Internet. They watch films and videos, listen to music and, of course, chat not only with friends, but also with strangers. I personally also can't live without the Internet. I buy things, download music, watch films, and write letters to my friends and relatives on the Internet. But I also can't live without my mobile phone. It is an essential part of my life. When I have no my mobile phone on me, I feel uncomfortable. All is put there: friends' numbers, addresses, different timetables and of course the Internet. I use my handy for talking, chatting, text messaging and gaming. Of course I use my phone at school, but it doesn't make me 'drop out' of my studies. I just use it as a watch or an organizer. It's a trendy thing I can't live without. But I understand that I should use it within reasonable limits.

On not answering the phone

Why don't I have a telephone? Not because I pretend to be wise or pose as unusual. There are two chief reasons because I don't really like the telephone, and because I find I can still work and play, eat, sleep, and breathe without it. Why don't I like the telephone? Because I think it's a time-waster. It may create unnecessary suspense and anxiety, as when you wait for an expected call that doesn't come; or irritating delay, as when you keep ringing a number that is always engaged.

If you have a telephone in your house, you will admit that it tends to ring when you least want it to ring — when you are asleep, or in the middle of the meal or a conversation, or when you are just going out, or when you are in your bath. Are you strong minded enough to ignore it, to say to yourself, «Ah, well, it will all be the same in a hundred years time»? You are not. You think there may be some important news or message for you. Have you never rushed dripping from the bath, or chewing from the table, dazed from bed, only to be told that you are a wrong number?

You were told the truth. In my opinion all telephone numbers are wrong numbers. If, of course, your telephone rings and you decide not to answer it, then you will have to

listen to an idiotic bell ringing in what is supposed to be the privacy of your own home. You might as well buy a bicycle bell and ring it yourself...

Well, sometimes I call from a pay telephone. Local calls usually cost 35 cents. The specific amount will be posted on the telephone. Use coins. To make a long distance call, dial the number as if you were calling from a normal phone and the operator will get on the line and tell you how much money to deposit for the first 3 minutes of your call. Dialling instructions will usually be printed on the telephone.

Mass Media

Mass media are basically TV, radio, newspapers and magazines-means of communication which are a vital part of our daily lives. They inform and educate, question and entertain. They also influence the way we see the world.

Every day millions of newspapers and magazines are published all over the world. There are different national and local papers, dailies, weeklies and monthlies. They satisfy different interests and tastes. The press informs the readers of the news at home and abroad. There are also articles on sports, art, music, culinary.

Radio and TV inform people, give wonderful possibilities for education and broaden our horizons. We become better informed by watching documentaries, science programmes and discussions.

TV is a favourite mass media in my family. It gives my family the opportunity to see the best actors, sport matches, to meet famous people.

We learn about different countries, people and their customs, traditions, achievements and problems. TV helps us to relax after a hard day. We watch different talk shows, TV games, concerts, feature films and serials.

But I should also mention the disadvantages of TV. It takes a lot of time and makes us lazy. TV can be harmful for our health, especially for our eyes. Some programs and films are violent. And there are a lot of advertisements which make us buy things we don't need.

I think TV is the most popular mass medium but we should choose only useful programmes.

We have come into a digital age. Nowadays the most popular mass medium is the Internet. You can find computers, laptops, iPads and mobiles in every house. A lot of people can't live without the Internet. We chat, find useful information and the latest news in the Internet.

In conclusion I should say that nowadays you can be informed even if you live in the Sahara desert.

I'm absolutely sure that we can't live without communication. Good communication skills can help you to make friends or to find a well paid and interesting job. But today people don't need a personal contact to communicate. We have the Internet. The Internet is the most powerful and popular means of communication. Nowadays many people, especially my classmates can't live without the Internet.

They watch films and videos, listen to music and, of course, chat not only with friends, but also with strangers. I think the Internet is the only most effective means of communication and only the Internet can exist in future. I personally can't live without the Internet. I buy things, download music, watch films, do my homework and write

letters to my friends and relatives in/on the Internet. So, I'm sure the Internet is very useful today.

Today many people listen to the radio. A lot of radio stations are very popular, especially music radio stations. They also provide us with the news and interviews with celebrities. In Britain the most popular radio station is the BBC channel.

In Belarus pensioners listen to the state radio channels, but there are also many private radio channels which satisfy different interests and tastes.

Teenagers' Favourite Mass Media

Today's teens are not really interested in any traditional media. Television, radio and newspapers are becoming less and less popular. Teenagers don't read newspapers. The only newspapers that are read are the cheaper tabloids. They are also not interested in listening to the radio. What is more surprising teenagers still watch TV, often turning into a popular season of TV show or sporting events, but the group of regular TV watchers who tune into daily programmes is getting smaller. Teens watch less TV than ever thanks to online services. They use Facebook for social networking, they search and research topics with Google, watch videos on YouTube and download music from file-sharing sites. Teens typically use their phones simply for talking and texting. However, they use their phones for sharing music files with their friends. Today's teenagers have grown up surrounded by technology and the Internet, so naturally they're not going to be as interested in old media as the older generations are.

Everywhere, every day, exciting things are happening. Each day is filled with news. Public life is rich in interesting and important events, and there is nothing strange that these events receive full coverage on the pages of many newspapers and magazines. The press is often called a mirror of current events. That's undoubtedly true. It plays an important role in reflecting the life of society and in shaping opinions. First of all, the press has great political influence. It helps people to understand the present-day world better. It educates people and makes them more competent in politics. Reports by political observers and commentators keep us well informed on all topical issues of the day, on home and foreign affairs. Besides, newspapers give serious accounts on business matters, industry and culture. There is a great variety of magazines in our country. They cater for all tastes and interests. There are special magazines for the driver, the farmer, the gardener and what not. Some special magazines for teenagers are very popular with young people. They provide exciting reading material about fashion, clothes, cooking, diet, the life of pop-stars. Teenager can write to a magazine to get some advice on the problems they face or decisions they have to make. And there they can find answers to some eternal problems such as how to overcome shyness, how to become sociable, how to avoid conflicts.

I believe it's quite surprising how much TV we normally watch. We don't even notice it. We watch soap operas, entertainment programmes, panel games and what not, all in one day. It's next to impossible to imagine our life without our blue-eyed BIG BROTHER. What would we do without it? It tells us what to do, what to buy, how to dress, how to avoid trouble. Today's variety of TV offerings is quite amazing. Actually they cater for all tastes. Everyone seems to have a favourite daily or weekly chart show,

a documentary, a soap opera, a serial or at least a news programme. Television captivates our attention, stirs our imagination and stimulates our intellect.

I personally consider it to be a wonderful way to relax and to switch off from every day problems. Speaking about the role of television in our life one can't but mention its great educational value. It serves as a nice medium for instruction. We have an opportunity of hearing well-informed talks on archaeology, history, geography, science and technology. We hear critics talking about new books, films, plays, works of art. I am keen on watching educational programmes dealing with animals and birds and all kinds of living creatures in their natural surroundings. Television made it possible for people who live far away from cultural centres to watch concerts, international and national sports events.

But like any other modern invention television has its weak points. If you ask me, I'll say that the worst thing about television is that it leaves so little time for serious study. All kinds of work don't get done properly. I used to do my lessons in front of the screen watching, writing, watching, reading, watching again. I don't do that now. But most of my friends do. I'm sure that it's pretty bad. But not only the quality of their work is affected, their health is ruined as well. Doctors keep reminding us that constant viewing inevitably leads to poor health through eyestrain, lack of sleep and lack of exercise. Nowadays psychologists are deeply concerned about the nervous system of teenagers. . The violence people get on television now, not only in films, has a terrible effect on young people especially children. They say that a child is being exposed to so much violence and crime that he is unable to differentiate between good and evil. Therefore he becomes aggressive and doesn't feel safe and happy. Actually we don't know how it affects their behaviour. But I'm sure the effect is negative.

A US poet Thomas Eliot wrote: "Television is a medium of entertainment which permits millions of people to listen to the same joke at the same time, and yet remain lonesome". I think it means that people begin to forget the art of conversation, they sit glued to the television screen instead of visiting their friends and relatives. In conclusion I want to say that television is surely one of the greatest inventions, but you shouldn't get addicted to it.

It's a well-known fact that advertising is penetrating all spheres of our life. It's so powerful that you just can't avoid it. You can see adverts everywhere, they are all around you; on the television and radio, in magazines and newspapers. Adverts are everywhere in the streets, on big posters and bill boards. When I sit down to watch the show and I'm really enjoying the story, suddenly the film stops and I have to look at beautiful and slim women wearing luxurious clothes or men driving their super-expensive cars. The things that our family simply can't afford. So my time is actually wasted. I don't take advertising seriously. I don't like ads for washing powders, which always say they get your clothes whiter than white, and show housewives testing them. In some ways we become victims of advertising. We are sold an image and we buy it even if it isn't what we actually need. Sometimes we are sold things which are dangerous to us. Companies try to target the young and fashionable when they advertise alcohol and cigarettes. They try to make it look —cool and trendy to smoke. Many people start drinking and smoking only because they want to identify themselves with

the image of the product. You can't but agree that it is morally wrong to advertise a product that has been proved, through medical research, to be so bad for your health.

Of course there are people who think that advertising provides a valuable service as it brings to your attention many products that you really need or want, it makes much easier the problem of choice taking the load of responsibility off our mind. They also say that it is important for the development of trade. Well... I don't know... I can agree that some commercials are really creative and informative. They are full of fun, humour and fantasy. But I think advertising is rather a curse than a blessing for our society.

Mass Media

Mass media play an important part in our lives. Newspapers, radio and especially TV inform us of what is going on in this world and give us wonderful possibilities for education and entertainment. They also influence the way we see the world and shape our views.

Of course, not all newspapers and TV programmes report the events objectively, but serious journalists and TV reporters try to be fair and provide us with reliable information.

It is true that the world today is full of dramatic events and most news seems to be bad news. But people aren't interested in ordinary events. That is why there are so many programmes and articles about natural disasters, plane crashes; wars, murders and robberies. Good news doesn't usually make headlines. Bad news does.

Some people say that journalists are given too much freedom. They often intrude on people's private lives. They follow celebrities and print sensational stories about them which are untrue or half-true. They take photos of them in their most intimate moments. The question is — should this be allowed?

The main source of news for millions of people is television. People like TV news because they can see everything with their own eyes. And that's an important advantage. Seeing, as we know, is believing. Besides, it's much more difficult for politicians to lie in front of the cameras than on the pages of newspapers.

Still, many people prefer the radio. It's good to listen to in the car, or in the open air, or when you do something about the house.

Newspapers don't react to events as quickly as TV, but they usually provide us with extra detail, comment and background information.

The Internet has recently become another important source of information. Its main advantage is that news appears on the screen as soon as things happen in real life and you don't have to wait for news time on TV.

Newspapers

In the past people learnt about news from newspapers. Nowadays people usually learn what is happening in the country and in the world from TV or radio news programmes or from the Internet.

Still we cannot imagine our life without newspapers. There are dozens of them on every news-stand. There are newspapers for professionals, for businessmen, for children and teenagers, for men and women, for sports fans, for those who are interested in gardening and for those who keep pets.

Some newspapers publish serious articles on politics, economy and finance, some aim to entertain their readers. Many newspapers express certain political opinion and people choose them according to their own political beliefs. In short, you can always find a paper which suits your interests.

Besides, there are many free local newspapers which are put into your post-box whether you ask for it or not. Probably they are not interesting, because they consist mainly of advertisements, but you can find a lot of useful telephone numbers and addresses there.

My parents subscribe to *Argumenty i Factly*. I also like this weekly. I don't read all the articles, but in every issue I find something interesting. I think that most articles are very well written, they give a detailed and well-balanced analysis of current events and trends in economy. I like to read articles on social issues, interviews, reviews of new books, plays and TV shows. One of my favourite columns is *The Quotation of the Day*, where they quote our popular politicians and give their comments. Sometimes it's very funny.

Quite often I buy *Sovershenno Secretno (Top Secret)* and practically in each issue there are some fascinating stories which you read like a detective story. Sometimes they uncover things I have not heard about, sometimes they show well-known events in a completely new light.

From time to time I read *Moskovsky Komsomolets*. It's one of the most popular daily papers, but I don't consider it serious. However, I never miss an article written by Minkin. I think he is a very good journalist. I also like Merinov's cartoons. Sometimes they publish good reviews of new films, new CDs and so on.

In short, I think that TV, radio and the Internet have their advantages, but nothing can substitute newspapers.

TV or not TV?

Whether we realise it or not, TV plays a very important part in our life.

It's the main source of information and a cheap form of entertainment for millions of people.

It's the window on the world which gives us an opportunity to "travel" all over the world, to "meet" different people and learn about their customs and traditions .

It has the power to educate and broaden our minds.

It helps us to relax after a hard day's work and escape from reality.

There's always a great variety of programmes on TV: news and sports programmes, talk shows and TV games, documentaries and feature films, concerts and theatre performances...

Of course, not all programmes are good. But many are made in good taste and with great professional skill.

Some people argue that television is a terrible waste of time. It makes us lazier. We stay at home instead of going out. We read less. We think less. We even talk less.

It's true that some TV addicts spend hours in front of the "box" watching whatever's on — from second-rate Mexican soap operas to silly commercials.

The trick is to learn to control television and use it intelligently. The ideal is to turn on the TV-set only when there's a really interesting programme.

Violence on TV is another problem that worries people. As George Mikes once said, TV teaches us "how to kill, to rob, to shoot and to poison." But the same can be said about computer games and many films and books. And if you don't like a certain programme, why watch it?

6. WEATHER. CLIMATE

Weather and Climate

In my view, a person's life depends to a certain degree on the climatic conditions he lives in. English people say: "There's no bad weather, there are bad clothes», but in reality bad weather influences our mood, emotions and even the physical state.

Today our planet is in danger because of global warming. It is the result of human's activities. Over the past century human activities have released huge amounts of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. These gases trap energy in the atmosphere and make it warm. As the climate has become warmer, some types of extreme weather have become more frequent, including extreme heat, intense precipitation, drought and flooding. Recent weather events such as deadly heat waves and devastating floods all over the world are the result of global warming. A warming climate can affect our water supplies, agriculture, our health and safety. Changes in extreme weather threaten human health, destabilize ecosystems and cause economic hardship.

Oceans are warming and becoming more acidic, ice caps are melting and sea levels are rising. If the temperature rises as much as 1,5°C, it will cause a lot of ice near the North and South Poles to melt, making more water go into the oceans. Many coastal areas like Venice, New York and others can get under water.

The climate of many countries has already changed. The average temperature rises, that's why dry countries become drier, hot countries become hotter.

Every day on TV we can see how droughts, tsunami, floods destroy countries. Some years ago in Africa there was a snowfall and a lot of people were hurt.

What concerns Belarus, our country has also experienced extreme weather severe heat waves and heavy showers in summer, severe frost or lack of snow in winter. But most environmentalists say that strong winds are the main threat because they have become more frequent and intense which is very dangerous for Belarusian agriculture management and infrastructure.

I'm sure global warming and the rise of temperature can kill us in future, that's why we should be very careful with our planet.

People should broaden ecological education. Governments must take serious measures against pollution. To my mind, we should remove factories from cities, use modern technologies, plant more trees and don't use harmful chemicals. We should remember that our planet is our home. We should realize that we are all responsible for our planet and we must think about the future of the world we live in.

In conclusion I should say we must save our planet for future generations.

Let's talk about weather and climate.

What do you know about weather and climate?

Climate isn't the same as weather. Climate shows the average weather conditions over a long period of time. There are different types of climate: tropical, continental, polar, moderate, etc. Weather is the state of the atmosphere over a short period of time. Weather *can* be dry, wet, cold, hot, rainy, stormy, sunny, windy, cloudy, etc.

It's common knowledge that the most weather-obsessed people in the world are the British. According to the latest survey they spend six months of their lives discussing weather. British people say that they have no climate, only weather. Britain's weather is very changeable, unpredictable and annoying. It's the most popular topic of conversations because there is always something to say about it. It may be quite sunny in the morning, then it may rain and after that the weather may improve. So, you should always carry an umbrella, just in case. But British people are very proud of their weather whatever it may be.

As for Belarusian climate, it's moderately continental with mild, humid winters, warm summers and damp autumns and springs. The average temperature in winter is about -5°C. The average temperature in summer is about 25°C. Belarusian spring and autumn can be very rainy. But every season is beautiful and pleasant in its way.

Some weather conditions can affect our health and mood. High temperatures cause stress and heart attacks. Windy or rainy weather can make people feel depressed or irritated. Cold weather causes colds. But I quite agree with an English proverb "There's no bad weather, there are bad clothes". Even if the frost is severe you can have fun with your friends, play snowballs, skate or enjoy the beauty of nature. You should just choose the right clothes and enjoy any kind of weather influences our mood, emotions and even the physical state. Some people, especially, the old are weather dependent. As for me, I'm not weather dependent. I am young and I have a good health. But on some days when I feel tired and when the weather is cloudy, rainy or windy I can feel bad.

If you are a weather dependent person, I advise you to learn the weather forecast for the day and if it's negative for you, try to do something pleasant and relaxing to raise your mood.

Ecology

The Earth is the only place in the solar system where there is life. But today our planet is in serious danger. Acid rains, global warming, air and water pollution, overpopulation are the most threatening ecological problems. They are the result of human's activity.

Our seas are filled with industrial and nuclear wastes and chemicals. The North and the Aral seas are nearly dead.

Our forests disappear because they are cut down or burnt. Some of them die from acid rains. Rain forests disappear at an alarming rate. Factories emit tons of harmful chemicals. They are the main reasons causing acid rains, the depletion of the ozone layer and the greenhouse effect. The climate of many countries has already changed. Every day on TV we can see how droughts, tsunamis, floods destroy countries.

The world's population is growing very fast and it causes food shortages and hunger. Unfortunately, Belarus has suffered greatly from Chernobyl disaster in 1986. About 20% of the country's soils are unfit for farming because of the radioactive

contamination. There are even territories unfit for living. Radioactive elements increase the risk of cancer. The questions of the rational use of water resources, the protection from pollution are of primary importance.

A lot of people suffer from poor health because of pollution.

That's why nature protection should be everybody's concern. People should broaden ecological education. Governments must take serious actions against pollution. To my mind, we should remove factories from cities, use modern technologies, reduce, reuse and recycle our wastes. We should realize that we are all responsible for our planet and we must think about the future of the world we live in.

The weather forecast

1. The day will start mainly bright with some fog. Much of the UK will be sunny and dry with light or *moderate* winds later in the day. The south-east, East Anglia and Lincolnshire will see more sunshine in the afternoon, and *cloud* will begin to thicken across north-eastern England during the evening. Western Scotland and Northern Ireland have the chance of patchy (местами) light rain or drizzle for a time.

The average day temperatures will range from plus 15 Degrees Celsius in the Scottish Highlands to plus 20 Degrees Celsius in the southeast of the UK.

On the whole, it will be a fantastic warm day. Have a good day, and fair weather, moderate - neither very great nor very small in amount, size, or strength

2. The UK will feel generally mild today under mostly overcast skies. London and southern England will have a cloudy and *breezy* but dry day, with brighter spells (intervals) in places. The rest of southern England, along with the Midlands and East Anglia, will also be gusty (с порывистым ветром) but dry. Wales and northern England will see windy weather, with patchy rain later in the day. Northern Ireland will have drizzle or downpours and be *blowy*, too, as will Scotland, where there's a chance of sunshine and a few showers.

Remember, there's no bad weather, there are bad clothes.

1. In much of (Wales) / In Belarus / In the southern regions
the day / the week

will start with

early fog/frost/a light wind /a lot of sun shine /frosty weather
in the morning /at the beginning.

2. The north / The central areas

will see

rainy weather / a lot of rain / a thunderstorm

which will move further south / to the north

during the day / later in the afternoon / later in

the week.

3. In the evening /at the weekend / at the end of the week
the weather

will turn / will become / will get

dry / fresh / warm / cold / stormy

in the east of the country.

4. The temperature will be (-5 °C) *in the morning*.

It will rise *I* fall by (three) degrees *by noon*

and it will fall to *I* rise to +2 °C *in the evening*.

The night temperature will be around average *I* a bit higher.

The average day temperatures will range from(+17°C) to (24°C).

5. On the whole, it will be a (rainy) day, but whatever the weather, stay healthy and happy, and have a good day!

About favourite seasons

Speaker 1: Oh, what horrible weather we have today. Yesterday it was sunny and cold and the air was full of magnificent snowflakes that covered every inch of the ground. And when the snow stopped falling it was quiet and peaceful. It was like a bit of magic before Christmas. Winter time is definitely my favourite time of the year. But not today. Look at the street. It's sleety and there's mud everywhere! And look at my new boots, I bet they are spoilt now! I can't stand when the temperature goes up and the snow melts and turns into small dirty puddles that I have to jump over on my way to work.

Speaker 2: It was a fantastic day. Just look at this picture. It was early in the morning on a chilly autumn day. The whole previous day the sky was overcast and it rained and rained. That downpour seemed endless, but in the evening the sky cleared up. And we even saw a flash of the sun before the sunset. And in the morning I took this picture. Can you see this beautiful and mysterious fog rising up above the lake? They call it evaporation, but it doesn't sound so poetic. I prefer calling it a mist. Though I don't fancy autumn much, I prefer hot boiling summer more, that day was the one I'd remember.

Speaker 3: My favourite season is summer since I can spend the weekend in my garden. I enjoy watching the nature. In summer it is so nice that the flowers dance with the leaves. But that day drove me absolutely crazy. I spent the whole day planting those roses in my garden. They said it was going to be a mild day with some gentle showers after lunch. But instead of a light rain black clouds blanketed the sky, threatening everyone of a heavy downpour. Sparkling bright lightning flashed, and then a great clap of thunder came close. And at once it started to hail! Can you imagine, in the middle of the summer! I could collect a hand full of those little white beads. The hail was short, but hard and of course my roses got frozen.

Speaker 4: I like different times of the year. I enjoy the grass covered with dew or sleet. I think it's nice to watch snowflakes or raindrops falling on your window. Or the beginning of a thunderstorm when a strong wind or gale hits the trees so hard they bend double. But best of all I like a clear frosty winter day when the sun is so bright I can hardly open my eyes. On such a day you can see icicles on the roof of your house or a garage. They shine like diamonds in the sunrays and it's fun to watch them growing bigger and bigger.

Climate and weather in Great Britain

The climate in Great Britain is mild and temperate due to the influence of the Gulf Stream.

The British often say: "Other countries have a climate; in England we have weather." The weather in Britain is very changeable. A fine morning can change into a wet afternoon and evening. And a nasty morning can change to a fine afternoon. That's why it is natural for the British to use the comparison "as changeable as the weather" of a person who often changes his mood or opinion about something.

The British also say that they have three variants of weather: when it rains in the morning, when it rains in the afternoon or when it rains all day long.

The weather is the favourite conversational topic in England. When two Englishmen meet, their first words will be "How do you do?" or "How are you?" And after the reply "Very well, thank you; how are you?" the next - remark is almost certain to be about the weather. When they go abroad the British often surprise people of other nationalities by this tendency to talk about the weather, a topic of conversation that other people do not find so interesting.

The best time of the year in Britain is spring (of course, it rains in spring too).

The two worst months in Britain are January and February. They are cold, damp and unpleasant. The best place in the world then is at home by the big fire.

Summer months are rather cold and there can be a lot of rainy days. So most people who look forward to summer holidays, plan to go abroad for the summer — to France, Spain or some other place on the Continent.

The most unpleasant aspect of British weather is fog and smog. This is extremely bad in big cities and especially in London.

The fog spreads everywhere, it is in the streets and it creeps into the houses. Cars move along slowly, but still street accidents are frequent in the fog. People cannot see each other. They creep along the houses touching them with their hands not to lose their way or not to be run over by a car

The weather in Belarus

I'd like to say that the weather in Belarus depends greatly on the climatic conditions in the eastern part of the European continent. In England, for example, it depends on the sea and they say that they have no climate, only weather as it may change several times during the day. Perhaps for this reason the weather topic is favourite with the English and is at the same time a good conversation starter.

Here in Belarus we don't talk much of the weather, we just take it as it is. There are four definitely marked seasons here which considerably differ from each other. In general the climate in Belarus can be characterized as moderately continental. It means that winters are fairly cold and summers are moderately hot. Though, of course, there may be exceptions.

Although each season lasts three months, in reality some of the seasons are longer and some are shorter. The longest in Belarus is winter. Snow may fall as early as November and may not melt as late as the end of March. Summer on the contrary is the shortest season. It becomes really warm somewhere late in June. Late August is often rainy and cool as if warning that autumn is near.

Every season is good in its own way. And every season has its own negative features. Consider autumn for instance. It is the time when nature fades away. The days grow shorter. Cold weather sets in. Hoar frost covers the ground at night. It rains. Some

autumn days may be really nasty when it doesn't stop raining for days or even weeks. But in spite of all this I like autumn. It's the period when the leaves are of beautiful colours from yellow to dark red. It's the time of harvest and a splendid variety of fruit and vegetables that only autumn can offer.

Winter in Belarus usually comes in November. At this time the countryside looks gloomy, calm and still. Snow covers up the ground and the roofs of the houses. On frosty days the branches of the trees are feathered with snow. In winter the sky is often grey and cloudy and it sometimes gets rather depressing and boring. Maybe one of the most unpleasant things about winter is that the sun sets early and rises late. The days are short and most people spend long dark winter evenings at home.

Summer comes in June and lasts usually till the end of August. The average temperature in summer is about 20-22 degrees above zero. Everyone would agree that summer is by far the best loved season. Who doesn't enjoy bathing on a hot day in a cool river, picking mushrooms in the forest, basking in the sun on the beach and so on. I am crazy about things like this. But the main thing is certainly having a two-month holiday. It is great fun for schoolchildren.

And yet, the best season of the year for me is spring. I love spring. It is the time when nature comes to life again after its winter rest. Everything around is in bloom. The first flowers appear, trees put on new green leaves and everything is fresh and fragrant. In May cherry and apple trees burst into blossom and it's a breath-taking sight. So in spring the nature starts living anew. I enjoy long walks in the country when everything is green. I share the opinion of those who say that spring is the season of love, hope and happiness.

Does it always rain in Britain?

TM: Today our guest is an expert in weather and climate, a member of Royal meteorological society, a popular weather forecaster Simon King.

Hello Simon. And my first question is ... Is it true that it always rains in Britain?

SK: Well, contrary to a popular belief, it DOES NOT rain every day in Britain. However, it's always advisable to bring some kind of a waterproof coat if you plan to visit the Isles and keep yourself psychologically prepared!

TM: So, it's true that a real Englishman carries around an umbrella and a pair of sunglasses in case the weather suddenly changes.

SK: You see, Britain is an island country and the surrounding sea gives it a varied climate. We never know what the weather will be like from one day to other. It can be sunny one day and rainy the next. As we have such a changeable weather from day to day it is difficult to predict it.

TM: Could you explain to our readers why it changes so fast. They say in Britain if you don't like the weather, wait a minute.

SK: The main influence on our climate is our closeness to the Atlantic Ocean and the warming of the waters around the land by the Gulf Stream (a warm current of the northern Atlantic Ocean).

Our island is small compared with the other land masses in the northern hemisphere – as a result Britain is more influenced by the ocean compared with other European countries, and the Gulf Stream helps to keep winters milder.

TM: So what is British climate like?

SK: In general we have warm summers and cool winters. Our summers are cooler than those on the continent, but the winters are milder. The overall climate in England is called temperate maritime. This means that it is mild with temperatures not much lower than 0°C in winter and not much higher than 32°C in summer. It also means that it is damp and changes frequently.

TM: What about the best time to visit the UK.

SK: July and August are normally the warmest month in England.

Around the coasts, February is normally the coldest month, but inland there is little to choose between January and February as the coldest month.

Probably the best months to travel in England are May, June, September and October. These months generally have the most pleasant temperatures and less rain. But even at that time be prepared for sometimes harsh weather conditions in the mountainous regions of Scotland.

July and August are the warmest months, but they are also the wettest. The sunniest parts of the Britain are along the south coast of England.

TM: And how come that British people have such a fascination with weather and weather forecasts?

SK: It's true, we love talking about the forecasts. And to answer we need to go back to the beginning of our conversation. We've already mentioned several times that the weather changes so often on our Isles and it's so unpredictable. As a result it brings some sort of a challenge to our everyday life. So to say we are a meteorologically-challenged nation! That's probably why discussing weather became a part of our daily routine.

TM: I see. And my last question would be what your favourite time of the year is.

SK: Well, I like St. Luke's summer. It is a period of fine, calm weather in the beginning of October. I normally try to get some days off and travel to the seaside to enjoy some sunshine before a gloomy winter.

TM: Thank you, Simon.

There is no bad weather, there are bad clothes

In my view a person's life depends to a certain degree on the climatic conditions he lives in. Though the English say «There's no bad weather, there are bad clothes», in reality bad weather influences our mood, emotions and even the physical state. Moreover, the- economy of whole countries and their agriculture are determined by the climate.

As we live in the eastern part of Europe, the seasons here have their own specific features, both attractive and unpleasant. Let's take autumn, for instance, when the nature fades away. The days grow shorter and nights become longer. The leaves turn yellow and fall to the ground. Gradually its gets colder and colder. But worst of all is rain and drizzle. There are days when it rains for a while then the rain stops, but soon it starts again — and this goes on throughout the day. All these things are well- known and nobody can say he likes them.

Yet there are many people, who like autumn. They try to look at the bright side of this season. They see autumn as the time of golden leaves, when the nature is quiet and

attractive. Poets of all nations have sung autumn as the most beautiful time of the year. Golden autumn, they call it, and it's really fantastic when the Indian summer sets in. I love that short spell of dry sunny weather when the sky is blue and cloudless, the trees around are golden, the air is transparent and it is still warm. Lord Byron, unlike Pushkin, didn't like autumn. So once he said: «I like the weather, when it's not raining. That is, I like two months of every year. They are certainly not autumn months». Autumn with rain and drizzle doesn't appeal to me either.

I like winter much better. In my opinion the white kingdom of winter is wonderful. At this time nature is having a rest. Snow covers up the ground, and the vast fields blanketed with snow which glitters in the sun, look fabulous to me. I admire forests in winter as well. The only disadvantage is that the days are short. Many people stay most of their time inside, though many of them do winter sports like skiing or skating. I usually make myself comfortable in front of the TV set on cold winter evenings. But at the same time there is no denying the fact that winter is a hard time. Think of severe frosts and long dark nights when the wind is howling outside. But as we know neither good nor bad things last forever. Winter is always followed by spring and then summer.

Summer usually lasts for three months in Belarus. The warmest is July. It's never too hot or too cold here in summer. But last summer was unusually cool with many rainfalls and storms. The temperatures didn't go above 20°.

Although summer is the best and the happiest season for most people, my favourite season is spring. It is the time when nature changes from grey to green and from cold to warm. Spring comes rather late in Belarus. March is cold and April is usually cool and rainy but May is really beautiful, especially when the trees are in blossom. I love spring, it makes me feel more cheerful and active. And in conclusion, I want to say again that every season is beautiful and attractive in its own way and we never stop wondering at the nature's wisdom and harmony.

Climate

1. The satellite photographs showed the hole in the ozone layer over Antarctica. The hole is pink and white on the computer photograph. The ozone layer stops some of the ultraviolet radiation from the sun. Too much ultraviolet radiation causes skin cancer.

2. CFCs* in the atmosphere have caused the hole. Scientists first discovered the hole in 1982, and it is getting bigger. Thirty percent of CFCs come from aerosol cans, thirty percent from fridges and air-conditioning and thirty - four per cent from the manufacture of some plastic products.

3. Sunlight gives us heat. Some of the heat warms the atmosphere, and some of the heat escapes back into space. During the last 100 years we have produced a huge amount of carbon dioxide. The carbon dioxide in the atmosphere works like a glass in the greenhouse. It allows heat to get in, but it doesn't allow much heat to get out. So the atmosphere becomes warmer because less heat can escape.

4. Where does the carbon dioxide come from? People and animals breathe in oxygen and breath out carbon dioxide. Trees take carbon dioxide from the air, and produce oxygen. We produce carbon dioxide when we burn coal, oil, petrol, gas or wood. In the last few years, people have burned huge areas of rainforest. This means there are fewer trees, and of course, more carbon dioxide.

5. Is the climate changing? Some scientists think the greenhouse effect will make the world hotter. Areas near the water will be cloudier and wetter. There will be more storms. Inland areas will have a little more rain, but because the temperature will be higher, they will be drier. Sea levels will rise. But clouds reflect sunlight back into space, and maybe more clouds will make the earth cooler again.

CFCs* — хлоро-фторо углерод, используемый в холодильниках и аэрозолях.

Carbon dioxide* — углекислый газ.

Is thunder dangerous?

There are many people who actually tremble with fear at the sound of a clap of thunder during a thunderstorm. There is absolutely no reason to have any fear of thunder. By the time the sound of thunder reaches you, the bolt of electricity which caused it has already done its work. You hear the thunder after the lightning flash simply because sound travels much more slowly than light.

During a thunderstorm you can tell how far away the centre of the storm is in this way. Light travels very quickly. It can go round the world seven times in one second, so lightning reaches your eyes instantly.

Should you be afraid of lightning? It is electricity in the air. Well, there is no question that lightning can cause damage, and in some rare cases it has even been known to kill people. But your chances of being struck by lightning are quite small.

Lightning, of course, is a form of electricity, and this is what can make it dangerous. It is a giant spark of electricity that we see as a bright flash of light. Electricity in the air has no wires, so it jumps from one place to another. It may jump across the space between two clouds or from cloud to earth or even from earth to cloud!

During a storm, different electrical charges (positive or negative) are built up by the clouds and the earth. When the difference between the charges becomes great enough, a spark — which is lightning — jumps the space between.

During and after an electrical discharge, currents of air expand and the noise we call «thunder».

Seasons

There are four seasons in the year. Each of them brings different weather and different dresses. When it is hot people wear T-shirts and shorts, light blouses and skirts, sport shoes, socks and sandals. In cold weather people usually put on warm clothes: jeans and trousers, sweaters and jackets, overcoats and caps. In winter they wear fur coats and fur caps, high boots and mittens or gloves.

When Englishmen say: «There is no bad weather, there are bad clothes», it means that they like all the seasons, all kinds of weather. Every season is good in its own way. Each person likes this or that season. It depends on his character, mood.

They say that Pushkin liked autumn very much. This season is full of colours, bright and tasty. Autumn is full of vegetables and fruit, mushrooms and berries. There is nothing like Indian summer in autumn. As for me, I like to walk on the carpet of bright leaves listen to the last songs of birds flying to warm countries, look at the nature. It is like a fairy-tale. It fades away and nothing can be done. Soon drizzling rains will begin and everything will be dull and sad. But still I like autumn.

Winter in Belarus is also beautiful. It often snows in winter. Fluffy soft snowflakes fall to the ground making a beautiful thick carpet. Many people go to the forests and enjoy tobogganing and skiing, playing snowballs and making a snowman.

Spring is the beginning of new life. Nature awakens from its long winter sleep. The trees begin to bud and soon tiny green leaves appear. Young green grass appear, fruit trees begin to blossom. Everything looks magic covered with green carpet.

I like summer because we have holiday and enjoy resting after a long school year. In my opinion every season is beautiful and attractive.

Seasons

There are four seasons in the year: winter, spring, summer and autumn. And every season has its charm: a sunny, frosty day in winter when everything is white and looks like a fairy-tale, a warm spring day, when little green leaves and grass are just appearing, a summer day after a thunder-storm when nature is so quiet and fresh, the air is pure and there is a rainbow in the sky, or an autumn day of Indian summer, when the leaves have already turned yellow and reddish and cover the ground with a multicoloured carpet, when the sun shines but it is not hot, when nature slowly falls asleep.

My favourite season is summer. You can easily guess why. The reason is quite obvious. In summer we have the longest holidays. Holidays are great; they shine out from the grey routines of everyday life. It's nice to swim in the river on a hot summer day. I'm fond of lying in the sun and getting sunburnt. We play sports and go hiking. Nature is so charming in summer. The flowers are showing their colours: yellow, red, orange, violet, white, pink. The birds are singing their wonderful songs. The butterflies and bees are dancing in the air. Every creature is thankful to the Sun. Indeed, there is a lot to be thankful for!

I enjoy going to the forest and picking berries and mushrooms in summer. Imagine it's a warm, rainy day and you are in a forest. You can find yourself under a branchy tree in the company of your dog and insects. We are all together; we feel the rain whispering to us something wonderful and comforting. The air is amazingly pure and fresh. When the weather is dry and warm farmers make hay and weed the plants. At the end of summer fruit and vegetables get ripe and very soon the harvest comes.

For many of us autumn starts on the 1st of September. This day is an official holiday- the Day of Knowledge. The weather is very changeable in autumn. Sometimes it's warm and sunny, but sometimes it drizzles, the sky is grey and covered with clouds. The days become shorter and the nights longer. We see the birds flying away. They are no longer singing, they are — packing . But there is a short spell of good warm weather at the end of October as if summer comes back to say —good-buy to you. It is called an Indian summer.

Winter sets in December. Winter is the coldest season of the year. In winter the days become shorter and the nights are longer. The shortest day of the year is the 22nd of December. But winter days can also be beautiful with their sunshine and hoarfrost on the trees. Winter is a very good time for sports. People go to the woods to ski, to make snowmen and to play snowballs, they can also go to the skating -rink and skate there. In winter we celebrate the most wonderful holiday New Year's Day. At the end of

February or at the beginning of March the snow begins to melt and streams flow in the streets, birds come back from warm countries and make their nests, animals clean and build their shelters, insects wake up and look for food in green gardens. Fruit trees show themselves in their blossoming beauty. The first flowers - snowdrops appear in the woods. Nature returns to life. People spend a lot of time working in their gardens. Spring is one of the beloved seasons for many people. It's a promising time for the old and the young.

To sum everything up I can say that every season is beautiful in its own way.

7. STUDIES

Practice makes perfect

Do you follow this proverb in your studies?

As you know, our modern world makes a person be flexible and mobile, creative and inventive, literate and well-read, ecologically and socially conscious. It makes him know how to use modern technologies and learn foreign languages. Modern life makes a person broaden his horizons as long as he lives. People have to get education during all their lives.

To get knowledge people need education: they need to learn a lot of theory and get practical experience. I mean they need to turn theoretical knowledge into practical skills. Nowadays we can get education at school, college and university. There are also a lot of possibilities for self-education in the modern world.

You can't obtain knowledge without practice and hard work. It takes us a lot of time to get deep knowledge and develop practical skills. It goes without saying that people are different. They have different abilities and natural talents. For example, some, primary school children are a success due to their abilities. They find it easy to study at school. At the same time there are pupils who have problems with learning and memorizing new information. They usually find lessons difficult. But the main task of school is to develop a child's personality and talents. Our teachers always try to show us how to learn difficult things. In my view, any child is given a possibility to be a success at school. His achievements and progress depend on his everyday hard work.

It often happens that successful primary pupils with good natural abilities have no achievements in secondary school and vice versa. To my mind, a hard working child has more chances to get good knowledge and develop practical skills than a lazy child with lots of talents. The secret of this success is simple. He should follow a wise proverb that practice makes perfect.

Let's remember Horatio Nelson. He seemed very unlikely to become a sea-man. However, despite his physical weakness he impressed his fellow pupils at grammar school by his great will. He did much physical exercise to achieve his aim. At the age of 14 he was allowed to join an expedition to the North Pole. He became a famous British admiral.

As for me, I'm keen on learning. I like to study hard to achieve good results and to get deep knowledge. I think that I should learn every school subject well and every subject is interesting for me. I get only excellent marks and it makes me feel proud and

happy. I strongly believe to be a success I should study hard every day of my school-life.

A good example to prove the idea that practice makes perfect in learning a foreign language. We start learning it with vocabulary and grammar. At first pupils can use only separate words and phrases. It takes them a lot of time and practice to master a language.

English is one of those languages which may seem easy in the beginning, but then the bridge between basic knowledge and mastery takes a long time to cross. Students who learn English have to memorize a lot of words, idioms, phrasal verbs, rules how to use prepositions, articles and so on. Every day I try to memorize English words, phrases and practise them. I try to learn new word combinations in context in order to learn how they should be used. When I learn a rule for the first time, it usually seems easy. But when I am given a complicated task, I often make mistakes. Only after having a lot of drills do I start to realize that I remember the rule. It happens that I forget words, phrases or rules when I don't use them for some time. The only way out is to revise the things I have already studied. It proves that practice makes perfect.

In my view, if I practise English every day, I will be able to master it. I read books, newspapers, magazines and other periodicals, it allows me to enlarge my vocabulary, learn up-to-date idioms and phrasal verbs, learn to guess the meaning of the words from their context and brush up my knowledge. Watching videos and TV programmes helps to learn informal English, practice listening and learn non-verbal communication.

As a person I'm persistent, hardworking, confident and patient. So, I'm not afraid of drills, learning a lot, doing tests or having exams. I want to be an educated and intelligent person who has an interesting and well-paid job. That's why studying hard is interesting and important for me.

The comprehensive system of education

A good education helps to develop their personalities and make their way in society. Opinions on what kind of school provides the best education differ considerably in Britain, as they do in Germany and other countries as well. Here is the view of a well-known British politician.

The comprehensive reform is controversial mainly because it is widely believed that academically able children suffer from being educated together with their less able contemporaries. The debate has centred on systems, not on schools. Would a comprehensive system produce better or worse results academically and socially than a selective system? Or would the results vary according to whether children were average, above average or below average academically? For Western Europe, so dependent on a good educational base, the answers to such questions matter. The findings of the study were surprising only to those who were deeply prejudiced against comprehensive schools. "Those in comprehensive schools did as well and as badly as if selection had still been in operation and some had gone to grammars and the rest to secondary moderns", the report concluded.

The social case for the comprehensive school has always been unanswerable. By educating children of different backgrounds and of different abilities together,

comprehensive schools begin to break down class barriers and the mutual ignorance of different social groups, and create the context for a more democratic, open and unprejudiced society. The only argument against comprehensive education is the educational one, that children's academic achievements will be worse if they are educated together rather than being segregated according to their abilities.

**Do young people enjoy going to school nowadays?
What do you think on the point?**

School is the place to...	provide oneself with... segregate pupils according... test oneself in all sorts of...
Learning is fun when it (is)...	available not dull varies relevant (to modern life)
A good education helps...	to develop a personality to find a place in society to guarantee good wages
The greatest thing at school is to learn...	to get along with... to get much information to study to carry on with studies
But some people have trouble at school because...	can't cope with... don't keep (them) interested far from real life don't consider worth-while...

I believe... I'm convinced that... Well, if you ask me... What I'm trying to say is...

What is the modern school in your view?

Modern school is a school with a free choice of subjects	It is a school where pupils and teachers are good partners and companions	It is a school with the greatest possible educational opportunities.
to suit individual needs a fairly wide range of subjects... to concentrate on a few things variety of subjects narrow area of study a bright pupil	fellowship partnership to encourage children's concern for... to become aware of problems to value equally to keep in touch with... to sort out problems to offer an opportunity	modern facilities special educational needs to examine in great depth pretty good knowledge understanding of the

to do well	to learn more about themselves	world
to start specializing	to take part in wide range of	technology moves
to discover new talents	activities	ahead
leads you into a job	to plan work, visits	to measure progress
to broaden knowledge	to appeal to pupils who have	not to drop subjects
	energy	too early
	Knowledge is the highest	business technology
	privy-ledge of the day	to reform smth
		to a high standard

It is obvious... I can't agree that... In other words... Talking of... I realize... If I've got it right... What I really mean is... All I'm trying to say, is...

The Test from Socrates

In ancient Greece, Socrates was reputed to hold respect for high esteem. One day Socrates met an acquaintance who ran up to him excitedly and said:

“Socrates, do you know what I have just heard about one of your students?”

“Wait a minute” said Socrates.

“Before you tell me I would like to conduct a little test. It is called the Triple Filter Test. The first filter is Truth. Have you made sure that what you are going to tell me is true?”

“No,” said the man, “Actually I just heard about it.”

“All right,” said Socrates, “so you don't really know if it is true. Now let us try the second filter, Goodness. Is what you are going to tell me about my student something good?”

“No, on the contrary...”

Socrates continued, “You want to tell me something bad about him, even though you are not certain it is true.”

The man shrugged, embarrassed. Socrates continued,

“Now we apply the third filter – the filter of Usefulness. Is what you are going to tell me about my student is going to be useful to me?”

“No, not really...”

Socrates concluded, “If what you tell me is neither True nor Good nor Useful, why tell it to me at all.”

You should know your intelligences

Knowing your strong and weak intelligences can help you in many ways. First of all, it will help to determine what is the best way for you to study, that is what helps you and makes remembering things easier. Secondly, you know what intelligence you should develop – we should teach ourselves, our brain to use all the power we have. Remember that talented people are talented in everything. Don't you think it's because all there intelligences are active? And the last but not the list: knowing your intelligence can help you to decide what career to choose.

So, let's find out which of the seven intelligences you possess.

If you are strong in visual-spatial intelligence you tend to think in images and pictures. You probably like to draw, paint, and make interesting designs and patterns, and work

with clay, coloured markers, construction paper, and fabric. Many who are picture smart love to work jigsaw puzzles, read maps and find their way around new places. You probably have definite opinions about colours that go together well, textures that are appropriate and pleasing, and how a room should be decorated. And, you are likely excellent at performing tasks that require “seeing with the mind’s eyes,” such as visualizing, pretending, imagining, and forming mental images.

If you happen to be a number or logic smart person, you tend to think more conceptually and abstractly and are often able to see patterns and relationships that others miss. You probably like to conduct experiments, to solve puzzles and other problems, analyze circumstances and people’s behaviour. You most likely enjoy working with numbers and mathematical formulas and operations, and you love the challenge of a complex problem to solve. You are probably systematic and organized, and you always have a logical argument for what you are doing or thinking at any given time.

If intrapersonal intelligence is one of your strong points you may like to work alone and sometimes you may shy away from others. You are probably self-reflective and self-aware and thus you tend to be in tune with your inner feelings, values, beliefs, and thinking processes. You frequently have creative wisdom and insight, are highly intuitive, and you are inner motivated rather than needing external rewards to keep you going. You are often strong-willed, self-confident, and have definite, well-thought out opinions on almost any problem. Other people will often come to you for advice and counsel.

If you are body or movement smart, you like physical movement, dancing, making and inventing things with your hands, and role-playing. You probably communicate well through body language and other physical gestures. You can often perform a task much better after seeing someone else do it first and then mimicking their actions. You probably like physical games of all kinds and you like to demonstrate how to do something for someone else. You may find it difficult to sit still for long periods of time and are easily bored or distracted if you are not actively involved in what is going on around you.

If you are strong in musical-rhythmic intelligence area you are likely to have a love of music and rhythmic patterns. You are probably very sensitive to sounds in the environment: rain on the roof, varying traffic patterns. You may study and work better with music in the background. You can often reproduce a melody or rhythmic pattern after hearing it only once. Various sounds, tones, and rhythms may have a visible effect on you. You probably like to create music and you enjoy listening to a wide variety of music. You may be skilled at mimicking sounds, language accents, and others’ speech patterns, and you can probably readily recognize different musical instruments in a composition.

If the naturalist intelligence is one of your strengths you have a profound love for the outdoors, animals, plants, and almost any natural object. You are probably fascinated by and affected by such things as the weather, changing leaves in the fall, the sound of the wind, the warm sun or lack thereof, or an insect in the room. At a young age you were likely nature collectors, adding such things as bugs, rocks, leaves, seashells, sticks, and so on to your collections. You probably brought home all manner and kinds of stray

animals and today you may have several pets and want more. You tend to have a natural liking and respect for all living beings.

If verbal-linguistic is a strong intelligence for you, you have highly developed skills for reading, speaking, and writing and you tend to think in words. You probably like various kinds of literature, playing word games, making up poetry and stories, getting into involved discussions with other people, debating, formal speaking, creative writing, and telling jokes. You are likely precise in expressing yourself and irritated when others are not! You love learning new words, you do well with written assignments, and your comprehension of anything you read is high.

If you possess interpersonal intelligence, this person-to-person way of knowing is more developed in you, you learn through personal interactions. You probably have lots of friends, show a great deal of empathy for other people and exhibit a deep understanding of other points of view. You probably love team activities of all kinds and are a good team member – you “pull your own weight” and often much more! You are sensitive to other people’s feelings and ideas, and are good at building your ideas on others’ thoughts. You are also probably skilled in conflict resolution, mediation, and finding compromise when people are in radical opposition to each other.

Education in Belarus

Pre-school education is not compulsory in Belarus but around 70% of children attend nurseries or kindergartens before they start school.

Most children in Belarus start school at the age of 6.

All pupils must follow the basic education curriculum up to the age of 15, and the vast majority of pupils stay at school until they finish their high school education at 18.

At the age of 15, pupils that have successfully completed basic education can attend college or professional technical institutions where they can focus on completing their high school education and work toward a professional certificate.

Completion of a high school or professional certificate allows students to apply to continue their education at the university level.

The higher education system in Belarus is seen as prestigious due to its high quality and affordability. There are four main types of higher education establishments to choose from, which can be either private or state operated: classical university, profile university or academy, higher college. Most courses run for 5 years and students can choose to study full time, at evening classes or by correspondence. Grants are available for full-time students and scholarships are awarded to very gifted students.

All higher education establishments are governed by the Ministry of Education in Belarus.

More than 6,000 foreign students study at higher education institutions and universities in Belarus every year.

Higher education fees for foreign nationals range from 700—3500 USD depending on the subject and the institution.

Once you have decided to continue your education at a university in Belarus, you will need to contact the university in order to receive an invitation to apply to study there. To do this you will need to provide the following documents: completed

application form, copy of your certificate of education showing your subjects and grades, copy of your passport and birth certificate, copy of your medical certificate.

Most students live in student hostels, which cost around 15—30 USD per month.

There are more than 50 higher education establishments in Belarus

School

School is a special place. It's a temple of knowledge, a place where you grow up and take courage. It's also a place where we make friends, learn to value moral qualities in people and develop our talents and skills. School teaches us to develop our critical and creative thinking, to form our views and outlook, our attitude to life and other people. It teaches us to love our Motherland, to treat Nature carefully, to be honest and hardworking.

As for me I study at Gymnasium which is as I think the best school in our town. There is a great variety of subjects I study at school, but my favourite subjects are English, History and Math's. If you ask me why I go to school I'll say that I go there to acquire general knowledge, to learn how to get that knowledge, then to learn discipline and order and of course I enjoy meeting other people and having a good time with them at school.

Our school as well as any other school has its rules and laws. The pupils should work regularly at home and at the lessons. Besides they have to keep things clean and tidy and mustn't make dog's ears in the books. And of course using foul, racist, offensive language are the things you should never do at school.

Our gymnasium offers modern facilities for studying. We have a good opportunity to learn English. In our library there are a lot of books, reference books, encyclopedias. Here we can search for information from the Internet and relax reading a book. In our Physics, Chemistry and Biology laboratories we can conduct experiments and carry our scientific projects. Our school also offers sport clubs, excursions, school subject weeks and Olympiads. We also have a wide range of out-of-class activities in our school. There is a number of sport clubs and societies to meet the interests of each pupil. They offer opportunities to develop different talents and skills.

As we go to school not only to learn, but also to communicate we have lots of traditions and holidays in our gymnasium. We celebrate the Day of Knowledge, the Last Bell, Graduation Day and others. We also take part in Health Day and school Olympiads.

I personally think our school teaches the whole child. It means that it pays attention to our academic growth of its students, their moral strength and physical development. It teaches us thinking skills through making decisions and choices, and it stirs our curiosity and creativity.

In my opinion every pupil has the same working day. Every day begins with breakfast, then it is studying at school. All time after school is occupied with preparing for classes for the next day. If children have any free time, they spend it before a TV-set screen or visit their friends

And now some words about my working day, I am an early riser. On week-days the alarm-clock wakes me up at 7 and my working day begins. I do my bed and go to the bathroom where I take a shower and clean my teeth. Then I go to the kitchen and have

breakfast. While I'm having breakfast I switch on the radio and listen to the news. Breakfast, as doctors say, must be the most substantial meal of the day. So for breakfast I usually have eggs and sausage, a cheese sandwich and a cup of coffee or tea. Sometimes I like to have some porridge. After breakfast I leave for school. It takes me 15 minutes to get to school by bus, and a bit longer if I go on foot

My classes begin at 8.00. Six or seven lessons a day is my ordinary time-table. So I stay at school till 2.30 or 3p.m When classes are over I go home. I walk home with my friends and we have a nice chat about school and other things When I come home I like to relax by sitting down and talking to my mother about my day until dinner is ready. After dinner I do some cleaning or shopping just to help my mother and after some short rest I do my homework. We study many subjects at school and it takes me almost three or four hours to be ready with it. Sometimes I go to the library to write a report. You see, I have practically no time for television or friends. But nevertheless I try to find time to go to a swimming pool twice a week in order to be in shape. Late in the evening, I say "goodnight" to my parents and go to bed. As a rule, it's about midnight

What would you advise a British student to do to prepare for an exam well?

First of all you should organize your work properly. It's not a bad idea to make a schedule. It will help you to organize your time and your thoughts. I believe that the best way to memorize the information is to use your imagination. The absolutely worst way to study is by cramming. Remember that cramming stores information in your memory for a short period of time. If you want to remember things better you can use mind maps, charts. Making notes is also very helpful.

Personally I like to record my reading aloud of my text. Then I walk around listening over and over until I know it. You should set a short time limit, like half an hour- then take a ten minute break. During the break you can walk around and relax and then get back to studying.

A better saying is: "Perfect practice makes perfect " If one doesn't practice the right way one doesn't get better. When people say: "Practice makes perfect "they mean that through practice a person can reach their full potential. I absolutely agree with the proverb. To become a good specialist in any field you need to practice a lot. You can't imagine a good surgeon or a good teacher with no practice. Of course, different people have different abilities and potential. But at the same time it often happens that successful primary pupils with good natural abilities have no achievements in secondary school and vice versa. To my mind a hard-working child has more chances to get good knowledge and develop practical skills than a lazy child.