

SOCIOLOGY FACULTY

AUTHENTIC READING

(Англомовні аутентичні тексти для студентів соціологічного факультету)

1. THE 'GRAMMAR' OF ENGLISHNESS

(From *Watching the English. The Hidden Rules of English Behaviour*

by Kate Fox)

(1) We are constantly being told that the English have lost their **national identity** – that there is no such thing as ‘Englishness’. There has been a **spate** of books **bemoaning** this **alleged** identity crisis, with titles ranging from the **plaintive** *Anyone for England?* to the inconsolable *England: An Elegy*. Having spent much of the past twelve years doing research on various aspects of English culture and social behaviour – in pubs, at racecourses, in shops, in night-clubs, on trains, on street corners – I am convinced that there *is* such a thing as ‘Englishness’, and that reports of its **demise** have been greatly **exaggerated**. In the research for this book, I set out to discover the hidden, unspoken rules of English behaviour, and what these rules tell us about our national identity.

(2) The object was to identify the *commonalities* in rules governing English behaviour – the unofficial codes of **conduct** that **cut across** class, age, sex, region, sub-cultures and other social boundaries. For example, Women’s Institute members and leather-clad bikers may seem, **on the surface**, to have very little in common, but by looking beyond the ‘ethnographic **dazzle**’ of superficial differences, I found that Women’s Institute members and bikers, and other groups, all behave **in accordance with** the same unwritten rules – rules that define our national identity and character. I would also **maintain**, with George Orwell, that this identity ‘is continuous, it stretches into the future and the past, there is something in it that persists, as in a living creature’.

(3) My aim, if you like, was to provide a ‘grammar’ of English behaviour.

Native speakers can rarely explain the grammatical rules of their own language. **In the same way**, those who are most ‘fluent’ in the rituals, customs and traditions of a particular culture generally lack the **detachment** necessary to explain the ‘grammar’ of these practices in an intelligible manner. This is why we have anthropologists.

(4) Most people **obey the unwritten rules** of their society instinctively, without being conscious of doing so. For example, you automatically get dressed in the morning without consciously reminding yourself that there is an unspoken rule of etiquette that **prohibits** going to work in one’s pyjamas. But if you had an anthropologist staying with you and studying you, she would be asking: ‘Why are you changing your clothes?’ ‘What would happen if you went to work in pyjamas?’ ‘What else can’t you wear to work?’ ‘Why is it different on Fridays?’ ‘Does everyone in your company do that?’ ‘Why don’t the senior managers follow the Dress-down Friday custom?’ **And on, and on**, until you were **heartily** sick of her. Then she would go and watch and **interrogate** other people – from different groups within your society – and, hundreds of **nosy** questions and observations later, she would eventually **decipher** the ‘grammar’ of clothing and dress in your culture. (2420)

VOCABULARY NOTES

accordance: in accordance with – following or obeying a rule, law, etc.

allege [ə'ledʒ] – to state something as a fact but without giving proof

bemoan [bi'məʊn] – to complain or say that you are not happy about something

conduct /'kɑ:ndʌkt/ – a person's behaviour

cut across – to affect or be true for different groups that usually remain separate

dazzle – the quality that bright light has that stops you from seeing clearly

demise [di'maɪz] – the end or failure of an institution, an idea, a company, etc.

decipher (sth) /di'saɪfər/ – to succeed in finding the meaning of something that is difficult to read or understand

detachment - the state of not being influenced by other people or by your own

feelings

exaggerate [ɪg'zædʒəreɪt] – to make sth seem larger, better, worse or more important than it really is

heartily – extremely

inconsolable [ˌɪnkən'səʊləbl̩] – very sad and unable to accept help or comfort

interrogate (smb) – to ask somebody a lot of questions over a long period of time

nosy – too interested in things that do not concern you, especially other people's affairs, **synonym:** inquisitive

plaintive [ˈpleɪntɪv] – sounding sad, especially in a weak complaining way

prohibit [prə'hibɪt] - to stop something from being done or used especially by law

set out – to begin a job, task, etc. with a particular aim or goal

spate – a large number of things

surface: on the surface – when not thought about deeply or thoroughly; when not looked at carefully

Non-standard verbs Reminder: wear (wore, worn)

Explain in your own words: 'Englishness', on the surface, unspoken rules of English behaviour, leather-clad bikers, unwritten rules, dress-down Friday custom.

. MOD CULTURE

by Luke Thompson

<http://teacherluke.co.uk/2016/09/21/382-mod-culture-with-ian-moore/>

Mod culture is **quintessentially** English. Basically, Mod is a fashion style, a way of life and a whole subculture of its own, and it's uniquely English I think. Mod is one of the first **genuine** youth subcultures of the modern era.

Nowadays there are many many subcultures (e.g. punk, skinhead, hippy, raver, indie kid, rocker, metal head, skater, etc) to the point that they don't really mean anything, but back in the late 1950s and early 1960s there weren't many youth

subcultures. Everyone basically dressed the same except between different social classes in society. Certainly young people just dressed and acted like adults. Then in the postwar period young people became more independent and developed their own alternative cultures which were **separate** from **mainstream** lifestyles. Young people began to **associate** themselves with these **alternative** cultural movements as an expression of their individuality particularly in the form of the clothes they wore and the music they listened to.

Mod culture first became well-known in the UK as a result of a story in the newspapers about **rival gangs** of ‘mods’ and ‘rockers’ fighting each other on the beach in Brighton in 1964. These were the two main youth subcultures of the time and they hated each other. The rockers wore leather jackets, had their hair quite long and unclean, and rode motorbikes. They listened to rock and roll music. The mods were very sharply dressed in well fitted suits and ties, wore smart **leather** shoes, had a particular haircut (a bit like the Beatle cut) and rode Italian scooters. They listened to modern jazz, black American rhythm and blues or Jamaican ska. Their **rivalry** came to a head in the well-documented fighting that happened on the beaches in Brighton. The fight between the mods and the rockers was all over the newspapers and it shocked everyone, causing **a kind of** moral panic about young people. At that time it was the equivalent of something like the London **riots** of 2011. Most people couldn’t understand the **violence** and it was considered a **sign** of the breakdown of society. It was also the first time that most people became **aware of** the mod movement.

Since then, Mod has drifted in and out of fashion, going away in the early 70s when it was **replaced** by things like glam, soul boy and skinhead movements to be **revived** again at the end of the decade, in the 1980s and again in the 1990s. Being a mod is a way of life and it **revolves** mostly around the clothing you wear and the music you listen to, but there is a certain philosophy which **underpins** the movement too and that seems to be based on certain kinds of European existentialist thinking and a kind of **open-mindedness** to outside influences combined with a great attention to detail in **clothing** choices. In order to identify a mod, you need to be aware of the

right details in the person's clothing. A certain type of suit, cut in a specific way. Certain brands, types of shoe or coat, and a particular hair cut. The most famous mods are probably people like the musician Paul Weller of The Jam, the groups The Small Faces and The Who (early period), and these days the actor Martin Freeman who likes to wear mod clothing when he's not acting in a movie or TV show. (2657)

Vocabulary Notes

clothing (n) – clothes, especially a particular type of clothes

genuine (adj) /'dʒenjuːn/ – real; exactly what it appears to be; not artificial

haircut (n) – the style in which somebody's hair is cut

quintessential (adj) /,kwɪntɪ'senʃl/ – representing the perfect example of something

revive (v) – to make somebody/something become strong again

revolve (v): revolve around smb/smth – to have somebody/something as the main interest or subject

rivalry (n) /'raɪvlrɪ/ – a state in which two people, companies, etc. are competing for the same thing

underpin (v) – to support or form the basis of smth (e.g. an argument)

Define the following: subculture, the mods

Explain in your own words: The mods were very sharply dressed

3. SILENT MOVIES

The **visual** quality of silent movies—especially those produced in the 1920s—was often high. However, there is a widely held **misconception** that these films were primitive and barely watchable by modern standards. This misconception comes as a result of silent films being played back at wrong speed and their **deteriorated** condition. Many silent films exist only in second- or third-generation copies, often copied from already damaged and neglected film stock. In addition, many prints may suffer from **censorship** cuts and missing frames and scenes, resulting in what may

appear to be poor editing.

Because silent films had no synchronized sound for dialogue, onscreen intertitles were used to narrate story points, present key dialogue and sometimes even comment on the action for the cinema audience. The *title writer* became a key professional in silent film and was often **separate** from the *scenario writer* who created the story. Intertitles (or *titles* as they were generally called at the time) often became graphic elements themselves, featuring illustrations or abstract decoration that commented on the action.

From the beginning, music was recognized as essential, contributing to the atmosphere and giving the audience vital emotional cues. Musicians sometimes played on film **sets** during shooting for similar reasons. Small town and neighborhood movie theatres usually had a pianist. Beginning in the mid-1910s, large city theaters tended to have organists or ensembles of musicians. Theatre organs had a wide range of special effects ranging from galloping horses to rolling thunder.

Silent film actors emphasized body language and facial expression so that the audience could better understand what an actor was feeling and portraying on screen. Much silent film acting is apt to strike modern-day **audiences** as simplistic or **campy**. The melodramatic acting style was in some cases a habit actors transferred from their former stage experience. (1720)

Vocabulary Notes

audience (n) – the group of people who have gathered to watch or listen to something

campy (adj) – exaggerated in style, especially in a deliberately amusing way

censorship: censor (v) – to remove the parts of a book, film/movie, etc. that are considered to be offensive, immoral or a political threat

deteriorated: deteriorate /di'tɪriəreɪt/ – to become worse

misconception (n) – a belief or an idea that is not based on correct information

separate (adj) /'seprət/ – not joined to something else

visual /'vɪʒuəl/ – connected with seeing

Define the following: a silent movie, body language, facial expression

4. LOOKING ON THE BRIGHT SIDE MIGHT HELP YOU LIVE LONGER

<http://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/thinking-positively-may-help-you-live-longer/3666435.html>

(1) Imagine there is a glass of water on a table in front of you. It has water in it but it is not full. How do you **describe** the glass? Do you say it is half full or half empty? If you say half full, you might be an optimist. If you say, half empty, you might be the **opposite** – a pessimist. Optimism and pessimism **represent** your general **attitude toward certain** situations or to life in general. And your attitude about life may be more important to living than you think. A new study **suggests** that your **level of** optimism may **affect** your health. People who are optimistic may live longer than those who are pessimistic.

(2) Researchers at Harvard University's School of Public Health in Boston did the study. They **compared** women with "a general expectation that good things will happen" to women who were less optimistic. They found that the optimists had a much lower risk of getting several **deadly** diseases, **including** cancer, heart disease, stroke, respiratory **disease** and certain types of infection.

(3) The researchers published their **findings** in the American Journal of Epidemiology. Epidemiology is the study of how diseases **spread** and how they can be controlled. Eric Kim is one of the study leaders. He says there is **increasing evidence** that **strengthening** psychological resilience may help **prevent** disease. Resilience is the ability to recover from difficulty or change. Kim says that these new findings suggest that people should make **efforts** to **increase** their resilience and optimism. He says optimism is connected with healthier behaviors and healthier ways of dealing with difficulty. Optimists **tend to** take better care of themselves by exercising, eating healthy foods and getting enough sleep.

(4) However, the researchers say that healthy behaviors of optimistic people only

partly explain the connection with **reduced** risk of disease. For the study, researchers looked at information gathered on 70,000 women in the Nurse's Health Study. This massive study began in 1975. It collects health information on those **involved** in the study every two years.

(5)The Harvard researchers looked at the level of optimism of the women, **as well as** other factors **such as** race, diet, physical activity level and overall health. They found the most optimistic women had **nearly** a 30 percent lower risk of dying from disease. When compared to the least optimistic women in the study, the optimistic women had: (a) an almost forty percent lower risk of dying from heart disease, stroke and respiratory disease, (b) a fifty percent lower risk of dying from infection, (c) and a sixteen percent lower risk of dying from cancer. The researchers **note** that other studies have linked optimism with reduced risk of death from cardiovascular disease. This, however, is the first study to **link** optimism with reduced **mortality** from other diseases. Kaitlin Hagan, another study leader, says earlier studies show that a person can use simple, low-cost methods to increase optimism. For example, she says people can think about and write down the best possible outcomes for areas of their lives, like their careers or relationships. Leslie Ralph is a clinical psychologist and counselor at the University of Arizona in Tucson. She also blogs about stress management. Ralph has several ideas about how to increase optimism. She says each night plan to do two or three simple, **enjoyable** activities the next day. These activities might include watching the sun rise, visiting a friend, dancing to a favorite song or reading a story with your child. She also suggests that if your day starts badly, simply close your eyes for a moment and take a deep breath. When you open your eyes, imagine your day has started over. It's like having your own restart button.

And the counselor adds offering **praise** or support to someone can also **improve** your own outlook. A smile and "thank you" from another person may help you feel more optimistic. (3284)

VOCABULARY NOTES

enjoyable (adj) – giving pleasure

improve (v) – to make better

mortality – the quality or state of being a person or thing that is alive and therefore certain to die: the quality or state of being mortal

note (v) – to mention something because it is important or interesting

opposite (adj) – as different as possible from something

praise (n) – words that show approval of or admiration for smb/smith

resilience – an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change

Explain in your own words: an optimist, a pessimistic attitude to smth, resilience

5. UNKIND WORDS HURT THE BRAIN

<http://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/health-and-lifestyle-unkind-words-hurt-the-brain/3491496.html>

(1) There is a popular saying in the English language: “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never **hurt** me.” Well, that is not true. Unkind words, **name-calling** or even the so-called “the silent treatment” can hurt children as much as being physically hit, sometimes even more so. A recent study of middle school children showed that **verbal abuse** by other children can **harm** development in the brain. The study was a project of researchers at Harvard Medical School in Massachusetts.

(2) Researcher Martin Teicher and his team studied young adults, ages 18 to 25. These young men and women had no **experience** with **domestic violence**, sexual abuse or physical abuse by their parents. The researchers asked the young people to **rate** their childhood exposure to verbal abuse from both parents and other children. Then the researchers performed imaging tests on the brains of the subjects.

(3) The images showed that the **individuals** who reported suffering verbal abuse from their **peers** in middle school had **underdeveloped** connections between

the left and right side of the brain. The two sides of the brain are connected by a large bundle of connecting fibers called the corpus callosum. This was the area that was underdeveloped. The middle school years are a time when these brain connections are **developing**. So, unkind, **hurtful** comments from children or adults during this period had the greatest effect.

(4) The researchers tested the mental and emotional condition of all the young people in the study. The tests showed that this same group of individuals had higher levels of fear, depression, anger and drug abuse than others in the study. The researchers published their findings online on the American Journal of Psychiatry’s website. We cannot control what other people say to our children. But we can prepare them. A website called CreativeWithKids.com suggests 64 things that all children need to hear. Here, are our top 20:

1. I am curious what you think.	11. My world is better with you in it.
2. You are creative.	12. I love you.
3. I believe in you.	13. It’s fun to do things with you.
4. You can ask for help.	14. You are valuable.
5. You make me smile	15. Your choices matter.
6. I have faith in you.	16. You can change your mind.
7. You are imperfect. So am I.	17. You make a difference.
8. You are a good friend.	18. I’m ready to listen.
9. I will do my best to keep you safe.	19. You can learn from your mistakes.
10. Trust your instincts.	20. I’m proud of you.

(2050)

VOCABULARY NOTES

abuse /ə'bjʊ:s/ –[uncountable, singular] the use of something in a way that is wrong or harmful

curious (adj) /'kjʊəriəs/ – having a strong desire to know about something

domestic (adj) – connected with the home or family

experience (n) – the knowledge and skill that you have gained through doing smth

hurt (v) – to make somebody unhappy or upset

hurtful (adj) – making you feel upset and offended, **synonym:** unkind

individual (n) – a person considered separately rather than as part of a group

name-calling – the act of using rude or insulting words about somebody

peer (n) – a person who is the same age or who has the same social status as you

saying (n) – a well-known phrase or statement that expresses smth about life that most people believe is wise and true

verbal /'vɜ:rbəl/ – relating to words

violence (n) – behaviour that is intended to hurt or kill somebody

rate (v) –to give position, **synonym:** to rank

Explain in your own words: domestic violence, depression

6. TECH TOOLS OFFER RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

<http://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/tech-tools-relax/3332930.html>

We all experience tension **in our lives**. **In fact**, technology can often be a **source of** the tension. But technology can also help us relax and **think less** about our **troubles**. **Sometimes**, Facebook posts, tweets, or web news reports can be **upsetting**. Emails can also bring bad news, **like** criticism from a boss or angry words from a friend.

It can be tempting to step away from technology. But perhaps technology **offers** some **solutions to** life's tensions, **instead**. There are some tech tools **designed to help** people relax.

Soothing Sounds. Sound can **have a major effect on** a person's **state of mind**.

Filling a space with peaceful music **can ease nerves**. YouTube offers hours of videos with **calming** music. Spotify is another online service where soothing sounds **can be found**.

Sounds of Nature. Humanity produces **a lot of noise** – car horns, televisions, airplanes and crowds. But there are sound effect apps that can help **drown out** that stressful noise. **Listen to** recorded nature instead, like ocean waves, raindrops, birds singing and crickets chirping. Many free apps **provide** such sounds.

Calm. *Calm.com* is a website with **tranquil** sounds, soothing images and guided meditation. **Choose between** timed or open meditation for a single session. There are also longer-term programs **available**. A YouTube video **provides** an example of *Calm.com* meditation. The website also offers videos **designed to ease** worries. The videos **include** scenes of nature, **such as** clouds, ocean and the beach at sunset. *Calm.com* is free. More advanced meditation programs **are available** for purchase.

Flowy. *Flowy* is an electronic game developed to help users **fight panic** and anxiety attacks. The designers said they based the game on **findings** from a group of studies about how to **ease** anxiety. *Flowy* teaches controlled breathing. The developers say that by playing *Flowy* for 90 seconds a day, users can learn **to breathe better** and **become calmer**. The website says *Flowy* “produced measurable decreases in anxiety and panic symptoms” during testing. *Flowy* puts the user on a boat **in the middle of** the ocean where he or she must sail the captain home. The app guides the user to breathe rhythmically to power the boat across the water. Tap the screen to steer the boat to collect coins and **avoid obstacles**.

Puzzles. Problem-solving can help **redirect** thoughts. Puzzle apps and websites can help the brain work on solving problems. The skills used to solve puzzles may help **solve real life problems**. There are many games that **are easy to learn** but difficult to master, like *Curvy*. It is a free online puzzle game where the user spins and connects tiles to complete a circuit.

Websites. *Do Nothing for 2 Minutes*

By taking a **two-minute break**, you may become calmer.

Do Nothing for 2 Minutes is a website from Calm.com. It helps you **take breaks** during the day. Head to the website and enjoy a beautiful image and calming sounds. A timer counts down two minutes during which **you are supposed to do nothing**. If you move the mouse, **touch** the keyboard or take other action, the clock stops and the two minutes begin again. (2547)

VOCABULARY NOTES

break (n) – a short period of time when you stop what you are doing and rest, eat, etc.

obstacle – a situation, an event, etc. that makes it difficult for you to do or achieve something

tension (n) – a feeling of anxiety and stress that makes it impossible to relax

tranquil (adj) – quiet and peaceful

Discussion: Do you agree with the ideas expressed in the text? (Completely? Partly?)

7. DO YOU THINK FOR YOURSELF WHEN YOU RELY ON TECHNOLOGY?

We have become so **dependent** on technology that we're losing our ability to solve problems and remember the most basic information. Whenever we need to solve a problem, we **turn to** a machine. If we need an answer to a question, we look it up on the internet. If we need a phone number, we look it up on our cell phones. I've seen people use a calculator to multiply single-digit numbers, like two times seven. When you rely on technology to think for you, you don't think for yourself.

The first thing to **suffer** is our memory. We store all the information we need on machines. We don't try to remember birthdays because they are **stored** in our electronic organizers. We don't try to remember **appointments** because they are noted in our calendars. We stop relying on our memories because we know we don't need to remember anything anymore.

Technology has harmed our communication skills, and, in particular, our language skills. We use electronic translators. We depend on word processors to correct spelling and grammar mistakes. In general, e-mails and texts are very badly written. We are either losing language skills because we've never learned them, or because technology makes learning obsolete.

How many times have you been focusing on one thing, such as reading a book or having a conversation, when your cell phone has rung, and you've turned your attention to that, **instead**? We live in a state of being constantly interrupted by technology, and this prevents us from being able to focus on one thing at a time. When something has no quick, easy solution, we tend to move on to something else. We've become so reliant on technology that we've stopped challenging ourselves.

Technology does not stimulate creativity. It kills it. It prevents us from original thinking. Instead of thinking for ourselves, we find it easier to look something up on the internet. What needs to be taught in school is the ability to moderate and balance the use of technological tools in order to develop and stimulate our brains to solve complex problems that computers cannot solve. Technology helps us to get information and results. It's like an automobile that helps us to go faster, but we must still **exercise** our muscles to get around. We must learn to **balance** technology and our own natural abilities, to use our brains as well as our machines. (1935)

Discussion: Do you agree with the ideas expressed in the text? (Completely? Partly?) e g Technology does not stimulate creativity.

Define the following: an electronic organizer, communication skills, language skills, an electronic translator, spelling.

Explain in your own words: We live in a state of being constantly interrupted by technology.

8. TECHNOLOGIES & OUR INTELLIGENCE

All technology can be used either well or badly. Cognitive-extension technologies do things so that our brains don't have to. They may change the nature of our

intelligence, but there's no reason to think that they reduce it. They can alienate us from the world around us, but only if we let them.

We have to remember that cognitive-extension technologies are not new. One of the oldest forms of recording our thoughts and memories in external form is the written language. It **did** result in a **gradual** loss of the kind of outstanding memory found in pre-literate cultures. But is anyone really going to say that we became more stupid after developing the written language?

Let's replace the word "internet" with "library." Now, if I were to tell my students at the beginning of a course: "I don't want you to read anything. I want you to think originally," this would show a very naive idea of creativity. True creativity is only possible after you've mastered a certain body of knowledge. And for this you need a "library" of knowledge, which is what the internet is gradually becoming.

I admit that I hate people using cell phones in restaurants. I find it sad that they have so little to say to the person they're with. But is this really a matter of technology making us stupid? It seems more like technology giving us an excuse to be rude. This might be a matter of alienation, but it is not a matter of intelligence.

Does technology reduce our ability to focus our attention? It can do so in certain situations, but there is no reason why it should in general. When I'm writing a research paper, I often have many windows open on my computer, and I simultaneously compare, contrast, collate and filter information from a large number of sources. Far from reducing the demands on my attention, I am actually forced to concentrate harder.

The claim that technology makes us stupid is based on the idea that intelligence is exclusively a matter of what your brain does, and that everything else is merely a "crutch." This assumption is naive. Ever since we started developing cognitive-extension technologies like written language, intelligence has always, at least in part, been a matter of what you can do with the world around you - a symbiosis of inner and outer processes. Thinking is not something we do **exclusively** in our head; it is also something we do in the world.

Our brains may be the center of huge information networks stretching out into the world through the technologies we build, but there's no reason to suppose that our brains won't always be at this center. (2130)

VOCABULARY NOTES

exclusively /ɪk'skluːsɪvli/ (adv) – completely; without including anybody or anything else

gradual (adj) – happening slowly over a long period; not sudden

intelligence (n)– the ability to learn, understand and think in a logical way about things

Discussion: Do you agree with the ideas expressed in the text? (Completely? Partly?)

9. REPORT SHOWS DEATHS BY SELFIE ON THE RISE

<http://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/selfie-deaths-report/3607554.html>

Do you know anyone who has risked their lives trying to take a selfie? Do you try to stay safe when taking selfies? What do you think should be done to help people stay safe while taking selfies?

"Selfie," taking a picture of yourself to post on social media, became an official word in the Oxford dictionary in 2013. The idea seems simple, just pose and snap a photo of yourself with your cell phone camera. How difficult could that be? But in 2014 a reported 15 people died while taking selfies. That number has **risen** each year since then. Thirty-nine deaths connected to selfies were reported in 2015. And, this year has seen more than 70 such deaths.

Researchers from universities in the U.S. and India have released findings from the first study of deaths due to selfies. The investigators examined the causes and characteristics of the deaths. The researchers found that people who take selfies for sharing on social media often have narcissistic tendencies. The report says these

people "use selfies as a form of self-identification and expression." They may take selfies in more dangerous settings because they seek greater attention.

These **dangerous** situations can lead to injury, and even death. The researchers define a selfie death as "death of an individual or a group of people that could have been avoided had the individual(s) not been taking a selfie." One example of a dangerous selfie in the study involved bicycle races. People sometimes get on the track to take a picture of themselves with the racing bicycles behind them. Crashes and injuries have resulted. Another example described people standing on train tracks trying to get a selfie as a train moves toward them from behind.

The most **common cause** of selfie death was falling from high places. It caused 32 of the 172 deaths during the last two and one-half years. Drowning was another common cause of death. Other risk factors include transportation, such as taking a selfie while walking on train tracks or driving a car. Taking a selfie near electric lines also led to some of the deaths, as did selfies taken with weapons and wild animals. India reported 76 selfie deaths, the most of the countries studied.

And it might be more dangerous to be a man with a smartphone. Although women take more selfies, males were far more likely to die during selfies. 75.5% of the reported deaths were of men. About one-third of the 172 reported selfie deaths had a single death while 24 incidents involved the deaths of groups. Two of the incidents killed seven people each. Efforts are growing to prevent these deaths. The study says there are now 16 places in Mumbai, India established as "No Selfie Zones." (2220)

VOCABULARY NOTES

cause (of) – synonym: **reason for**

incident (n) – an unexpected and usually unpleasant thing that happens

narcissistic (adj) – loving and admiring yourself and especially your appearance too much

risen (rose, risen) synonym: **increase**

Define the following: smartphone, selfie, narcissistic tendencies

Discussion: What is your attitude to selfies? Do you often make a selfie? Why?

10. COLORING BOOKS CAN CUT STRESS FOR ADULTS

<http://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/adult-coloring-books-cut-stress/3469234.html>

Coloring is an activity that children **worldwide** have long enjoyed. With a picture already made for them, kids simply choose a **crayon**, pencil or marker of their favorite color and fill it in. But why should children get to have all the fun? Now they don't.

More and more adults are enjoying relaxing hours of coloring. This is *thanks to* a new book **craze** in the United States and in other countries *around the world* – an adult coloring book craze. In December, five of the top ten best-selling books in the United States were coloring books made for **adults**. They're fun but are coloring books good for you?

Artist Trina Lucido **creates** coloring books. To find **inspiration** for her drawings, she says she **doesn't have to look far**. "One day I saw a beautiful **leaf** and – boom! – I did a whole page on **leaves**. So, some came from sketchbooks. Some were *just* one-word inspiration and some I just saw something on the ground and that was my inspiration that day."

Trina Lucido's latest coloring book **contains** 40 pages filled with hand-drawn sketches of flowers, birds and geometric **shapes**. It also has spaces to journal – *in other words*, to write about what you're doing or thinking. **Journaling** has long been an exercise in many types of therapy. Lucido says the "big idea" *behind* her latest book is to help **encourage** people to do something creative.

"It's called Color, Write and Create. I wanted to do something that would encourage people to be creative. When I do art journaling, people see my journals and (they go), 'Oh my gosh! I wish I were **creative**.' And that makes me **sad** because I think everybody is creative. So the idea *behind* this book, the big idea is to encourage

people to be creative..." Lucido says the positive **feedback** from her customers is encouraging. She says that many of her customers are buying the coloring books for others who are **sick** or having **challenges**. Lucido adds that the act of coloring becomes almost **healing**, or as she says, "**therapeutic**." "Something else I heard from people, they are buying these for people who are *either* ill *or* **going through a rough time**, and they feel that this is something that **kind of** helps them, almost **therapeutically**."

Art **therapy** experts have said in several articles that coloring can **reduce** stress **by focusing** you **on** a simple task. When you are filling in a flower with a **vibrant** purple color, you **focus on** the flower and not on your **troubles**. Experts **add** that coloring can **bring out** your imagination and can **take you back to** your childhood. **Psychologists** add that coloring **activates** your brain **in a healthy way**. The shape and form of the drawings activate **one side of the brain**, *while* the color and **texture** of the drawing material activates **the other**.

Coloring also exercises a person's fine **motor skills**. But people **drawn** to coloring books *probably* are not thinking of exercising their fine motor skills. Susan Jackson is a big **fan of** Lucido's coloring books. Jackson stands in a local store in the Washington, D.C. area. She holds one of Lucido's coloring books in her hands. As she flips through the book, she says she is drawn to their beauty and **authenticity**. Sitting down and coloring, Jackson adds, relaxes her and just makes her feel happy. "Oh, it is very relaxing. Any stress just **sort of falls away**. It **frees** your mind. And it's not as **daunting** as trying to fill a **blank** page. The pictures, I think, are just happy. They just make me feel happy. I love her little birds. There is just something about them. They make me smile. So I'm saving the bird pictures **to the very end**, I think."

For now, there is strong **demand for** adult coloring books. That fact keeps Lucido happy and busy. (3000)

VOCABULARY NOTES

authenticity (n) – smth real or genuine : not copied or false

boom! – interjection indicating that something has happened suddenly

craze (n) – something that is very popular for a period of time

daunting (adj) – tending to make people afraid or less confident: very difficult to do or deal with

drawn: **draw** (v) (drew, drawn) = attract

encourage (v) – to make (someone) more likely to do something: to make (someone) more determined, hopeful, or confident

geometric (adj) – of, relating to, or according to the methods or principles of geometry

journal (n) – a book in which you write down your personal experiences and thoughts

inspiration (n) – a person, place, experience, etc., that makes someone want to do or create something

positive feedback –. helpful information or criticism that is given to someone to say what can be done to improve a performance, product, etc.

sketch (n) – a quick, rough drawing that shows the main features of an object or scene

therapeutic (adj) – producing good effects on your body or mind :

vibrant (adj) – very bright and strong

11. SCIENTISTS EXPLAIN WHY DRINKERS OFTEN SMOKE

<http://learningenglish.voanews.com/content/drink-and-smoke-go-hand-in-hand-scientists-say/3060628.html>

Many people who drink alcohol also like to smoke cigarettes. Drinking and smoking seem to be closely linked. Some people might even say they go together hand-in-hand. But this may be more than just a mixing of two fairly common activities. New research has looked more closely at the relationship between cigarettes and alcohol. And the relationship is one of equal dependence. Smoking and drinking seem to feed

on each other. These are the exact words of Mahesh Thakkar. He is head of research in the Department of Neurology at the University of Missouri's School of Medicine.

Thakkar explains that when a person drinks alcohol they get sleepy. He says a drug in cigarettes fights that sleepy feeling. That drug, nicotine, can be addictive; smokers need more cigarettes because of their body's growing dependence on the drug. So, if a person smokes, then he or she is much more likely to drink alcohol, and vice versa. Thakkar says, "They **feed off** one another."

Researchers already knew that people who use alcohol often smoke. In fact, earlier research shows that more than 85 percent of alcohol-dependent American adults also depend on nicotine.

Thakkar's earlier research showed that nicotine combined with alcohol stimulates what he calls the "reward center" of the brain. However, the new study shows a dependent relationship between the substances. Thakkar says his team "found that nicotine weakens" the sleep-causing effects of alcohol. It does this by activating an area of the brain called the basal forebrain. According to the Psychology Definition website, that area is responsible for memory, learning and attention. For this new experiment, Thakkar and his team used equipment that measures brain activity in rats. They injected the rats with both nicotine and alcohol, and then studied brain activity in the animals as they slept. The researchers found that nicotine goes through the basal forebrain and cancels out the sleep-causing effects of alcohol.

So, why is this new research important? The World Health Organization says 7 million people die every year from alcohol and nicotine use. Mahesh Thakkar and his team identified why alcohol use and smoking are often linked. He says this knowledge may help people break their addictions to alcohol and nicotine. The researchers published their findings in the *Journal of Neurochemistry*. (1997)

VOCABULARY NOTES

addiction – n. a strong and harmful need to regularly have something (such as a drug) or do something (such as gamble) : **addictive** – adj.

cancel out (phrasal verb) – to cause smth to end or no longer produce a certain effect : to stop (something) from being effective or valid

feed off – to become stronger because of something else

reward center – n.– any of multiple different regions of the brain which have been involved in generating satisfaction: also called the “pleasure center”

stimulate (v) – to make (something) more active : to cause or encourage (something) to happen or develop

vice versa (adv) – used to say that the opposite of a statement is also true

12. BEST TOOL TO TEACH BABY TALK

<http://learningenglish.voanews.com/content/best-tool-to-teach-babies-speech-their-parents-voice/3140320.html>

Before you read the text answer the question: In your opinion, what is the best way to teach babies talk? Then read the text to compare your idea with that of some experts'.

A new study says electronic toys are not helping babies learn. “Even if companies are marketing them as educational, they’re not teaching the babies anything at this time,” said the study’s author, Anna Sosa. She is a Northern Arizona University professor who heads the school’s Child Speech and Language Lab.

Sosa and her fellow researchers listened to audio recordings of parents playing with their babies – aged 10 months to 16 months. The researchers compared the experiences when the children played with electronic toys, traditional toys such as blocks, or when the children looked at books. What they found is that parents talked less with their babies when the babies played with electronic toys. “The parents talked less, responded less and used fewer content specific words,” Sosa said. Why is this important?

Sosa said research shows that how quickly children develop language is often based on what they hear from parents. When the infants played with electronic toys,

parents said little to their children, Sosa said. But with traditional toys, such as blocks, parents shared the names and descriptions of the animals, colors and shapes as their children played, Sosa said. There was even more information given by parents as their babies looked at the pictures in books, Sosa said.

Sosa is not telling parents to throw out electronic toys. But she said parents should look at their infants' play with such toys as entertainment, not a learning experience. Toy Industry Association spokeswoman Adrienne Appell responded to the study. She said it is important that parents make time to play with their children. "Playing is a way that kids can learn so much, not only cognitive skills, but social and developmental skills," she said. She added that play should be balanced, including time for just "make believe" activities, as well as traditional and electronic toys. (1577)

VOCABULARY NOTES

content (n) – the things that are in something

description (n) – a statement that tells you how something or someone looks, sounds

entertainment (n) – amusement or pleasure that comes from watching a performer, playing a game, etc.

respond (v) – to say or write something as an answer to a question or request

specific (n) – the facts or details that relate to something

13. HOW TXT SPK IS NOW A PAIN IN THE NECK

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/how-txt-spk-is-now-a-pain-n-d-neck-1-832402>

TO THE uninitiated, "2G2B4G" may look like a personalised **number plate**, but in fact it is text-speak for "too good to be forgotten".

(1) Millions of text messages are sent every day, but new research shows many Britons are exasperated by being bombarded with bizarre acronyms in modern slang. A study reveals that eight *out of* ten people say they cannot understand some of the messages they receive. *Even* among the young, the shorthand proves indecipherable

for four in ten *under* the age of 24. The research found an overwhelming 76 per cent of Britons admit to using abbreviations and text slang, but hate receiving it. Most people (71 per cent) would prefer a properly written text message.

(2) Paul Cockerton, of the text question and answer service AQA 63336, which surveyed 2,400 adults, said: "We understand that speed often comes first when sending messages, but clarity comes from the careful use of language. "*That's why, while* most people can understand most text-speak, we never use it in our answers. *Instead* we pay careful attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar. It doesn't take much longer, and it's better for the recipient."

(3) Professor Christian Kay, an expert in the development of language at the University of Glasgow, said text messages were limited in what they could convey. "I think that when texting first appeared young people took it as a new way of conversing which could exclude people who weren't in on the scene," Prof Kay said. "At the time this was quite interesting, because we were being told that the written language was going to disappear. But after an initial burst of enthusiasm we are *at the stage* where texting *either* has to develop *or* fade away." She added: "It has reduced everything to a very basic language, which doesn't leave room to convey the nuance of a word. *In many ways* it has *run out of* interesting things to say, which limits interpretation, which leads to misunderstandings."

(4) Britons have become the most prolific texters in Europe. However, one recent study by Coventry University found that text-speak, *rather than* harming literacy, could have a positive effect on the way young people interact with language. Other reports have produced similar results. *Research* from the University of Toronto *into* how teenagers use instant messaging found that it had a positive effect on their command of language. (1960)

VOCABULARY NOTES

a pain in the neck – (informal) a person or thing that is very annoying

number plate – a metal or plastic plate on the front and back of a vehicle that shows its registration number.

Ex.1. Learn these words below. Translate them in writing. Find these words in the text above. Add your own examples. Be ready to translate these words back (from Ukrainian/Russian into English):

1) abbreviation, 2) acronym, 3) bizarre (adj), 4) clarity, 5) convey, 6) exasperate, 7) exclude, 8) hate, 9) interact, 10) message, 11) misunderstanding, 12) nuance, 13) receive (a message), 14) recipient, 15) reveal, 16) scene, 17) shorthand.

Ex 2. Give definitions of the following:

1)text message, 2)text-speak, 3)acronym, 4)literacy, 5)slang, 6)shorthand, 7)spelling,8)punctuation, 9)grammar, 10) number plate, 11) a pain in the neck.

Ex 3. Translate the underlined words. Make up own sentences with gerund. Find more ing-words in the text above. Translate them, paying attention to their forms and functions.

GET YOUR FINGERS OUT

(The expression “get, pull, etc. your finger out” (BrE, informal) is used to tell somebody to start making an effort]

Below are some most hated text and e-mail phrases. But what do they stand for? Try to guess, test your texting knowledge. The Answers column might help you. Remember to choose the proper answer.

Text-speak phrases	ANSWERS to be chosen
1) TTYL8R	A) In my humble opinion
2) ROTFL	B) Rolling on the floor laughing
3) CSThnknAU	C)Talk to you later
4) @TEOTD	D) Actually laughing out loud
5) TTFN	E) Can't stop thinking about you
6) IMHO	F) Ta-ta for now
7) CWYL	G) Too good to be forgotten

8) 2G2B4G

H) At the end of the day

9) ALOL

I) Chat with you later

14. BULLYING AT SCHOOLS

<http://www.sociology.com/2013/06/understanding-bullying-schools/>

(1) Bullying is one of the most notable social problems seen today in the American school system. However, bullying and **intimidation** occurs in most cultures around the world. Bullying comes from the need to feel powerful in a powerless situation. In order to be a bully, an individual **perpetuates violence** either in **threats** or actions in a social situation. Schools are **increasingly** becoming a **hotbed** for bullying resulting in children being **victimized**. Using sociology we can find a **solution** to this issue.

Who is Being Bullying?

(2) Social demographics show that victims run the **gamut** in social groups. Anyone from any socio-economic background, race or ethnicity can be the **target of bullying**. A major attraction for bullies is a perceived weakness of someone whom they can target using intimidation, threats or physical violence. Individuals who **bully** use this as a form of power and control over others. As a result, **victims** should understand the bullying is not a direct reflection of themselves. Unfortunately many victims, most notably those who have been **cyber bullied**, have come to the attention of the media because they have committed suicide as a result of being bullied.

Trends in Bullying

(3) Serial bullies are those who affect multiple individuals over a period of time. Additionally, this type of bully will typically associate with other serial bullies. In this social group, such bullies share behaviors and characteristics. For example, they might tell lies and appear **innocent** in front of everyone except those whom they are victimizing. In school, for instance, bullies find ways to get what they want out of others, such as the answers for an exam or someone to do their homework. Bullying becomes **ingrained** in their lifestyle so that this type of bully takes on the facade of

being socially acceptable in order to escape the blame for intimidating or **threatening** others.

Long-term Social Effects

(4) Victims of bullying are becoming more **noticeable** as increased attention is being placed on this social problem. As a result studies are being done to see what the long-term effects of bullying are for both the bullies and their victims. Researchers have found that victims are **skipping** classes and sometimes school altogether in order to **avoid** running into bullies. Dr. William Pollack determined that approximately 160,000 students are absent everyday in the U.S. as a result of fear of being bullied. As **previously** mentioned suicide is also an effect of being victimized by bullies. Dr. Dan Olweus has found that bullies don't simply grow out of their intimidating behavior. In a study of male bullies from middle school age to young **adulthood**, 60 percent of these bullies were **convicted** of **criminal activity** by the time they turned 24 years old.

Remedy to Bullying

(5) Anti-bullying programs are becoming more **prevalent** throughout American schools in order to address this social problem. Additionally, anti-bullying **rallies** can be found in communities in which nonprofit organizations, civics groups and religious factions are equally addressing bullying in schools. We can expect to see bullying addressed more regularly in school classrooms in hopes to raise awareness for victims looking for support. By breaking down the barriers of social stigma associated with being bullied, we can help empower victims and thereby reduce the instances of bullying in American schools. (2845)

VOCABULARY NOTES

bully (v, n) – a person who uses their strength or power to frighten or hurt weaker people

convict (v) – to decide officially in a law court that someone is guilty of a crime

hotbed of something – a place where a lot of a particular activity, especially

something bad or violent, is happening

increasingly (adv) – more and more

innocent (adj) – not guilty of a crime, etc.; not having done something wrong

intimidation (n) – the act of frightening or threatening somebody so that they will do what you want

powerful (to feel powerful)

noticeable (adj) – easy to see or recognize

remedy (n) – a way of dealing with a problem

perpetuate (v) – to cause something to continue

skip (v) – to not do something that you usually do or should do, e g skip classes

stigma (n) – a strong feeling of disapproval that most people in a society have about something, especially when this is unfair

target (n) – an object, a person or a place that people aim at when attacking (e g **the target of bullying**)

threat (n) – the possibility of trouble, danger or disaster

violence (n) – actions or words that are intended to hurt people

Explain in your own words: 1) bullying, 2) a bully, 2) the **target of bullying**, 3) serial bullies, 4) physical violence

Discussion: 1. What is bullying? 2. Is bullying characteristic to the American school system only? 3. Who are typical victims of bullying? 4. Is there any solution to the problem?

15. GENDERLESS PARENTING

<http://www.sociology.com/2013/05/genderless-parenting/>

Before you read the text: What is your favorite color? What do you think “genderless parenting” is?

When a little girl says her favorite color is pink, might she unknowingly be **lying**? Not just **to lie**, but simply because she's only been taught to say pink is her favorite color. Color is not the only thing we **segregate** by gender.

Toys, activities and even future career paths are also often associated with gender, leading some to assume gender roles potentially enable us off from becoming the people we really are. In hopes of giving children the chance to be whomever they want, without the strict **confines** of gender roles, genderless parenting **remains** an **option** slowly **gaining** popularity.

The day we are born our gender starts to **predict** our life, if a girl—we are wrapped **snug** in pink, while boys cling tight to blue. Home from the hospital, even our bedrooms are decorated differently, including diverse toys and outfits. If a little girl cries, Daddy rushes over to hug her, but the little boy better suck it up because *'big boys don't cry!'*

All through life we are treated differently based on our **outright** gender, which is why genderless parenting kicks all these notions to the curb—treating a child of either gender exactly the same. This includes buying a boy a Barbie doll if he wants one, as opposed to simply laughing it off, telling him those toys are for girls.

When Sasha was born, his parents Beck Laxton and Kieran Cooper, decided they would raise a gender-neutral child, to such the **extent** that they did not **reveal** his gender until January 2012 when the boy turned 5. Until then, everyone from **close relatives** to classroom friends remained unsure if Sasha was a girl or boy, it didn't make things easier with him changing between pink dress and blue overalls throughout the last 5 years. The reason for finally revealing Sasha's gender came off the idea that continuing on with the non-disclosure would only **interfere with** his life, not aid it. Although Sasha's parents haven't changed their overall parenting premise, they still encourage Sasha to ignore gender roles and be anything he wants—whether that be a princess in a tower or a knight on horseback.

Anything that we see and interact with is influencing us, especially **in regards** to the very young who are socialized at school, by teachers and **peers**, and by popular

media. All of this **lends** an example for how to act, dress, and associate. Even with so many **outside influences**, parents play the most **prominent** role in early **socialization**, as they are the first large dose of it any child receives.

Because of this, parents who decide to parent their child without any regard to gender feel that their influences will outweigh **that of** the public opinion. While most who try genderless parenting realize complete freedom from gender stereotypes still remains impossible, they believe that it still allows their child more freedom than the majority to discover who they are—outside of male or female. (2367)

VOCABULARY NOTES

gender /'dʒendə(r) – the fact of being male or female, especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences, not differences in biology

interfere with smth – to prevent something from succeeding or from being done or happening as planned

outside (adj) – synonym: **external**

predict (v) – **to say that something will happen in the future**

Explain in your own words what is meant by: female, gender, male, genderless parenting, gender stereotypes.

Discussion: What is Genderless Parenting? Speak about the types of socialization

16. IS RAPE PREVENTABLE?

One of the issues that sociologists study is **rape** and sexual **assault**. There are many **misconceptions** (or *rape myths*) around this issue. Some believe that rape only happens to young, attractive women, and that rapists are usually male **strangers**. They believe that the way a woman dresses or where she goes contributes to her likelihood of being raped. None of this is completely true. Rape can happen to anyone—including men and the very young or very old. It doesn't matter how you are dressed or where you are. Many rapes happen in one's own home. Moreover,

rapists are usually people we know. Often they are family members, romantic partners, friends, or **acquaintances**.

Rape education/prevention seminars are prevalent on many college campuses, and community organizations often offer ‘self-defense’ classes for women. So, that should take care of things, right? Sadly, this is not the case. Sociologists who study rape and sexual assault point out that by focusing on potential **victims**; we aren’t addressing the people (usually male) who **perpetrate** rape. This can become a form of *victim blaming* where we teach women that if they dress a certain way, avoid certain situations (such as drug or alcohol use at parties or in clubs), and learn self-defense moves, they can prevent rape. Undoubtedly, these strategies help some, but the **bottom line** is that if a rapist is determined, he or she will find a way to rape. Moreover, rape prevention/self-defense classes can give people a **false** sense of security. They think, “If I only do this, or don’t do that, I will be safe.” Then, if they are raped, they look for what they did wrong and **blame** themselves.

All of this takes the focus off the perpetrator. Whether or not a rape occurs is ultimately up to the rapist. Perhaps it is time to direct our energies towards rape **prevention** by educating potential perpetrators. If they are made aware of the legal penalties, if they can learn to treat others with respect, and if they are taught how to deal with their sexual urges, then rapes on college campuses can be reduced.

As we all know, however, rape is *not* just about sex—it is about power and control and feeling a sense of **entitlement** over someone else’s body. Most rapists rape because they enjoy being in control, and they are gratified by the ability to force (or coerce) another person into a sexual act. Thus, the ultimate key to preventing rape is learning respect for all individuals and realizing that their bodies are just that, theirs! Until we can accomplish this, rape will continue, regardless of self-defense and rape prevention classes.

Remember – no one is ever entitled to have sex with another person against their will. Not in any situation, under any circumstances, or even if they’ve had sex with that person before. If someone says no, or is too impaired to say no, then having sex with them is *rape*. (2379)

VOCABULARY NOTES

acquaintance – a person that you know but who is not a close friend

assault – the crime of attacking somebody physically

blame – to think or say that somebody/something is responsible for something bad

the bottom line – the most important thing that you have to consider or accept; the essential point in a discussion, etc.

misconception – a belief or an idea that is not based on correct information, or that is not understood by people

perpetrate /'pɜ:rpətreɪt/ – to commit a crime or do something wrong or evil

rape – the crime of forcing somebody to have sex with you, especially using violence

rapist – a person who forces somebody to have sex when they do not want to (= rapes them)

victim – a person who has been attacked, injured or killed as the result of a crime, a disease, an accident, etc.

Explain in your own words: family members, romantic partners, acquaintances. 'self-defense' classes, college campuses.

17. A SINGLE-MOTHER FAMILY

<http://www.sociology.com/2012/11/single-mothers-life/>

In many parts of the world we find that nearly twenty-five percent of children come from a single-parent home. Of there, there are far more single mothers raising their children than fathers.

There are a **myriad** of reasons for the increase in single mother homes, not just divorce but also the death of a **spouse** or even just the fear of having a spouse walk out on the other. In a case of the latter, this may be a result of a divorce in the woman's life as a child, so when she decides to have children she chooses not to be married so as not to hurt her own family the same way. Also, we find that better

educated women are part of a single-mother trend that is growing by leaps and bounds. No longer do the women have to rely on the man of the house to provide for her and her children, she can do just as well if not better on her own.

The life of the single mother is not one that can be simply **lumped together** or grouped into just one category. There are too many reasons and too many ways that a woman can become a single mother. Many are tragic, such as death, and involve not only the mother trying to take care of her children, but also trying to grieve herself and yet be strong for her children. This is not even **close to** what a single mother who chose to be single needs to deal with. Most of these women are professionals with good jobs that they enjoy. They are generally able to provide a much more emotionally stable **household** than the previous mother simply because there has not been such trauma to the family in general.

The most critical question that comes to the forefront of many a child psychologists and an educators mind is whether or not the children of such homes are as advantaged as homes with either two parents or a home with a step-parent. In recent studies it has been examined and found to be true that the children of many single mother families actually do as well socioeconomically as adults as do the children of two parent biological families. This is a vast majority over the adult children of a single father home. You will find that single mothers who are in the job market in managerial sectors have the best balance for their children. They are able to provide for them and due to their position, generally have a little more time management flexibility to assist in making choices regarding their children.

When a stepparent is added to the equation, you find that many times the added income to the family does not even out or equalize the playing field. Oftentimes, the children suffer from a larger gap in emotional distance or may actually be put in positions that result in further conflict, such as the clash over parenting styles that may occur or even a crisis about the amount of time the child gets to spend with the biological parent. Many stepparents also do not know exactly how much of the parenting they are to take on and exactly what role they are to play in the child's life. The results can be catastrophic when the child reaches the age of majority. When they

become adults, a greater part of these children do not go on to college, resulting in lower paying jobs than did the children of single-mothers.

When you stop to examine the reasons of the lives behind single mothers, you will find it is true that there are many. However, you will also learn that every one of these mothers wishes only the best for their children and are not afraid to go out and get it. One other thing this is remarkably true and accurate about the children is that they are generally very well balanced individuals and as adults they will continue to be extremely productive members of their communities. While it is still good to have both parents to raise the child, the second best option currently recognized is the single-mother family. This does not necessarily mean that any other form of family is more or less enlightening; it is mostly due to a lack of information that is available of other familial arrangements. Expect great things from these children as we learn more about them as adults. (3309)

VOCABULARY NOTES

adult a fully grown person who is legally responsible for their actions, synonym:

grown-up

household – all the people living together in a house or flat/apartment

myriad – extremely large in number

option

spouse /spauz / – a husband or wife

stepparent – the man or woman who is married to someone's mother or father but who is not their real father or mother

Explain in your own words: a single-mother family, to raise the child, stepparents

Discussion: What are the reasons for becoming a single mother?

18. WHAT IS ART?

Read the text below to be able to discuss it.

Until about a hundred years almost no one would have thought to ask the question "What is art?" People who considered art at all **assumed** they knew what it was. In

the 21st century, however, the problem of definition, of deciding what is and what is not art, has become far more complex, and this is true for several reasons.

For one thing, people today are exposed to art from many different times and places – an **available** body of art is more **varied** than at any other period in history. Each work of art we see is the product of its own culture, with its own **prevailing** standards of taste. Each represents what the person who made the work – and those for whom it was made – considered to be art.

The citizen of ancient Athens might have said that art is a sculpture, perhaps depicting a goddess, modeled to look very much like a living woman, yet taller and more beautiful than life. The tribal member in Africa might have said that art is wood **figurine, stylized** and **exaggerated** in its **features**, that **symbolizes** the human figure. Each of these works met the standards of accepted art for its audience, yet we cannot apply the same standard to both.

Before our age of easy worldwide communication, the art produced by any specific culture tended to be relatively **homogeneous** – much the same in style and expression. Now, not only are we confronted with art from many different cultures, but the art of our own time **defies** such classification. How, for example, do we categorize a work that consists of the artist and another figure, spray-painted in black and hung from a "canvas" of simulated drapery? This "painting" can move, shake hands with onlookers.

To further complicate the problem, we now have works of art created in media undreamed of a mere thirty or forty years ago. Electronic images of all kinds are made and accepted as art. Often there is no concrete "object," nothing you could hang on the wall or place on a pedestal. Some types of contemporary art are preserved only in the memory banks of computers, and some disappear forever within minutes or hours after they are created.

Do we need to stand back and ask, "What exactly *is* art? How can we tell what is and what isn't? What is art *for me*?" (based on *Living with Art* by Rita Gilbert) (1800)

VOCABULARY NOTES

assume /ə'sju:m/ (v) – to think or accept that something is true

at all – in any way; to any degree

available (adj) – that you can get, buy or find

defy /dɪ'faɪ/ – to refuse to obey or show respect for smb in authority, a law, a rule, etc.

exaggerate /ɪg'zædʒəreɪt/ – to make something seem larger, better, worse or more important than it really is

feature /'fi:tʃə(r)/ – something important, interesting or typical of a person, place or thing

figurine /,fɪgʃə'ri:n/ – a small statue of a person or an animal used as a decorative object

homogeneous /,həʊmə'dʒi:niəs/ (adj) – consisting of things or people that are all the same or all of the same type

prevailing (adj) – most common at a particular time

stand back – to think about a situation as if you are not involved in it

stylized (adj) /'staɪlaɪzd/ – drawn, written, etc. in a way that is not natural or realistic

symbolize (v) /'sɪmbəlaɪz/ –to be a symbol of something

varied ['veərɪd] (adj) – of many different types

In the text above, find the words meaning the following:

1) an explanation of the meaning of a word or phrase; 2) a painting, statue, etc.; 3) a level of quality, especially one that people think is acceptable; 4) belonging to a period of history that is thousands of years in the past; 5) a work of art that is a solid figure or object made by carving or shaping wood, stone, clay, metal, etc.; 6) a female god; 7) the particular way in which something is done; 8) to be made to look like something else; 9) a person who watches something that is happening but is not involved in it; 10) the base that a column, statue, etc. rests on.