

TOMSK POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY

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BUSINESS ENGLISH

Textbook

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FOREWORD

This book includes practical materials of Business English initially designed for students of the Institute of International Management of Tomsk Polytechnic University. Taking into account the topics presented and the urgent need to introduce business technologies in modern scientific, educational and industrial context, the textbook can also be applied to students of technical educational institutions (Intermediate, Upper-Intermediate and Advanced).

Business English will help students to activate and extend your knowledge of English and gain the necessary confidence and skills to use it for your own purposes. It encourages you to think about language creativity. There are opportunities for individual, pair and group work and private study at home. This book includes a wide range of activities and approaches designed to appeal to different personal learning styles.

The course consists of ten units, each containing the same component sections which cover various types of activities.

1. Unit 1: Introduction into Business English
2. Unit 2: Recruitment
3. Unit 3: Writing CV and Letter of Application
4. Unit 4: Job interviews
5. Unit 5: Business Etiquette
6. Unit 6: Types of Business Organizations
7. Unit 7: Company Structure
8. Unit 8: Money Matters
9. Unit 9: Telephoning
10. Unit 10: Giving a Successful Presentation.

Each unit has a separate section on Listening, Speaking, Writing, Reading, and Vocabulary, but the order of the sections varies from unit to unit. Each section focuses on a particular area of language use, but also integrates and practices other skills.

The listening passages provide examples of authentic or typical spoken English. There is a variety of accents, and a mix of monologues and conversations. The passages vary in length depending on their purpose. You may be asked to respond verbally or non-

verbally, to work alone or with other students, and to focus on what the speakers say or on how they say it. The tapescripts are included on pages 157-180.

In reading sections the passages have been chosen for their intrinsic interest. They are drawn from a variety of sources: newspapers, magazines, letters, literature and the Internet. The purpose of reading exercises is to help and encourage you to read without stress, for enjoyment, and for specific information.

Almost every unit has some speaking activities. Sometimes you will be asked to focus on accuracy, other times on fluency. These activities provide the opportunity for students to interact in pairs and groups, using language in a freer, more relaxed and more creative way.

There are a wide range of exercises to master your writing skills. The book provides fairly detailed guidelines, particularly in the early units and it is advisable that these are discussed fully in class, and that students are given the opportunity for planning, on an individual or group basis, before the writing stage.

This book uses a variety of learning strategies to introduce new words, to provide opportunities to use words you already know, and to encourage you to use words generatively. There is a detailed unit vocabulary at the end of this book.

The author would like to express special thanks to all teachers contributing to this course and all people working at the language resource centre “Mediateka” of the Institute of International Management for their encouragement, kind support, help and invaluable advice in the selection and publishing of educational materials.

UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION INTO BUSINESS ENGLISH

Exercise 1. Explain the following words and make up sentences with either of them:

1. to mind one's own business;
2. bad business;
3. dirty business;
4. personal business;
5. business hours;
6. monkey (funny) business;
7. annual business;
8. to be in business;
9. to be out of business;
10. booming business;
11. to build up business;
12. business competition;
13. business corporation.

Exercise 2. Choose three words which you consider the most important ones in any business from the list below. Explain your answer:

money	business
promotion	customer
challenge	result
respect	profit
team spirit	prestige

Exercise 3. Read the text about business and answer the questions below:

Business is an organized approach to providing customers with the goods and services they want. The word *business* also refers to an organization that provides these goods and services. Most businesses seek to make a *profit* - that is, they aim to achieve *revenues* that exceed the costs of operating the business. Prominent examples of *for-profit businesses* include Mitsubishi Group, General Motors Corporation, and Royal Dutch/Shell Group. However, some businesses only seek to earn enough to cover their *operating costs*. Commonly called nonprofits, these organizations are primarily nongovernmental service providers. Examples of *nonprofit businesses* include such organizations as social service agencies, foundations, advocacy groups, and many hospitals.

Business Operations

A variety of operations keep businesses, especially large corporations, running efficiently and effectively. Common business operation divisions include (1) production, (2) marketing, (3) finance, and (4) *human resource management*.

Production includes those activities involved in conceptualizing, designing, and creating products and services. In recent years there have been dramatic changes in the

way goods are produced. monitor, control, and even Flexible, high-tech minutes what it used to accomplish. Another has been the trend toward The word *inventory* refers business keeps available *just-in-time inventory*, the needs for the next day or on fast, global computer them to respond quickly to changes in *consumer demand*. Inventories are thus minimized and businesses can invest more in product research, development, and marketing.



Today, computers help perform work. machines can do in take people hours to important development *just-in-time inventory*. to the amount of goods a for *wholesale* or *retail*. In firm stocks only what it two. Many businesses rely communications to allow

Marketing is the process of identifying the goods and services that consumers need and want and providing those goods and services at the right price, place, and time. Businesses develop marketing strategies by conducting research to determine what products and services potential customers think they would like to be able to purchase. Firms also promote their products and services through such techniques as advertising and *personalized sales*, which serve to inform potential *customers* and motivate them to purchase. Firms that market products for which there is always some demand, such as foods and household goods, often advertise if they face competition from other firms marketing similar products. Such products rarely need to be sold face-to-face. On the other hand, firms that market products and services that buyers will want to see, use, or better understand before buying, often rely on personalized sales. Expensive and durable goods - such as automobiles, electronics, or furniture - benefit from personalized sales, as do legal, financial, and accounting services.

Finance involves the management of money. All businesses must have enough capital on hand to pay their bills, and for-profit businesses seek extra capital to expand their operations. In some cases, they *raise* long-term *capital* by selling ownership in the company. Other common financial activities include granting, monitoring, and collecting on credit or loans and ensuring that customers *pay bills* on time. The financial division of any business must also establish a good working relationship with a bank. This is particularly important when a business wants to *obtain a loan*.

Businesses rely on effective human resource management (HRM) to ensure that they hire and keep good employees, and that they are able to respond to conflicts between workers and management. HRM specialists initially determine the number and type of employees that a business will need over its first few years of operation. They are then responsible for recruiting new employees to replace those who leave and for filling newly created positions. A business's HRM division also trains or arranges for the training of its staff to encourage worker productivity, efficiency, and satisfaction, and to promote the overall success of the business. Finally, human resource managers create workers' compensation plans and benefit packages for employees.

Exercise 4. Discuss the following questions:

1. Give definition to the word 'business'.
2. What is the difference between for-profit and non-profit organizations? Support your answer with relevant examples.
3. What is production?
4. Specify the notion of 'just-in-time inventory'.
5. What is marketing?
6. Define such business operation as finance.
7. What does the HRM involve?

Exercise 5. Discussion. How do you see your future profession? Please answer the following questions:

What kind of work are you interested in:

1. well paid work
2. interesting work
3. work in a large and famous company
4. quiet work
5. work in an industry which has future prospects
6. prestigious work
7. a kind of work such as not to sit the whole day in the office
8. to travel a lot

Please, discuss advantages and disadvantages of your future profession:

1. Do you think that your future profession is prestigious?
2. Do you think it will be still prestigious and well paid by the time you graduate?
3. How difficult is it to find a good work in your field?
4. Is there a competition in your group?
5. Do you think that competition among your coeds is a good stimulus to study well or it just makes communication between you more difficult?

Exercise 6. Do the questionnaire, and then compare your answers with a partner:

How do you rate as entrepreneurs?

1. Are you a self starter?
 - a. *I only make an effort when I want to.*
 - b. *If someone explains what to do, then I can continue from there.*
 - c. *I make my own decisions. I don't need anyone to tell me what to do.*
2. How do you get on with other people?
 - a. *I get on with almost everybody.*
 - b. *I have my own friends and I don't really need anyone else.*
 - c. *I don't really feel at home with other people.*
3. Can you lead and motivate others?
 - a. *Once something is moving I'll join in.*
 - b. *I'm good at giving orders when I know what to do.*
 - c. *I can persuade most people to follow me when I start something.*
4. Can you take responsibility?

- a. *I like to take charge and to obtain results.*
 - b. *I'll take charge if I have to but I prefer someone else to be responsible.*
 - c. *Someone always wants to be the leader and I'm happy to let them do the job.*
5. Are you a good organizer?
- a. *I tend to get confused when unexpected problems arise.*
 - b. *I like to plan exactly what I'm going to do.*
 - c. *I just like to let things happen.*
6. How good a worker are you?
- a. *I'm willing to work hard for something I really want.*
 - b. *I find my home environment more stimulating than work.*
 - c. *Regular work suits me but I don't like it to interfere with my private life.*
7. Can you make decisions?
- a. *I am quite happy to execute other people's decisions.*
 - b. *I often make very quick decisions which usually work but sometimes don't.*
 - c. *Before making a decision, I need time to think it over.*
8. Do you enjoy taking risks?
- a. *I always evaluate the exact dangers of any situation.*
 - b. *I like the excitement of taking big risks.*
 - c. *For me safety is the most important thing.*
9. Can you stay the course?
- a. *The biggest challenge for me is getting a project started.*
 - b. *If I decide to do something, nothing will stop me.*
 - c. *If something doesn't go right first time, I tend to lose interest.*
10. Are you motivated by money?
- a. *For me, job satisfaction cannot be measured in money terms.*
 - b. *Although money is important to me, I value other things just as much.*
 - c. *Making money is my main motivation.*
11. How do you react to criticism?
- a. *I dislike any form of criticism.*
 - b. *If people criticize me I always listen and may or may not reject what they have to say.*
 - c. *When people criticize me there is usually some truth in what they say.*
12. Can people believe what you say?
- a. *I try to be honest, but it is sometimes difficult or too complicated to explain things to other people.*
 - b. *I don't say things I don't mean.*
 - c. *When I think I'm right, I don't care what anyone else thinks.*
13. Do you delegate?
- a. *I prefer to delegate what I consider to be the least important tasks.*
 - b. *When I have a job to do I like to do everything myself.*
 - c. *Delegating is an important part of any job.*
14. Can you cope with stress?
- a. *Stress is something I can live with.*
 - b. *Stress can be a stimulating element in a business.*
 - c. *I try to avoid situations which lead to stress.*
15. How do you view your chances of success?
- a. *I believe that my success will depend to a large degree on factors outside my*

- control.*
- b. *I know that everything depends on me and my abilities.*
- c. *It is difficult to foresee what will happen in the future.*
16. If the business was not making a profit after five years, what would you do?
- a. *give up easily.*
- b. *give up reluctantly.*
- c. *carry on.*

Key to the questionnaire:

1. a=0	b=2	c=4	9. a=2	b=4	c=0
2. a=4	b=2	c=0	10. a=0	b=2	c=4
3. a=0	b=2	c=4	11. a=0	b=4	c=2
4. a=4	b=2	c=0	12. a=2	b=4	c=0
5. a=2	b=4	c=0	13. a=2	b=0	c=4
6. a=4	b=0	c=2	14. a=2	b=4	c=0
7. a=0	b=4	c=2	15. a=0	b=4	c=2
8. a=2	b=4	c=0	16. a=4	b=2	c=0

44 or above

You definitely have the necessary qualities to become the director of a successful business. You have a strong sense of leadership, you can both organize and motivate and you know exactly where you and your team are going.

Between 44 and 22

You may need to think more carefully before setting up your own business. Although you do have some of the essential skills for running business, you will, probably, not be able to deal with the pressures and strains that are a part of the job. You should perhaps consider taking some professional training or finding an associate who can compensate for some of your weaknesses.

Below 22

Managing your own business is not for you. You are better suited to an environment where you are not responsible for making decisions and taking risks. To operate successfully you need to follow well defined instructions and you prefer work that is both regular and predictable.

Exercise 7: How would you generally feel happy or unhappy, if you were in the following situations. Use the words in italics to help you decide:

1. The company you work for is well-known for its *job security*.
2. You were suddenly made *redundant*.
3. You received a *promotion*.
4. You were given an *increment*.
5. You worked *unsociable hours*.
6. You had a *steady job*.
7. You had *adverse working conditions*.
8. You suddenly found yourself *unemployed*.
9. You took time off work because of *repetitive strain injury*.

10. The office where you work has *sick building syndrome*.
11. You receive regular *perks* as part of your job.
12. Somebody called you a *workaholic*.
13. Your company doesn't give you many *incentives*.
14. Your boss announces that there is going to be some *downsizing* of the workforce.
15. Your work didn't offer much *job satisfaction*.
16. Your company has a generous *incentive scheme*.
17. You receive a *commission* for the work you have done.
18. You receive support from a *union*.
19. You were under *stress*.
20. You were forced to *resign*.
21. You received a cut in your *salary*.
22. Your company gave you *sickness benefit*.
23. You found your job very *demanding*.

Exercise 8: Match sentences 1-6 in the first box with one of the sentences A-F in the second. Use the words in italics to help you:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Samantha is the assistant manager of a bank and she works from 8.30 to 5.30 every day. 2. Tracy works on the production line of a factory which makes cars. She uses a machine to spray paint onto the finished car parts. 3. Jane works for herself. She is a photographer. She works every day for about eight or nine hours. 4. Jeanette is a cleaner for a company in Birmingham, but she only works there for about three or four hours a day. 5. Claire has a powerful job in the personnel office of a large multinational company. She is responsible for employing new people and getting rid of those that the company doesn't want to employ anymore. 6. Marie works in the finance department of an international college in Oxford. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. She is a <i>semi-skilled blue-collar worker</i> in a <i>manufacturing industry</i>. B. She is a <i>self-employed</i> and works <i>full-time</i>. She likes to describe herself as <i>freelance</i>. C. She is responsible for <i>hiring and firing</i>. D. She calculates the <i>wages, salaries, pension contributions</i> and <i>medical insurance contributions</i> of all the staff. E. She is a <i>full-time white-collar worker</i> in a <i>service industry</i>. F. She is an <i>unskilled part-time employee</i>.
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Exercise 9: Now read this essay and complete the gaps with one of the words or expressions from Exercise 7 and 8. You may need to change the form of some of the words:

'Some people live to work, and others work to live. In most cases, this depends on the job they have and the conditions under which they are employed. In your opinion, what are the elements that make a job worthwhile?'

In answering this question, I would like to look first at the elements that combine to make a job undesirable. By avoiding such factors, potential 1) _____ are more likely to find a job that is more worthwhile, and by doing so, hope to achieve happiness in their work.

First of all, it doesn't
 2) _____ worker
 3) _____
 on a production line in one
 a 6) _____ worker
 the other
 lack 8) _____,
 you might lose your job at
 feel happy. Everybody



matter if you are an
 cleaning the floor, a
 4) _____ worker
 of the 5) _____, or
 in a bank, shop or one of
 7) _____ : if you
 with the knowledge that
 any time, you will never
 would like a

9) _____ in which he or she is guaranteed work. Nowadays, however, companies have a high turnover of staff, 10) _____ new staff and 11) _____ others on a weekly basis. Such companies are not popular with their workers.

The same can be said of a job in which you are put under a lot of 12) _____ and worry, a job which is so 13) _____ that it takes over your life, a job where you work 14) _____ and so never get to see your family or friends, or a physical job in which you do the same thing every day and end up with the industrial disease that is always in the papers nowadays – 15) _____.

With all these negative factors, it would be difficult to believe that there are any elements that make a job worthwhile. Money is, of course, the prime motivator, and everybody wants a good 16) _____. But of course that is not all. The chance of 17) _____, of being given a better position in a company, is a motivating factor. Likewise, 18) _____ such as a free lunch or a company car, an 19) _____ scheme to make you work hard such as a regular 20) _____ above the rate of inflation, 21) _____ in case you fall ill and a company 22) _____ scheme so that you have some money when you retire all combine to make a job worthwhile.

Unfortunately, it is not always easy to find all of these. There is, however, an alternative. Forget the office and the factory floor and become 23) _____ and work for yourself. Your future may not be secure, but at least you will be happy.



Exercise 10. You are going to hear four conversations in which a number of men and women agree and disagree about different suggestions concerning working life. As you listen, write down the topic of the conversation and put a (✓) for the people who agree or a (X) for those who disagree:

Conversation 1		Conversation 3	
Topic:.....		Topic:.....	
1 st woman		1 st man	
1 st man		1 st woman	
2 nd woman		2 nd man	

2 nd man		2 nd woman	
3 rd man		3 rd man	
3 rd woman		4 th man	
		3 rd woman	
Conversation 2		Conversation 4	
Topic:.....		Topic:.....	
1 st man		1 st man	
1 st woman		1 st woman	
2 nd man		2 nd man	
2 nd woman		2 nd woman	
3 rd man		3 rd woman	
4 th man		3 rd man	
3 rd woman			

UNIT 2: RECRUITMENT

Exercise 1. Read the following information about recruitment procedures:

A. Recruitment

The process of finding is *recruitment* or, *hiring*. Someone who has or, in Am. English, a *hire*. *hires* them; they join the may recruit employees *recruiters*, *recruitment agencies*. Outside *headhunters* may be people for very important leave the organizations This process is called



people for particular jobs especially in Am. English, been recruited is a *recruit* The company *employs* or company. A company directly or use outside *agencies* or *employment specialists* called called on to *headhunt* jobs, persuading them to they already work for. *headhunting*.

B. Applying for a job

Fred is a van driver, but he was fed up with long trips. He looked in the situations vacant pages of his local newspaper, where a local supermarket was *advertising* for van drivers for a new delivery service. He *applied for the job* by completing an *application form* and sending it in.

Harry is a building engineer. He saw a job in the appointment pages of one of the national papers. He made an *application*, sending in his *CV* (curriculum vitae – the “story” of his working life) and a *covering letter* explaining why he wanted the job and why he was the right person for it.

Note: BrE: CV; AmE: resume

BrE: covering letter; AmE: cover letter.

C. Selection procedures

Dagmar Schmidt is the head of recruitment at a German telecommunications company. She talks about the *selection process*, the methods that the company uses to recruit people:

“We advertise in national newspapers. We look at the *backgrounds* of *applicants*: their experience of different jobs and their *educational qualifications*. We don’t ask for handwritten *letters of application* as people usually apply by email; handwriting analysis belongs to the 19th century.

We invite the most interesting *candidates* to a *group discussion*. Then we have individual *interviews* with each candidate. We also ask the candidates to do written psychological tests *to assess* their *intelligence* and personality.

After this we *shortlist* three or four candidates. We check their *references* by writing to their *referees*: previous employers or teachers that candidates have named in their applications. If the references are OK, we ask the candidates to come back for more interviews. Finally, we *offer the job* to someone, and if they *turn it down* we have to think again. If they *accept* it, we hire them. We only *appoint* someone if we find the right person”.

Exercise 2. Complete the following sentences with the right word or phrase:

- a. I hope she, because if shethe job, we’ll have to start

- looking again.
- b. That last applicant was very strong, but I understand he's had two other already.
 - c. They've finally a new receptionist.
 - d. I phoned to check on my application, but they said they'd alreadysomeone.
 - e. This job is so important, I think we need to someone.
 - f. Computer programmers wanted. Only those with UNIX experience should
 - g. The selection process has lasted three months, but we're going tosomeone next week.

Exercise 3. Replace the underlined phrases with correct forms of words and expressions from A, B and C:

Fred had already refused two job offers when he went for a discussion to see if he was suitable for the job. They looked at his driving licence and contacted previous employers Fred had mentioned in his application. A few days later, the supermarket asked him if he would like the job and Fred said yes.

Harry didn't hear anything for six weeks, so he phoned the company. They told him that they had received a lot of requests for the job. After looking at the life stories of the people asking for the job and looking at what exams they had passed during their education, the company had chosen six people to interview, done tests on their personality and intelligence and they had then given someone the job.

Exercise 4. Read this newspaper article and find the answers to the following questions in the text:

1. What were the TWO reasons why Virgin Atlantic was considering redundancies?
2. What were the TWO things Richard Branson invited his staff to do?
3. How many people volunteered to take unpaid leave?
4. How did the long break affect the staff's attitude to their work?
5. Why is the scheme attractive to new recruits?
6. Is the scheme going to become permanent?

Branson's new route to more jobs

by Celia Weston

For many young people lucky enough to get a job after leaving school or college, the biggest shock of the transition to work is how few holidays they get.

Having spent their academic years working an eight or nine-month year, it can be depressing to realize that for the rest of their working lives they will be able to take only four weeks off a year.

Many would jump at the chance to take three months off - and that's exactly what happened at Virgin Atlantic, the airline run by Richard Branson. He believes the new initiative could help *to reduce unemployment*.

Faced last autumn with the *recession* and with its failure to acquire more flight slots out of Heathrow airport, the company was having to consider *redundancies*. Mr. Branson wrote to staff saying that *cutting back* on jobs was "something I have never wanted to do".

Instead he invited employees to take up to six months *unpaid leave* and to participate in a job sharing scheme.

The immediate crisis shorter working year took later asked for 300 months unpaid leave, 450 Mr. Branson said: “To be some cases we said that weeks.”

Most of the volunteers staff, including secretaries of the offer as well. “And when they came back from their break ... they definitely seemed to enjoy work more,” he said.

The company tends to recruit and train its own staff *from scratch*. As Mr. Branson said: “If you’ve been at college or *on the dole*, working for only nine months still makes you a lot better off financially than you were before.” He believes there is a broader social benefit to be achieved. “If you are only taking on people for nine months, that will enable others who would otherwise have no work or be living on the dole to have a chance too.”

And he goes further. “I think this should be the basis of a pattern across the whole European Community for the first few years of working life.”

Nor was a shorter working year only applicable to young people. “If older women and men with children can afford it because one partner’s working 12 months and the other nine, I think a lot of people would like to earn slightly less and be able to spend more time with their children,” Mr. Branson said.

This year the scheme is *on offer* again, although not over the busy summer period. “All the people who took time off last year would like to do so again,” Mr. Branson said. But its realization depended on whether the company could recruit enough people to allow 400-500 existing staff to take three months off.

The company was considering whether the arrangement should become a permanent feature, Mr. Branson said. “For new people being taken on in most departments, we’re thinking about making nine-month working a standard contract.”



passed but the idea of a off. When the company volunteers to take three put their names forward.

fair and share it around, in people could only take six

were cabin crew but other and pilots, *took advantage*

Exercise 5. Work in groups. Discuss these questions:

1. What are your views on Richard Branson’s scheme? Would you like to participate in such a scheme?
2. Would such a scheme succeed in the firm you work/have worked for? Why not?
3. Why do you think so many of Virgin’s cabin crew took advantage of the scheme?
4. Could this kind of scheme only succeed with a youthful staff who have few family responsibilities?
5. How could you persuade people who have considerable working experience and are used to earning a certain wage that they should take a pay cut?
6. What do you think of the following:
a four-day week a nine-day fortnight seasonal work job sharing

Exercise 6. Insert the following words in the gaps in the text below:

applicant application application form apply candidate

curriculum vitae or CV (GB) or resume (US) employment agencies
interview job description job vacancies references short-listed

Many people looking for work read the (1) advertised in newspapers by companies and (2) To reply to an advertisement is to (3) for a job. (You become a (4) or an (5)). You write an (6), or fill in the company's (7), and send it, along with your (8) and a covering letter. You often have to give the names of two people who are prepared to write (9)for you. If your qualifications and abilities match the (10), you might be (11), i.e. selected to attend an (12)

Exercise 7. When employees 'give notice', i.e. inform their employer that they will be leaving the company (as soon as their contract allows), in what order should the company carry out the following steps?

- a. either hire a job agency (or for a senior post, a firm of headhunters), or advertise the vacancy
- b. establish whether there is an internal candidate who could be promoted (or moved sideways) to the job
- c. examine the job description for the post, to see whether it needs to be changed (or indeed, whether the post needs to be filled)
- d. follow up the references of candidates who seem interesting
- e. invite the short-listed candidates for an interview
- f. make a final selection
- g. receive applications, curricula vitae and covering letters, and make a preliminary selection (a short list)
- h. try to discover why the person has resigned
- i. write to all the other candidates to inform them that they have been unsuccessful



Exercise 8. While you are listening to the interview on the tape, complete the table below:

1. Name of applicant	6. References (very good/good/fair/bad)
2. Job applied for	
3. Education	7. Hobbies.....
4. Qualifications	8. Which Department is the applicant interested in?
5. Work experience (years).....	9. Interviewed by: 1. 2.

Exercise 9. Below you will see some extracts from wants ads. Fill in each blank with a word or phrase from the following list:

competitive initiative suit kitchen staff ability outgoing team pension plan clear contact experience preference required skills willing busy office hard work potential customers successful candidate thorough training

- Our new 200-seat restaurant is opening in May and we are looking for waiters, waitresses and (1).....
- If you are a friendly and (2).....person who is not afraid of (3)....., we have the job and hours to (4).....you.
- For more information, (5).....Helen at (415) 331-2012.
- Secretary/Receptionist (6).....for a (7)..... . Typing and shorthand between 80 and 120 wpm. We will give (8).....to applicants who have experience using word processors and computers.
- We want a positive person who is (9).....to work hard and can use their own (10)..... . You must be lively and have a good sense of humour and a (11).....speaking voice. You will receive (12).....to enable you to inform (13).....of the benefits of advertising with us.
- The (14).....will have had (15).....in booking and banking procedures. The position calls for word-processing and secretarial (16).....plus the (17).....to work as part of a (18)..... A (19).....salary is offered as well as a company (20).....

UNIT 3: WRITING CV AND LETTER OF APPLICATION

Exercise 1. Work in pairs. Discuss these questions:

- What impression do you try to give in an application letter?
- Should an application letter be handwritten, typed, or laser-printed?
- Do you always tell the absolute truth in application letters?



Exercise 2. Listen to an expert discussing letters of application. What information does she consider to be essential?

Exercise 3. Write ten DOs or DON'Ts to help people who are writing letters of application. The first ones have been done for you.

- Do write clearly.
- Don't use a pencil.



Exercise 4. Listen to the tape and write down anything which is not on the list you wrote.

Exercise 5. Read the following information about writing letters of application:

Writing application letter

A *letter of application* should potential employer want to look at reading your CV and hopefully application letter, however, should your *experience* and *qualifications*

Layout and style

The letter should be limited to normally be sufficient. It is better to address a letter to a specific person, e.g. *Dear Miss Chan*, rather than to *Dear Sir or Madam*. However, in some job advertisements the name of the person you are writing to is not given. It is good practice to try to find out the following information before you write your letter:



create enough interest to make the your application in greater detail by invite you for an interview. Your not contain too much detail about because that is the job of the CV.

one page and a few paragraphs will

- the full name of the person you are writing;
- their title - Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms, Dr, Professor, etc, and;
- their position - Personnel Manager, Human Resources Manager, etc.

All this information can be obtained by a quick phone call to the company. Remember, **never** write *Dear Miss W. Chan*. It should be *Dear Miss Chan*. Do not use the initial except in the address. If you start with **Dear Sir/Madam**, it is accepted practice to finish with **Yours faithfully**. Whereas, if you start with **Dear Miss Chan**, you may finish with **Yours sincerely**. Your letter should be neat and free from careless mistakes. You can follow the *blocked* and *open punctuation* style. Whichever layout style you choose to use, you should use it *consistently* throughout the letter.

Structure of the letter

Paragraph 1 It should state clearly **why** you are writing and **where** you saw the job advertised.

- 1. I would like to apply for the post of ... as advertised in today's issue of..*
- 2. With reference to your advertisement in ... on ..., I am writing to apply for the position of ...*

Paragraph 2 It should give a little information about your qualifications and experience. Make sure the information you give is relevant to the job that you are applying for.

- 1. As you can see from my enclosed CV, I have worked in my present position for five years. During this time I have gained invaluable experience in ...*
- 2. I am currently a student at TPU studying I am due to graduate in..... Although I have been studying full time, I have had a number of summer jobs which have helped me to gain experience in ...*
- 3. My experience over the past two years has been at the managerial level, where I have had responsibility for ...*

Paragraph 3 It should say **why** you believe you are suited to the job and **what** you can offer the company. Those currently employed can state the reason for wishing to change their present job. However, you should not sound critical of your present employer.

1. I am currently working as a receptionist in ...The reason for my seeking a new position is that I wish to pursue a secretarial career. Unfortunately, there are no openings for advancement in my present employment.

2. For the last two years I have been working as a receptionist in ...Unfortunately the company is moving its main offices overseas and I have therefore decided to look for a new position. I believe that the experience I have gained in ... has given me the qualities you are looking for ...

3. I believe I would be an asset to your company. I will be able to bring with me my experience of ... which I believe would be useful in this position...

4. I feel that my ability to ... will help/enable me to ...

Paragraph 4 It should tell the reader **when** you are available for an interview and **how** to contact you.

1. I would like to have the opportunity to talk to you further about my application. I am available for interview at any time and I can be contacted at/on ...

2. I am available for an interview at any time but would appreciate two days notice. I can be contacted on/at ...

I look forward to hearing from/meeting you soon.

3. *As requested in the advertisement, I enclose a copy of my resume together with a recent photograph.*

I look forward to meeting with you to discuss my application further. I am available ... and can be contacted on/at ...

Remember you might have to give a bit more detail than in the above examples. You can also combine the language in these examples. Also, it is sometimes useful to gather information about the company so that you know more about its *background* and policies. This may help you present yourself *in the best light*.

Exercise 6. Read the following extracts from two letters about the advertisement for administrative clerk. Fill in each blank with a word from the following list:

*as audio available consider enclose inquiries favourably
for form further in opportunity position take to with*

A. Dear Sir or Madam,

In reference (1).....your advertisement in today's 'Morning News', I am interested (2).....applying for the (3).....of administrative clerk with your company. Could you please send me (4).....details and an application (5).....

B. Dear Sir,

I would like to apply (6).....the position of administrative clerk with your company. I (7).....my application form. I am presently working (8).....a secretary in the accounts office at TW Industries. My responsibilities include (9).....and copy typing and dealing (10).....correspondence and telephone (11)..... Twice a week I have been going to evening classes in bookkeeping and I intend to (12).....an examination in three month.

I am applying for the position because I would like an (13).....to make more use of my training.

I would be (14).....for an interview at any time.

I hope that you will (15).....my application (16).....

Exercise 7. Look at this job ad: what would be its attractions - what might be its drawbacks? Based on the information from Exercise 5 write a letter of application to ACME Atlantic.

Work in Bermuda!

ACME Atlantic are a well-known and respected trading company. We handle imports directly from manufacturers in 35 different countries, often to our own specifications, and currently export to 46 different countries worldwide.

We are looking for enthusiastic people to work in our office in Bermuda on temporary 3-6- and 9-month contracts. Applicants must be able to speak and write at least one foreign language fluently and can be nationals of any country.

Experience in import/export will be an advantage, but as special training will be available this is not essential. The main requirements are a willingness to work as a member of a team, to cope with pressure, to use the telephone in a foreign language and in English and to be prepared occasionally to work long hours when necessary.

There are several posts available and long-term prospects are good, though initially all successful applicants will be contracted for a maximum of 9 months.

The salary we will offer is excellent. We will pay for your return air fare and provide adequate accommodation at a nominal rent.

Please apply in your own handwriting, enclosing your resume, to Charles Fox, European Sales Office, ACME Atlantic Ltd, 45 Pentonville Road, London EC2 4AC.



Exercise 8. Listen to the following conversation and complete the notes below:

NOTES ON APPLICATION	
Name:	<i>Jonathan Briggs</i>
Degree:	<i>Economics and 1).....</i>
Teaching experience:	<i>Volunteer Teacher</i>
Location:	<i>2).....</i>
Dates:	<i>3).....</i>
Volunteer organization:	<i>4).....</i>
Type of school:	<i>5).....</i>
Subjects taught:	<i>6)..... Forms 1, 2 and 3</i>
	<i>- English Form 7).....</i>
	<i>- Agricultural Science Form 6</i>
Other responsibilities:	<i>ran school farm</i>
NOTES (continued)	
Reasons for wanting to leave in the first year:	<i>- 8)..... - few teaching resources</i>
Reasons for wanting to extend tour:	<i>- success of cattle breeding project - obtained funds for farm buildings</i>
Reasons for wanting to train to teach Geography:	<i>- It is his 9)..... - It has many 10).....</i>

Exercise 9. Read the following information about CV writing:

Format for a Curriculum Vitae (CV)

A Curriculum Vitae, commonly referred to as CV, includes a summary of your educational and academic *backgrounds* as well as teaching and research experience, publications, presentations, *awards*, honors, and *affiliations*.

International employers often expect to read the type of personal information on a *curriculum vitae* that would not be included on a resume. When writing a CV for graduate school or academia the personal information included in this curriculum vitae template would be omitted.

The following curriculum vitae template will give you an example of what to include in your CV and show the appropriate format for a curriculum vitae.

Sample Curriculum Vitae Template

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name
Address
Telephone
Cell Phone
Email

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Date of Birth
Place of Birth
Citizenship
Visa Status
Sex

Optional Personal information:

Marital Status
Spouse's Name
Children

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Work History
Academic Positions
Research and Training

EDUCATION

High School
University
Graduate School
Post-Doctoral Training

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Certifications and Accreditations
Computer Skills

AWARDS

PUBLICATIONS

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

INTERESTS

Having a well written, effective resume at one's disposal is an excellent tool in today's ever changing job market. A strong resume may be the sole difference in getting a call for an interview or simply having your resume *tossed* into the proposed employer's *sludge pile*. Simply put, an effective resume may win you a job interview. In the world of academia, a strong resume, known as a curriculum vitae (CV) may open the door towards a *tenured position*.

Exercise 10. Rewrite this letter in a suitably formal style. Some sentences may have to be left out altogether. Check your version with another student:

11 Oakwood Road
Stanhope, Birmingham
8th October

Dear Mr. Scott,

I am writing because you said you wanted a Service technician in The Evening Mail of 7th October. I've put my life story in with this letter. If you look at it you'll see I know a lot about engineering because I've been a maintenance engineer for six years. So I've learnt a lot about servicing manual and electrical systems. I took a conversion course the other day, all about pneumatic, hydraulic and electrical systems. It was pretty easy. Now I'm going to evening classes in the same things, and I hope I'll pass the exams at the end!

I liked your comment in the ad about "good prospects" because I'm not just in it for the money. I want a job that'll mean something. I'm sure you'll understand. Get in touch if there's anything else you need to know. Give me a ring at work, it's 423419. In the evenings, you can always get me at my mother's in King Oak. I can come and see you at any time except Tuesdays, which are a bit awkward.

*Best wishes,
Richard Walters*

UNIT 4: JOB INTERVIEWS

Exercise 1. Below you will see some common expressions that you might find useful. Put each expression into the correct box according to the function of that expression:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. May I think about that for a moment? 2. In short, ... 3. What I'm trying to say is... 4. To sum up, ... 5. What are your views on...? 6. Would you mind repeating that? 7. How can I put this? 8. In other words... 9. Sorry to say but... 10. Well, as a matter of fact... 11. I'm not so sure about that 12. Pardon? 13. I can't help thinking the same 14. What are your feelings about...? 15. So in conclusion, ... 16. I see things rather differently myself 17. True enough 18. That's right | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 19. I don't entirely agree with you 20. Perhaps I should make that clearer by saying... 21. How can I best say this? 22. Could you repeat what you said? 23. I couldn't agree more 24. Actually... 25. To put it another way... 26. That's just what I was thinking 27. In brief, ... 28. Could I just say that ... 29. Well, my own opinion is that... 30. That's my view exactly 31. To summarise, ... 32. What was that? 33. I must take issue with you on that 34. Let me get this right 35. Sorry to interrupt, but... 36. I'm afraid I didn't catch that 37. What's your opinion? |
|--|---|

Agreeing with somebody	Disagreeing with somebody
<i>Example: Yes, I agree.</i>	<i>Example: I'm afraid I disagree.</i>
Interrupting	Asking for clarification or repetition
<i>Example: Excuse me for interrupting.</i>	<i>Example: I'm sorry?</i>
Asking somebody for their opinion	Saying something in another way
<i>Example: What do you think about..?</i>	<i>Example: What I mean is</i>
Giving yourself time to think	Summing up
<i>Example: (in response to a question) Let me see.</i>	<i>Example: So basically.....</i>

Exercise 2. Work in groups. Think of the last interview you attended and discuss these questions:

- What was the worst thing about it?
- What difficult questions were you asked?
- Why do you think you were successful, or unsuccessful?
- If you could go through the interview again, what would you do differently?
- In an interview, do you always have to be completely honest?
- What impression do you try to give in an interview?



Exercise 3. You'll hear extracts from two interviews. Use this assessment form to decide which candidate performed better on a scale of 1 to 5:

	Sue Jones	Tom Richards
qualifications		
confidence		
reliability		
personality		
work experience		
overall impression		

Exercise 4. Imagine that a young friend of yours is about to attend his or her first interview. Note down some more advice that you would give:

- e.g. Do your homework: find out about the company
- Prepare some questions to ask about the company and what the job entails
- Wear smart, formal clothes, etc.

Exercise 5. Read the following information about an interview, its types and methods of success. Prepare a short presentation on either of these topics:

JOB INTERVIEWING. GETTING DOWN TO BASICS

A job interview is your chance to show an employer what he or she will get if you're hired. That is why it is essential to be well prepared for the job interview. There exist five basic types of interviews:

The Screening Interview

This is usually an interview with someone in human resources. It may take place in person or on the telephone. He or she will have a copy of your resume in hand and will try to verify the information on it. The human resources representative will want to find out if you meet the minimum qualifications for the job and, if you do, you will be passed on to the next step.

The Selection Interview

The selection interview is the step in the process which makes people the most *anxious*. The employer knows you are qualified to do the job. While you may have the skills to perform the tasks that are required by the job in question, the employer needs to know if

you have the personality necessary to “fit in.” Someone who can’t *interact* well with management and co-workers may *disrupt* the functioning of an entire department. This ultimately can affect the company’s *bottom line*.

The Group Interview

In the group interview, several job candidates are interviewed at once. The interviewer or interviewers are trying to separate the *leaders* from the *followers*. The interviewer may also be trying to find out if you are a “*team player*.” The type of personality the employer is looking for determines the *outcome* of this interview. There is nothing more to do than act naturally.

The Panel Interview

The candidate is interviewed can be quite *intimidating* as should try to remain calm and member of the *panel*. Make *eye* the panel as you answer his or



by several people at once. It questions are fired at you. You *establish rapport* with each *contact* with each member of her question.

The Stress Interview

It is not a very nice way to that may end up being your a technique sometimes used to *handle adversity*. The

artificially introduce stress into the interview by asking questions so quickly that the candidate doesn’t have time to answer each one. The interviewer may also ask *weird questions*, not to determine what the job candidate answers, but how he or she answers.

Preparing for the Interview

Before you begin to think about how you will dress for the interview, or answer questions, you should gather as much information about the employer as you can. Not only will you appear informed and *intelligent*, it will also help you make a decision if a *job offer* is eventually made.

You might also want to prepare for answering questions by listing some of your *attributes*. Talk to former co-workers with whom you worked closely. Ask them to list some *traits* about you that they most admired - work related, of course.

You want to seem somewhat *spontaneous*, but you also want to appear *self-confident*. The way to do that is to *rehearse*, not exactly what you will say, but how you will say it. A great method is to rehearse in front of a video camera. Study your *posture*, the way you make eye contact, and your *body language*.

Dressing for the Interview

Appearance is very important and whether we like it or not, it is the first thing people notice about us. You should match your dress to employees in the workplace in which you are interviewing and probably take it up a notch. If dress is very *casual*, those being interviewed should wear dress pants and dress shirts or skirts and blouses. Don’t choose a Friday, since many offices have “*casual Fridays*.”



Your hair should be *neat* and *stylish*. Your nails should be well manicured and clean. Men's nails should be short. Women's nails should be of a reasonable length and polished in a neutral color. Also for women, makeup shouldn't be heavy. Perfume or cologne should be avoided as some people find certain scents offensive.

Establishing Rapport

Since the interviewer's job is to make sure that not only your *skill*, but your personality as well, is a good match, you must establish rapport with the person or persons interviewing you. That begins the instant you walk in the door. Let the interviewer set the tone. Nothing is as awkward as offering your hand and having the *gesture* not returned by the other person. Therefore you should wait for the interviewer to offer his or her hand first, but be ready to offer your hand immediately.

Body Language

They say that body language gives more away about us than speech. Eye contact is very important but make sure it looks natural. A smiling, relaxed face is very *inviting*. Hands resting casually in your lap rather than *arms folded across your chest* also is more inviting.

Answering Questions

When it comes down to it, isn't this the main point of the interview? Speak slowly and clearly. Pause before you answer a question. Your answers will seem less rehearsed and it will give you a chance to collect your thoughts.

Asking Questions

Usually toward the end of the interview, the person conducting it will ask you if you have any questions. You should have some. You should ask about what a typical day would *entail*. You could also ask what special projects you would be working on. As in every other aspect of the job search, you are trying to show the employer how you can fill their needs.

Illegal Questions

We have all heard horror stories of interviewers asking job candidates *inappropriate questions*, such as those about *marital status*, age, and *family status*. These questions should not be asked, but it is up to you whether to answer them.

Money Questions

Money is a very sensitive topic. The candidate shouldn't bring it up. However, the interviewer may bring it up first. He or she may ask what *salary* you hope to earn. You must prepare for this question before the interview. Find out what others in the same position are earning. Always give a range, not an exact number. This will help keep you from pricing yourself out of a job. You don't want the employer to think they can't *afford* you, but you also don't want them to think you are a *cheap commodity*.

After the Interview

This is something that It's the *thank you note* or chance to *reiterate* on the interview or *bring* to mention. It is also a matter of *politeness*.



is too often neglected. *follow-up letter*. It is your something you mentioned *up* something you forgot nice gesture and a simple

Exercise 6. Here are some tips relating to your appearance and body language. For each one select the correct missing word from the options below:

1. Make sure your clothes are clean, but _____ wear obvious logos or designer names.
 - a. do
 - b. don't
 - c. must
2. Don't use _____ much deodorant or perfume!
 - a. to
 - b. too
 - c. two
3. Don't wear too much jewellery. Interviewers don't _____ like rings!
 - a. never
 - b. sometimes
 - c. usually
4. Wear _____ that are smart, but comfortable.
 - a. cloths
 - b. clothes
 - c. covers
5. Arrive well _____ the interview time.
 - a. before
 - b. after
 - c. later than
6. Make eye _____ with the interviewer when you are introduced.
 - a. contactation
 - b. contiction
 - c. contact
7. Give a firm handshake, and make sure you _____!
 - a. snarl
 - b. smile
 - c. snigger
8. Don't _____. This will distract the interviewer from what you're saying.
 - a. fidget
 - b. figgit
 - c. fijit
9. Don't appear over-confident, for example by leaning too far back in your chair, but do try to _____.
 - a. relax
 - b. relapse
 - c. collapse

Exercise 7. Match the common interview question on the left with the suitable response from the list on the right:

1. Why did you choose this company?	A. People say I'm sociable, organized, and decisive.
-------------------------------------	--

2. What are your strengths/weaknesses?	B. My aim is to have a position in the Management Team.
3. How would your friends describe you?	C. I have excellent time management, but I can be impatient for results.
4. What is your greatest achievement?	D. Because I think I will find the work environment both challenging and rewarding.
5. How well do you work in a team?	E. I always support my colleagues and believe we should work towards a common goal.
6. Where will you be in 5 years?	F. Leading the University football team to the national Championships.

Exercise 8. The words in the column on the right are phrases that use the word career. For each definition on the left, match it to the correct phrase on the right:

1. Chances of future success in your career	A. career move
2. The direction you hope your career will take	B. career break
3. A change you make in order to progress	C. career prospects
4. Time when you are not employed, perhaps when travelling or looking after children	D. career ladder
5. A series of promotions towards more senior positions	E. career plan

Exercise 9. Read the text below which advises candidates how to answer difficult interview questions. For each question, mark the correct answer – right, wrong or not given:

Attending interviews

Good interviewers prepare their questions carefully in advance according to the candidate's application and CV. So candidates need to prepare just as carefully. Here are some useful tips on answering interview questions.

1. What don't you like about your current position?

No job is perfect; there's always something we don't like. Be honest but don't give a list of complaints. The important thing is to talk positively about how you deal with problems at work.

2. Where does your employer think you are today?

Be honest. If you lie to your current employer, you'll lie to your next employer. Don't of the interview. don't say why.

3. What are your objectives?

Think about these Your objectives job you have achievable. If the everything you will think that you probably won't stay with the company very long.



lie to your current phone in sick on the day Take a day's holiday but

your professional

before the interview. should be relevant to the applied for and new job can't offer you want, the interviewer

4. What are your weaknesses?

Be honest; no-one is perfect. Think about this before the interview and choose your answer carefully. Talk about how you deal with a weakness; this is far more important than the weakness itself.

1. Interviewers ask every candidate the same questions.
2. You shouldn't mention problems with your current job.
3. You should arrange to have a day off for the interview.
4. You should give your personal objectives.
5. Your objectives should suit the position you apply for.
6. You should practise your answers at home.
7. You shouldn't discuss things you aren't good at.

Exercise 10. Work in groups. Take turns to carry out the interview:

Student A:

You are applying for the position of a manager at a famous manufacturing company. You have exactly five minutes to find out if it is the right job for you. Prepare questions on the five features of character which you consider the most important.

Student B:

You are the chair of the manufacturing company. You have exactly five minutes to find out whether the candidate you are interviewing is the right person for the job. Prepare questions on the candidate's experience, character and qualifications.

UNIT 5: BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

Exercise 1. Read the following information:

Ethical behaviour is doing things that are morally right. *Ethics (countable noun)* are moral beliefs about what is right or wrong. *Ethics (uncountable noun)* is the study of this. Ethically responsible companies want to do the right thing in areas such as:

- employment and community: they want to pay attention to things that affect all people, not just their employees, in the areas where the company has its offices, factories and activities.
- the environment: they want to conduct business in ways that protect the environment to ensure that the air, rivers etc. are not polluted and plant and animal life are not endangered.
- winning new business: they want to get business without engaging in corrupt behaviour, for example offering *bribes* - money given to someone so that they behave unethically.

Companies want to be seen as good corporate citizens, with activities that are beneficial not only for their *stakeholders* - their employees, *shareholders* and so on - but for the community and society as a whole.

Accountability and transparency

Ethical corporate behaviour includes *accountability* - the idea that companies are completely responsible for what they do and that people should be able to expect them to explain their actions. *Transparency* is explaining this behaviour in a way that can be understood by outsiders, and not trying to hide anything. Companies may say that they demand high levels of *probity* and *integrity* - complete honesty - from their employees, and that they do not tolerate any form of *misconduct*.

Corporate social responsibility

Companies have long had *codes of ethics* and *codes of conduct* saying how their managers and employees should behave. Now they are looking at these issues in more systematic ways. They are designating executives to oversee the whole area of *corporate social responsibility* (CSR).

Exercise 2. Read the article relating to the ideas in Exercise 1. Then say if the statements below are true or false, identifying the phrase or sentence from the article that confirms your answer:

How to become good in all areas

Few companies are clear about how to manage what can be an amorphous collection of internal initiatives and external relationships on social, environmental and ethical issues. Probity and responsibility must be *embedded* in a company's culture, strategy and operations from the top down. But how can this be done? A new guide from Business for Social Responsibility, a US non-profit research and advisory organization with 1,400 member companies and affiliates, attempts to answer this by taking the reader step by step through the process of designing a corporate social responsibility management system.

Only a *handful of* companies have a full CSR management system in place, says the organization, which advises its members on how to make responsible practices integral to their strategy and operations. Its combined annual revenues of nearly \$2,000 bn (£1,300bn) and employ 6m people. They include ABB, British Airways, Coca-Cola, Ikea,

Unilever and Wal-Mart. The scandals in the US have underlined how “corporate responsibility *taskforces*” and codes of conduct are not enough on their own and can sometimes be a *smokescreen*.

Creating and building a system is a complex, long-company,” says the report. “It company conducts business implementing other large-as total quality management.”

The guide runs through has responsibility for CSR in management structure might button” issues (child labour, sectors. It encourages their stakeholders, what their and influential they are and long-term partner or *liability*.



successful CSR management term project for any involves a shift in the way a and can *be likened to* scale change initiatives such

basics such as who currently the company, why a better improve things and what “hot-drug pricing) face different companies to think hard about concerns are, how *credible* whether they are a potential

1. Most companies have clear, coherent policies on social, environmental and ethical issues.
2. If a company behaves with probity, it has high ethical standards.
3. Business for Social Responsibility has a coherent approach to designing a corporate social responsibility management system.
4. It’s simple for a company to add a CSR management system to its day-to-day business.
5. Codes of conduct are enough to ensure ethical behaviour.
6. The guide says that a company’s stakeholders should all be kept happy so that they are all retained by the company over the long term.

Exercise 3. Complete the sentences, with expressions from the text above:

1. The company was accused of giving to local officials in order to allow their products into the country more quickly.
2. The company has supported several projects in the local where its factories are situated.
3. Voters demanded that there should be greater in the election process so that they could understand it fully.
4. Following the scandals of Enron, Worldcom and others, there is greater emphasis in business schools on the teaching of

Exercise 4. How ethical are you in your business dealings? Find out with the questionnaire below:

<p>1. You do a lot of travelling on business. Your company pays your air fares and you have collected ‘frequent flyer’ miles from the airlines that you can exchange for free</p>	<p>5. You work in the purchasing department of a large company. One of your suppliers has sent you a Christmas present - a case of wine. They know you shouldn’t accept it</p>
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<p>flights. If you use them for your own personal travel, nobody will know. <i>Will you</i></p> <p><i>a. use them for business trips and save your company money?</i></p> <p><i>b. use them to upgrade your seat to first class on business trips?</i></p> <p><i>c. book that holiday in the Bahamas that you've always wanted?</i></p>	<p>because they also sent a note promising not to tell any of your colleagues about it. <i>Will you</i></p> <p><i>a. send the wine back and never buy anything from that supplier again?</i></p> <p><i>b. send the wine back and explain you can only accept gifts up to a certain value?</i></p> <p><i>c. send the wine back and say that you prefer fine malt whisky?</i></p>
<p>2. You are the manager of a charming pub in the country a long way from the nearest town. The owner of the pub wants you to run an 'all you can drink' campaign where the customers can have as much beer as they want for a fixed price. It's bound to attract more customers and be very profitable. <i>Will you</i></p> <p><i>a. refuse to do it, in case it encourages people to drink and drive?</i></p> <p><i>b. agree to do it, but put up posters warning against drink-driving and start selling black coffee as well as beer?</i></p> <p><i>c. refuse to do it unless you receive a profit-related bonus?</i></p>	<p>6. You are a financial manager. Until last year, your company had an unbroken record of rising earnings per share, but last year's profits were down. Fortunately you have received a very large order since the beginning of the present financial year. Your boss tells you to record the new order in last year's accounts, so you don't spoil the company's track record. <i>Will you</i></p> <p><i>a. explain it might mislead shareholders and refuse?</i></p> <p><i>b. refuse unless you can include a note about it in the small print in the annual report?</i></p> <p><i>c. agree and suggest some other 'legal' ways of making the figures look better this year?</i></p>
<p>3. You are the owner of a small business. One of your suppliers, an old friend, has asked you to pay them cash for an order so they can avoid paying VAT. There's no chance of you getting into trouble even if the tax office find out because it is your supplier's responsibility to declare it, not yours. <i>Will you</i></p> <p><i>a. refuse?</i></p> <p><i>b. warn your friend that they could get into trouble but agree if they insist?</i></p> <p><i>c. agree? (After all, what are friends for?)</i></p>	<p>7. You are friendly with someone in the strategic planning department of your company. One day, they give you some confidential information. They tell you about a company they are going to target for take-over. They are sure the share price will rise. You could make a lot of money if you buy shares now. <i>Will you</i></p> <p><i>a. tell your colleague they shouldn't pass on confidential information?</i></p> <p><i>b. thank your colleague but do nothing?</i></p> <p><i>c. tell your broker to buy as many shares as they can?</i></p>
<p>4. You have run out of stationery at home and there's plenty of nice blank paper and envelopes in your desk at work. <i>Will you</i></p> <p><i>a. resist the temptation to take any home?</i></p> <p><i>b. take a little home to keep yourself going until you can buy some more?</i></p> <p><i>c. take plenty home so you don't run out</i></p>	<p>8. You are the owner of a small company. A friend offers you a free copy of a computer software program that you need at work. If you accept their offer, you won't have to pay the \$700 licensing fee to the software company. <i>Will you</i></p> <p><i>a. turn down your friend's offer and buy your own copy?</i></p>

again?	<p>b. accept your friend's offer?</p> <p>c. accept their offer and charge the company \$700 which you can pocket tax-free?</p>
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How did you score?

<p>Mostly as You may not always be popular with your colleagues but your business contacts know they can trust you to play fair. If some people accuse you of being inflexible, it's because your strong principles make them feel uncomfortable. Your honest approach should bring you success in your career and, although it may be slow coming, it's bound to be long-lasting.</p>	<p>Mostly bs You like to do what's right if you can, but realize the world is not an honest place. You've probably noticed the person who tells the truth is not always the person who gets on fastest so you are prepared to make compromises, accepting the fact that in order to do business you sometimes have to bend the rules.</p>	<p>Mostly cs If the people around you are behaving dishonestly, you will do everything necessary to ensure they don't get your share. As you see it, if you can't beat them, join them. No doubt you will advance up the ladder of success at top speed because you are very good at telling people exactly what they want to hear. The trouble is, it is not always what they <i>should</i> hear, so your success will probably be short-lived.</p>
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Exercise 5. You'll hear three conversations in which people are meeting and being introduced to each other. Listen to what they say to each other and fill the gaps below:

- Alex White, a new employee, meets Chris Grey.
 Alex White: I'd like to 1) _____. My name's Alex White and I'm the new export sales co-ordinator.
 Chris Grey: Oh, yes. I've heard of you. How 2) _____? I'm Chris Grey. 3) _____ you....
- Liz Jones, a colleague from Canada, is visiting the office in London.
 Tony Harris: Ms. Smith, I'd 4) _____ Mrs. Jones. Mrs. Jones is from our sales office in Toronto.
 Liz Jones: Hi!
 Claire Smith: 5) _____, Mrs. Jones? I've been 6) _____ meeting you.
 Liz Jones: Oh, please 7) _____ Liz.
 Claire Smith: And I'm Claire.
 Liz Jones: Hi.
 Claire Smith: Well, Liz, did you 8) _____?
 Liz Jones: Yeah, not too bad...
- Miss Lucas, a visitor from Argentina, is introduced to Mr. Evans.
 Mrs. Green: Mr. Evans, 9) _____ Miss Lucas? She's from Argentina.
 Mr. Evans: Yes, I think we've met before. It's 10) _____!
 Miss Lucas: That's right, hello again. 11) _____?
 Mr. Evans: Fine, thanks...

Exercise 6. Read the following information about different culture manners:

Alexandra Adler is an expert in doing business across cultures. She is talking to a group of British businesspeople.

‘Culture is the “way we do things here”. “Here” may be a country, an area, a social class or an organization such as a company or school. You often talk about:

- *company or corporate culture*: the way a particular company works, and the things it believes are important.
- *canteen culture*: the ways that people in an organization such as the police think and talk, not approved by the leaders of the organization.
- *long-hours culture*: where people are expected to work for a long time each day.
- *macho culture*: ideas typically associated with men: physical strength, aggressiveness, etc.

But you must be careful of *stereotypes*, fixed ideas that may not be true.’

Distance between managers and the people who work under them varies in different cultures. Look at these two companies.

In Country A, managers are usually easy to talk to - *accessible* and *approachable* - and there is a tradition of employees being involved in *decision-making* as part of a *team of equals*. This company is not very hierarchical, with only three *management layers*.

In Country B, managers are usually more *distant* and *remote*. Employees may feel quite distant from their managers and have a lot of *deference* for them: accepting decisions but not participating in them.

Companies in Country B tend to be more hierarchical than those in Country A, with more management layers.

Deference and distance may be shown in language. Some languages have many *forms of address* that you use to indicate how *familiar* you are *with* someone. English only has one form, ‘you’ but distance may be shown in other ways, for example, in whether first names or surnames are used.

Exercise 7. Look at Exercise 6. Which word combination with ‘culture’ describes each of the following?

1. The men really dominate in this company, they don’t make life easy for women at all. All they talk about is football.
2. Among the management here we try to be fair to people from different minorities, but there are still elements of racism among the workforce.
3. Of course, the quality of the work you do after you’ve been at it for ten hours is not good.
4. There was a time when managers could only wear white shirts in this company - things are a bit less formal now.
5. Here the male managers talk about the market as if it was some kind of battlefield.
6. They say that if you go home at 5.30, you can’t be doing your job properly, but I’m going anyway.

Exercise 8. Read this information and decide whether these pieces of advice about the English-speaking business world are true or false:

In the English-speaking business world, people use first names, even with people they do not know very well. But if you aren't sure, use *Mr.* and the family name for men, and *Mrs.* or *Miss* and the family name for women, depending on whether they are married or not. *Ms.* often replaces *Mrs.* and *Miss*. You don't use *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Miss* or *Ms.* with only a first name (e.g. ~~Mr. John~~) or by itself.

1. It's possible to introduce yourself by saying your family name then your first name.
2. It's possible to use *Mr.*, *Mrs.* or *Miss* on its own, or with a first name.
3. British people use *Sr.* and *Jr.* to refer to a father and his son.
4. Americans often show their middle name with an initial.
5. You can always use someone's first name to talk to them, even if you don't know them very well.
6. *Ms.* is being used more and more as a title for women.
7. You can show your qualifications after your name on your business card.

Exercise 9. Read the following text and do the exercises below:

In Alphaland, businesspeople dress quite formally. The *business suit* is common, but for men, wearing non-matching jacket and trousers is also a possibility.

In Betatania, the dark business suit is obligatory for men. Some companies allow women to wear trouser suits.

In Gammara, the business suit is almost as necessary as in Betatania, but with more variation in colours. Some companies require employees to wear *formal clothes* from Monday to Thursday, and allow less formal ones on what they call *casual Fridays* or *dress-down Fridays*. In some places, many banks and shops require people dealing with customers to wear uniforms so that they all dress the same.

In Deltatonia, people dress more *casually* at work than in the other countries. For men, suits and ties are less common than elsewhere. This is *smart casual*.

Alexandra Adler continues her seminar on cross-cultural issues.

Entertaining and *hospitality* vary a lot in different cultures.

- In Alphaland, entertaining is important. There are long business lunches in restaurants, where deals are discussed. Professional and private lives are separate, and clients are never invited home.
- In Betatania, evenings are spent drinking and singing in bars with colleagues and clients.
- In Gammara, lunch can be important, but less so than in Alphaland. Important contacts may be invited to dinner at home. Corporate hospitality is a big industry, with clients invited to big sports events.
- In Deltatonia, restaurants are rare outside the capital. Some entertainment takes place when important clients are invited to people's houses for dinner, or go sailing or to country houses for the weekend, etc.

Attitudes towards time can vary enormously.

In Busyville, people start work at eight, and officially finish at six, though many managers stay much longer. There is a culture of *presenteeism*: being at work when you

don't need to be. There is a two-hour lunch break, and a lot of business is done over restaurant lunches. (Lunch is the main meal. The *working breakfast* is rare.) There are no snacks between meals, just coffee, so eat properly at meal times.

As for *punctuality*, you can arrive up to 15 minutes 'late' for meetings. If invited to someone's house (unusual in business), arrive 15-30 minutes after the time given.

Don't phone people at home about work, and don't phone them at all after 9 pm. There are a lot of *public holidays* (about 15) during the year. Busyville is empty in August, as many companies close completely for four weeks. Employees have five weeks' holiday a year and they usually take four of them in August.

Here are some other areas of potential cultural misunderstanding:

- a. *distance* when talking to people: what is comfortable?
- b. *eye contact*: how much of the time do people look directly at each other?
- c. *gesture*: people make lots of facial gestures? How much do they move their arms and hands?
- d. *greetings/goodbyes*: do people shake hands every time? Are there fixed phrases to say?
- e. *humour*: is this a good way of relaxing people? Or is it out of place in some contexts?
- f. *physical contact*: how much do people touch each other?
- g. *presents*: when should you give them? When should you open them? What should you say when you receive one?
- h. *rules of conversation* and the *role of silence*: how long can people be silent before they feel uncomfortable? Is it acceptable to interrupt when others are speaking?

In which country might you hear these things:

1. How about a trip out tomorrow afternoon? We could see some horse racing and have a glass of champagne.
2. Do come out with us this evening! I know some great bars. How's your singing?
3. What are you doing this weekend? You could come to our summer cottage. You'll meet my family and we can take the boat out.
4. Let's get out of the office to discuss the deal. I know a nice restaurant near here, with some very good local dishes.

Exercise 10. Tick (✓) the things this visitor to Busyville does right, and put a cross (X) by her mistakes:

I phoned my contact in her office at 7.30 pm. (1...) I suggested a working breakfast the next morning. (2...) She wasn't keen, so I suggested lunch. (3...) We arranged to meet at her office at 12.30. I arrived at 12.45 (4...) and we went to a restaurant, where we had a very good discussion. That evening I wanted to check something, so I found her name in the phone book and phoned her at home. (5...) She was less friendly than at lunchtime. I said I would be back in Busyville in mid-August (6...). Not a good time, she said, so I suggested September. (7...)

Exercise 11. Which points in the text above (Exercise 9) are referred to in this story:

Sally, a student, is working for a company abroad for work experience. The company has employees from all over the world. The head of the company, Henrik, invites Sally to a barbecue for his employees at his home, at 3 pm on Saturday.

She is the first to arrive, at exactly 3 o'clock. When the others arrive, some shake hands with each other. Some kiss on one cheek, others on both cheeks. Others arrive and say hello without kissing or shaking hands. (1...) Some bring wine or flowers, which the host does not open and puts to one side. Others bring nothing. (2...) In conversations, some people move their arms around a lot and seem to make signs with their hands, others keep their hands by their sides. (3...) Some people do not let others finish what they are saying, and others say almost nothing; the people with them seem upset and move away when they can. (4...). Some people look directly at the person they are talking to. Others look away more. (5...) Some touch the arm of the other person whenever they are speaking to them. (6...) notices that some people seem to be slowly moving backwards across the garden as the conversation goes on, while the person with them is moving forward. (7...) Later, somebody makes a joke but nobody laughs. Everyone goes quiet. (8...) People start saying goodbye and leaving.

Exercise 12. Read this article and choose one of these titles for it:

**When in Rome ...
Travelling abroad
Doing business in Europe**

**Problems that business people face
Good manners, good business
I didn't mean to be rude!**

Nobody actually wants to cause offence but, as business becomes ever more international, it is increasingly easy to get it wrong. There may be a single European market but it does not mean that managers behave the same in Greece as they do in Denmark.

In many European countries *handshaking* is an automatic gesture. In France good manners require that on arriving at a business meeting a manager shakes hands with everyone present. This can be a demanding task and, in a crowded room, may require gymnastic ability if the farthest hand is to be reached.

Handshaking is popular in - including Belgium and Northern Scandinavians, fond of demonstrations

In Europe common



is almost as other countries Germany, Italy. But Europeans, British and are not quite so physical of friendliness. the most challenge is

not the content of the food, but the way you behave as you eat. Some things are just not done. In France it is not good manners to raise tricky questions of business over the main

course. Business has its place: after the cheese course. Unless you are prepared to eat in silence you have to talk about something - something, that is, other than the business deal which you are continually chewing over in your head.

Italians give similar importance to the whole process of business entertaining. In fact, in Italy the biggest fear, as course after course appears, is that you entirely forget you are there on business. If you have the energy, you can always do the polite thing when the meal finally ends, and offer to pay. Then, after a lively discussion, you must remember the next polite thing to do - let your host pick up the bill.

In Germany, as you walk sadly back to your hotel room, you may wonder why your apparently friendly hosts have not invited you out for the evening. Don't worry, it is probably nothing personal. Germans do not entertain business people with quite the same enthusiasm as some of their European counterparts.

The Germans are also notable for the amount of formality they bring to business. As an outsider, it is often difficult to know whether colleagues have been working together for 30 years or have just met in the lift. If you are used to calling people by their first names this can be a little strange. To the Germans, titles are important. Forgetting that someone should be called *Herr Doktor* or *Frau Direktorin* might cause serious offence. It is equally offensive to call them by a title they do not possess.

In Italy the question of title is further confused by the fact that everyone with a university degree can be called *Dottore* - and engineers, lawyers and architects may also expect to be called by their professional titles.

These cultural challenges exist side by side with the problems of doing business in a foreign language. Language, of course, is full of difficulties - disaster may be only a syllable away. But the more you know of the culture of the country you are dealing with, the less likely you are to get into difficulties. It is worth the effort. It might be rather hard to explain that the reason you lost the contract was not the product or the price, but the fact that you offended your hosts in a light-hearted comment over an aperitif. Good manners are admired: they can also make or break the deal.

Exercise 13. Decide if these statements are true or false, according to the writer:

1. In France you are expected to shake hands with everyone you meet.
2. People in Britain shake hands just as much as people in Germany.
3. In France people prefer talking about business during meals.
4. It is not polite to insist on paying for a meal if you are in Italy.
5. Visitors to Germany never get taken out for meals.
6. German business people don't like to be called by their surnames.
7. Make sure you know what the titles of the German people you meet are.
8. Italian professionals are usually addressed by their titles.
9. A humorous remark always goes down well all over the world.

Exercise 14. Discuss these questions:

- Which of the ideas in the article do you disagree with?
- What would you tell a foreign visitor about good manners in your country?
- How much do you think international business is improved by knowing about foreign people's customs?



Exercise 15. Listen to the people talking about customs to do with work. Which speakers mention the customs in the chart? Put a tick (✓) in the correct column:

	Polly	Mohammed
a. The working day starts about 7.30.		
b. Some people go home for lunch.		
c. Sunday is a day of rest for most people.		
d. Men in offices do not usually wear ties.		
e. Some people go for a beer after work, before they go home.		



Exercise 16. Listen to the same speakers talking about foreign visitors and decide whether the statements below are true or false:

- Americans in Zaire prefer to stay in big hotels.
- Americans like to try the local food.
- Zairean food is very spicy.
- Zairean people are very friendly.
- Bengali is such a difficult language that no-one expects foreigners to learn it.
- Bengali food is too hot for foreign tastes.
- There are so many people in Bangladesh that people should visit them instead of looking at a few tourist sights.

Exercise 17. Read the following text and do the exercises below:

BOARDROOM CULTURE CLASH

An Unpredictable Affair

Try to put pressure on a Japanese in a *negotiation* and you will be met with *stony silence*. Hold an informal fact-finding meeting with a German and you can expect a battery of searching questions. Disagree with the French on even a minor point and they will take great pleasure in engaging in spirited *verbal combat*. Doing business across culture can be an *unpredictable* affair.

Cultural Awareness

Most of us prefer to do business with people we like. And it should come as no surprise that the people we like tend to be like us. So whilst we may dispute the *accuracy* of cultural stereotypes it is generally agreed that good business relationships are built on cultural awareness. Across national frontiers 'nice guys' do more business than *nasty* ones. But what constitutes nice-guy behaviour in a *boardroom* in Miami is not necessarily what they expect in Madrid.

The US Perspective

For instance, most Americans will insist on the hard sell. It's not enough that you want to buy their products, you must let them sell them to you. They have to report back to superiors who will be as interested in how the deal was struck as the result. Systems and procedures matter to Americans.

The Spaniards Trust You

The Spanish, on the other hand, are unimpressed by the most *meticulously* prepared meeting and pay much more attention to people. In this they are more like the Arabs or the Japanese. In the Middle and Far East business is built on trust over a long period of time. Spaniards may come to a decision about whether they trust you a little sooner.

Animated Italians

Italians too tend to feel that the main purpose of meetings is to assess the mood of those present and *reinforce team-spirit*. There may well be a lot of animated discussion at a meeting in Italy, but the majority of decisions will be, made elsewhere and in secret.

Scandinavians want results

Strangely enough, Scandinavians are rather like Americans. They value efficiency, novelty, systems and technology. They are firmly profit-oriented. They want results yesterday.

Succeed with the Germans

Don't be surprised if the Germans start a meeting with all the difficult questions. They want to be convinced you are as efficient and *quality-conscious* as they are. They will be cautious about giving you too much business until you have proved yourself. They will demand *prompt delivery* and expect you to keep your *competitive edge* in the most price-sensitive market in Europe. Succeed and you will enjoy a long-term business relationship.

Adversarial Meetings

The French will give you their business much more readily. But they will withdraw it just as fast if you fail to come up with the goods. Meetings in France tend to be *adversarial*. *Heated discussion* is all part of the game. Germans will be shocked to hear you question their carefully prepared arguments. The Spanish will offer no opinion unless sure of themselves, for fear of losing face. But French executives prefer to meet disagreement head on, and the British tendency to *diffuse tension* with humour doesn't go down too well.

Prisoners of our culture

Ask yourself whether meetings are opportunities to network or get results. Is it more important to stick to the agenda or generate new ideas? Is the main aim of a meeting to transmit or pool information? It all depends on where in the world you hold your meeting and whether you belong to an individualistic business culture like the French, Germans and Americans or to a collective one like the British, Japanese and Greeks. Indeed, who knows to what extent our views are our own and to what extent culturally conditioned? For in business, as in life, "all human beings are captives of their culture".

Which of the following points support the opinions expressed in the article?

1. In meetings the French tend to be more aggressive than the Germans.
2. The Arabs have nothing in common with the Japanese.
3. The French generally don't appreciate the British sense of humour.
4. The Spanish are rarely hesitant in cross-cultural meetings.
5. The Americans and Scandinavians value a methodical approach.
6. The Germans want quality at any price.
7. The British tend to be more individualistic in business than the Germans.
8. In business the Italians are more or less like the Spanish.

Exercise 18. Complete the sentences below using words from the following list. Referring back to the article will help you with some of them:

market price profit quality client cost technology

1. We're a firmly-oriented company, so the bottom-line for us is not how big our market share is but how much money we're going to make.
2. Even at low prices inferior products won't sell in such a-conscious market.
3. The market's far too-sensitive to stand an increase in service charges.
4. We're constantly forced to respond both to changing customer needs and to what our main competitors are doing in a-driven business such as this.
5. The customer always comes first. We're a very-centred company.
6. In a-led business, such as ours, it's vital to plough profits back into R&D.
7. If the price of materials goes up any more, production will no longer be-effective.

Exercise 19. Obviously, in a delicate negotiation you do not always say exactly what you think! You need to be able to express yourself diplomatically, to make your point firmly but politely. Match what you think with what you say:

WHAT YOU THINK	WHAT YOU SAY
1. We are unhappy with this offer.	a. Unfortunately, we would be unable to accept that.
2. We are dissatisfied.	b. With respect, that's not quite correct.
3. We can't accept it.	c. I'm sure we don't need to remind you of your contractual obligations.
4. You said there would be a discount.	d. We're rather surprised you expect us to cover the costs.
5. Don't forget your obligations.	e. We would find this somewhat difficult to agree to.
6. We want a guarantee.	f. We were rather hoping to finalize the deal today.
7. We won't agree to this.	g. I'm sorry but we're not very happy with this offer.
8. We're shocked you expect us to cover the costs.	h. Actually, we were hoping for a slightly more substantial rebate.
9. That's wrong.	i. I'm afraid you don't seem to understand.
10. We want a bigger rebate.	j. We understood there would be a discount.
11. We must finalize the deal today.	k. We would need some sort of guarantee.
12. You obviously don't understand.	l. We're not completely satisfied.

UNIT 6: TYPES OF BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS

Exercise 1. Read the following text and try to summarise the notion of the words 'company' and 'association':

A *company* is, in general, any group of persons (known as its members) united *to pursue a common interest*. The term is thus synonymous with *association*, but more often it is used specifically to identify associations formed for profit, such as the *partnership*, the *joint-stock company*, and the *for-profit corporation*. A company is not necessarily a *corporation*, and thus may not have a separate existence from its members.

A company might also not be able *to sue* or *be sued* in its own name, and thus would not be considered to be a *legal person*. Whether a company has either of these characteristics depend on the law of the *jurisdiction*.

Although associations of persons carrying on business must have existed *from time immemorial*, the oldest continually-operating business in existence is Japanese firm Kongo Gumi, which was founded in the sixth century.

A *voluntary* association (also sometimes called just an association) is a group of individuals who voluntarily enter into an *agreement* to form a body (or organization) *to accomplish a purpose*.

Strictly speaking in many jurisdictions no formalities are necessary to start an association, although it is difficult to imagine how a one person association would operate. In some jurisdictions, there is a minimum for the number of persons starting an association. Some jurisdictions require that the association *register* with the police or other official body to inform the public of the association's existence. This is not necessarily a tool of political control but much more a way of protecting the economy from *fraud*. In many such jurisdictions, only a registered association is a legal person whose membership is not responsible for the financial acts of the association. Any group of persons may, of course, work as an association but in such case, the persons *making a transaction* in the name of the association are all responsible for it.

Associations that are organized for profit or *financial gain* are usually called partnerships. A special kind of partnership is a *co-operative* which is usually founded on one man - one vote principle and distributes its profits according to the amount of goods produced or bought by the member. Associations may take the form of a non-profit organization or they may be not-for-profit corporations; this does not mean that the association cannot make benefits from its activity, but all the benefits must be reinvested. Most associations have some kind of document or documents that regulate the way in which the body meets and operates. Such an instrument is often called the organization's *bylaws, regulations, or agreement of association*.

In some civil law systems, an association is considered a special form of *contract*. In the Civil Code of Quebec this is a type of *nominate contract*. The association can be a body corporate, and can thus *open a bank account, make contracts (rent premises, hire employees, take out an insurance policy), lodge a complaint* etc. In France, conventional associations are regulated by the Waldeck-Rousseau law of July 1, 1901 and are thus called *Association loi 1901*, except in Alsace and Moselle where the law of April 19, 1908 applies (these countries were German in 1901). In Texas, state law has *statutes* concerning unincorporated nonprofit associations that allow unincorporated associations that meet certain criteria to operate as an *entity* independent of its members, with the right to own

property, make contracts, sue and be sued, as well as *limited liability* to its officers and members.

Exercise 2. Complete the text using the words below:

<i>bankruptcy</i>	<i>corporations</i>	<i>creditors</i>	<i>issue</i>	<i>liability</i>	<i>losses</i>
<i>partnership</i>	<i>registered</i>	<i>shares</i>	<i>sole trader</i>		<i>financial</i>
<i>premises</i>	<i>capital</i>	<i>prospectus</i>	<i>files</i>		

The simplest form of business is the individual proprietorship or (1): for example, a shop (US = store) or a taxi owned by a single person. If several individuals wish to go into business together they can form a (2).....; partners generally contribute equal capital, have equal authority in management, and share profits or (3) In many countries, lawyers, doctors and accountants are not allowed to form companies, but only partnerships with unlimited (4) for debts - which should make them act responsibly.

But a partnership is not a legal entity separate from its owners; like sole traders, partners have unlimited liability: in the case of (5) a partner with a personal fortune can lose it all. Consequently, the majority of businesses are limited companies (US = (6)), in which investors are only liable for the amount of capital they have invested. If a limited company goes bankrupt, its assets are sold (liquidated) to pay the debts; if the assets do not cover the debts, they remain unpaid (i.e. (7) do not get their money back.)

In Britain, most smaller enterprises are private limited companies which cannot offer (8) to the public; their owners can only raise capital from friends or from banks and other venture capital institutions. A successful, growing British business can apply to the Stock Exchange to become a public limited company; if accepted, it can publish a (9) and offer its shares for sale on the open stock market. In America, there is no legal distinction between private and public limited corporations, but the equivalent of a public limited company is one (10) by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Founders of companies have to write a Memorandum of Association (in the US, a Certificate of Incorporation), which states the company's name, purpose, registered office or premises and authorized share (11)

(12)..... (always with an 's' at the end) - is the technical term for the place in which a company does its business: an office, a shop, a workshop, a factory, a warehouse, etc. Authorized share capital means the maximum amount of a particular type of share the company can (13)

Founders also write Articles of Association (US = Bylaws), which set out the rights and duties of directors and different classes of shareholders. Companies' memoranda and articles of association, and annual (14). statements are sent to the registrar of companies, where they may be inspected by the public. (A company that (15) its financial statements late is almost certainly in trouble.) In Britain, founders can buy a ready-made "off-the-shelf company" from an agent, that is, a company formed and held specifically for later resale; the buyer then changes the name, memorandum, and so on.

Exercise 3. Read the following text and list the steps in starting a business as well as explain four elements involved in every business:

The Steps in Starting a Business

Nearly every person who makes the decision to start a business is an *entrepreneur* because he or she is willing to take a risk. Usually people decide to start a business *to gain profits* and to “do something on their own” or to be their own boss.

Entrepreneurs then gather the *factors of production* and decide on the form of business organization that best suits their purposes. Anyone hoping to become an entrepreneur must also learn as much as possible about the business he or she plans to start. This process includes learning about the laws, regulations, and tax codes that will apply to the business.

Elements of Business Operation

To start a business, you must make potential customers aware that your services are available for a price. You could have one-page fliers printed to advertise your business and pass them out. You could also buy advertising space in the local newspaper.

Every business, regardless of size, involves four elements: *expenses*, *advertising*, *receipts* and *record keeping*, and *risk*.

Expenses

If you own a painting business, you will need to purchase brushes and paint. As your business grows, you might invest in paint sprayers so that you can complete jobs faster. This new equipment would add to your income, but will probably take more money capital than you have on hand.

Advertising

You will quickly find out that letting potential customers know that you are in business is costly. Once you have customers, however, information about your business will spread by *word of mouth*.

Receipts and Record Keeping

No matter how small your business is, having a system *to track* your *expenses* and *income* is key to your success. All receipts should be safely filed and saved.

Risk

Every business involves risks. You must balance the risks against the advantages of being in business for yourself - including *profit versus loss*.

Depending on the kinds of jobs you do, you will need equipment and replacement parts. At first, you might buy parts as you need them for a particular job: In time, you will find it easier to have an *inventory*. An inventory is a supply of whatever items are used in a business.

Probably one of the first things you want to do, if you have not already done so, is buy a computer. With the computer, you also should purchase the programs that will allow you to keep track of all your expenses and all your receipts. Many such programs exist and are relatively inexpensive. Programs write checks for you, calculate your monthly profit and *loss*, tell you the difference between what you own and what you owe (called *net worth*), and so on. As an entrepreneur, you are taking many risks, but the profit you expect to make is your *incentive* for taking those risks. For example, if you spend part of your *savings* to pay for advertising and equipment, you are taking a risk. You may not get enough business to cover these costs.

Whenever you buy a special part for a job, you are taking a risk. Suppose you do the work and your customer never pays you. You are even taking a risk with the time you spend. You are using time to think about what you will do, to write *ads*, to set up the

bookkeeping, and so on. This time is an *opportunity cost*. You could have used it to do something else, including work for someone for a *wage*. If you work for someone else, you take only the risk of not being paid, which is usually small. As an entrepreneur your risks are great, but so are the potential *rewards*.

Exercise 4. After reading the text in Exercise 3, you should be able to fill in the missing word or words:

People who want to start their own businesses are regarded as (1)_____. The first step in starting a new business is to (2)_____. Along with the desire to be one's own boss, most people are motivated by the hope of gaining (3)_____ from the business. The second step involves gathering the (4)_____ and then choosing the most suitable form of (5)_____. New business owners must learn all they can about the laws, regulations, and tax codes that apply to their operation. Every business involves four elements. Through (6)_____, owners let others know about the business and the services offered. Once customers know a business, information spreads by (7)_____. As the business grows, there will be more (8)_____ incurred for supplies, raw materials, equipment, and so on. In time, an owner will want to have an (9)_____ of replacement parts to make the business more efficient. State and federal tax laws require that an owner keep (10)_____ for every expenditure. (11)_____ will enable an owner to keep track of all transactions related to the business. A computer and specialized software can help maintain business files. Finally, an entrepreneur needs to be aware of the (12)_____ of starting a business and balance them against the potential (13)_____.

Exercise 5. Read the following text and describe the advantages and disadvantages of a sole proprietorship, explain how people can get help starting a small business, and list the advantages and disadvantages of a partnership:

SOLE PROPRIETORSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS ARE COMMON IN THE UNITED STATES TODAY

Business can be organized in the United States in a number of ways. The two most common are a sole proprietorship and a partnership.

Sole Proprietorship

The most basic type of business organization is the *sole proprietorship*, a business owned by one person. It is the oldest form of business organization and also the most common. The colonies of Maryland and Pennsylvania were founded as sole proprietorships. When we speak of a *proprietor*, we are always referring to the owner of a business. The word proprietor comes from the Latin word *proprietas*, meaning "property." A business is a kind of property.

Today, the United States has about 14 million such businesses, and many of them are small. For that reason, they usually are easier and less expensive to start and run. You probably have contact with many sole proprietorships every day without realizing it - owners of corner grocery stores, repair shops, dry cleaners, and so on. Many doctors,

dentists, lawyers, and accountants are sole proprietors. In farming, construction, and contracting, sole proprietorships are the most numerous types of business organization. The following table shows advantages and disadvantages of a sole proprietorship.

	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Profits and losses	As sole owner, the proprietor receives all the profits because he or she takes all the risks.	Losses are not shared.
Liability		The proprietor has complete legal responsibility for all <i>debts</i> and damages brought upon oneself in doing business. This is known as <i>unlimited liability</i> . If the firm is unable to pay its bills or if someone is injured as a result of the business, the proprietor can be forced to sell his or her personal <i>assets</i> as well as the business to pay these debts. Assets are items of value such as houses, cars, jewelry, and so on.
Management	Decisions on starting and running the business can be made quickly because the owner does not have to consult with other people. Because a proprietorship is usually small, the operation of the business is less complicated than other types of business. There are generally fewer government regulations than with corporations.	A proprietor must handle all <i>decision making</i> , even for unfamiliar areas of the business. For example, the owner of a manufacturing firm may know a great deal about product design, but very little about selling. This is a severe problem for many sole proprietorships.
Taxes	A proprietor must pay <i>personal income taxes</i> on profits, but these taxes may be lower than taxes for a corporation.	
Personal satisfaction	The proprietor has full <i>pride</i> in owning the business. The person is his or her own boss and makes the business whatever it is.	Running a sole proprietorship is <i>demanding</i> and <i>time-consuming</i> . If the proprietor does not enjoy such responsibility, he or she will find ownership a <i>burden</i> .
Financing growth	Because the proprietor has liability for all debts, it is occasionally easier for a proprietorship <i>to obtain credit</i> than for a corporation of the same	A sole proprietor must rely on his or her own funds plus money that can be <i>borrowed</i> from others. Borrowing small amounts may be easier for a sole proprietorship than

	size. <i>Lenders</i> are more willing to extend credit knowing that they can take over not only the assets of the business, but also the assets of the proprietor if the loan is not paid back.	for a corporation of similar size, but borrowing large amounts can be difficult.
Life of the business		A sole proprietorship depends on one individual. If that person dies, <i>goes bankrupt</i> , or is unwilling or unable to work, the business will probably close. This uncertainty about the future increases the risk to both employees and creditors.

Help in starting a small business

For a person who wants to start a sole proprietorship, help is available. The federal government's Small Business Administration often helps finance *startups*, which are new small businesses. State departments of commerce and community affairs also offer assistance. Many community college and university campuses have federally funded small business development centres that will help a small business get started.

A *small business incubator* might also aid businesses. Just as incubators help hatch chickens, there are business incubators that help "hatch" small businesses. They are often operated with state and federal funds. A small business incubator might provide a low-rent building, management advice, and computers. The incubator's goal is to generate job creation and economic growth, particularly in depressed states.

Partnerships

To take the example of your repair business a little further, suppose that your business is doing so well that your workload has increased to the point at which you have little time for anything else. You could expand your business by hiring an employee. You also need financial capital, but would rather not take out a loan. You may look into taking on a partner.

You decide that the best solution is to look for someone who can keep books, handle customers, and invest in the business. You offer to form a partnership. A partnership is a business that two or more individuals own and operate. You may sign a *partnership agreement* that is legally binding. It describes the duties of each partner, the division of profits, and the distribution of assets should the partners end the agreement.

Many doctors, dentists, architects, and lawyers work in partnerships. Two or more people often own small stores. The following table lists some of the major advantages and disadvantages of partnerships.

	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Profits and losses	Losses are shared. Several individuals can sometimes survive a loss that might bankrupt a sole proprietor.	Because partners share the risks of the business, they also share the profits.
Liability		Partners as a group have unlimited

		liability for all debts and damages incurred in business. If a partner is unable to pay his or her share of a debt, the others must make up for the difference.
Management	Partnerships are usually more efficient than proprietorships. They allow each partner to work in areas of the business that he or she knows most about or is best at doing.	Decision making is often slow because of the need to reach agreement among several people. Disagreements can lead to problems in running the business.
Taxes	Partners must pay personal income taxes on their share of profit. These taxes are sometimes lower than those for a corporation.	
Personal satisfaction	Partners, like sole proprietors, often feel pride in owning and operating their own company.	If partners do not get along with each other, trying to work together can result in constant arguments.
Financing growth	A partnership combines the capital of two or more people. It makes more money available to operate a larger and perhaps more <i>profitable</i> business. Because the risk is shared, creditors are often willing to lend more money to a partnership than to a sole proprietorship.	Like sole proprietorships, partnerships can have trouble obtaining large amounts of capital. The amount that partnerships can borrow is usually limited by the combined <i>value</i> of the assets of the business and of the partners.
Life of the business		If one partner dies or leaves, the partnership must be ended and reorganized. The others may be unable or unwilling to continue operating, and the business may close. This uncertainty is a risk to employees and creditors.

Limited Partnerships. A limited partnership is a special form of partnership in which the partners are not equal. One partner is called the *general partner*. This person (or persons) assumes all of the responsibilities for the partnership. The other partners are do is *contribute money* or property. They have no voice in the partnership's management.



The advantage to the limited partners is that they have no liability for the losses beyond what they initially invest. The disadvantage, of course, is that they have no say in how the business is run. Limited partnerships must follow specific guidelines when they are

formed. Two or more partners must sign a *certificate of limited partnership* in which they present, at a minimum, the following information:

- The company name
- The nature of the business
- The principal place of business
- The name and place of residence of each partner
- How long the partnership will last
- The amount of cash or other property contributed by each partner

Joint Ventures. Sometimes individuals or companies want to do a special project together. They do not have any desire to work together after the project is done. What they might do is form a *joint venture*. A joint venture is a temporary partnership set up for a specific purpose and for a short period of time.

Exercise 6. After reading the text in Exercise 5, you should be able to fill in the missing word or words:

Physicians, writers, and local grocery store owners often do business as

- (1) _____ . The owner of the business is known as a
(2) _____ and accepts all the risks and rewards. One advantage of this form of business is that the owner may find it easier to obtain (3) _____ because the business serves as (4) _____ for loans. Pride of ownership is balanced by the fact that running a business is very (5) _____. Also, borrowing (6) _____ can be difficult, which may create a shortage of funds. If the owner dies or is unable to work, the business may be forced to (7) _____. Such uncertainty increases risks to both (8) _____ and _____. Small business startups can be financed by the federal government's
(9) _____ or by state departments of
(10) _____. In some cases, universities or colleges have (11) _____, whose goals are to foster job creation and
(12) _____. If a business grows rapidly, an owner may form a partnership with two or more people. These people sign a (13) _____ that is legally binding on all parties. If one partner provides money but does not help manage the business, the arrangement is known as a (14) _____. In other cases, a partnership known as a (15) _____ may be formed for a specific purpose. Advantages of a partnership include the fact that losses are (16) _____, partnerships are generally more
(17) _____, the owners pay (18) _____ only on their share of profits, and often more
(19) _____ are available to finance growth. Disadvantages include
(20) _____ on debts and the fact that: if one partner dies, the business must be (21) _____.

Exercise 7. Read the following text and describe the advantages and disadvantages of a corporation:

THE CORPORATE WORLD

Suppose your electronic repair business has grown. You now have several partners and have turned your garage into a shop. You would like to expand and rent a store so that your business would be more visible. You would like to buy the latest equipment, charge a little less than your *competitors*, and capture a larger *share of the market* for electronic repair work. You need money capital, however.

You have decided that you do not want any more partners. You would have to consult with them about every detail of the business as you do now with your present partners. What you want is *financial backers* who will let you use their money while letting you run the business. What you are proposing is a *corporation*. The following table shows the advantages and disadvantages of corporations.

	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Profits and losses	Owners of the corporation – <i>stockholders</i> – do not have to devote time to the company to make money on their <i>investment</i> .	
Liability	The corporation, and not its stockholders, is responsible for its debts. If a corporation goes bankrupt or is sued, creditors cannot normally take personal property from stockholders to pay debts. This is known as limited liability, and may be the major advantage of the corporate form of business.	
Management	Responsibility for running a corporation is divided among many people. Decisions are made at many levels by individuals trained in specific areas, such as sales, production, and so on. This allows a corporation to handle large and complicated operations and to carry on many types of business activities at the same time.	Decision making can be slow and complicated because so many levels of management are involved. Also, the interests of those running the corporation, who may not be stockholders, are not always the same as those of the stockholders, who often seek an immediate return on investment.
Taxes		The federal government and some state and local governments tax corporate profits. The profits that are paid to stockholders as <i>dividends</i> are again taxed as income to those

		individuals. Some states also tax corporate property.
Personal satisfaction	An individual may feel satisfaction simply in owning a part of a corporation.	Individual stockholders have little or no say in how a corporation is run.
Financing growth	Corporations draw on resources of investors and may <i>issue stock</i> at any time to <i>raise capital</i> .	
Life of the business		The life of a corporation can continue indefinitely if it remains profitable. Its life is not affected by the death of stockholders.

A corporation is an organization led by many people but treated by the law as though it were a person. It own property, pay taxes, make contracts, sue and be sued, and so on. It has a separate and distinct existence from the stockholders who own the corporation's stock. Stock represents ownership rights to a certain portion of the profits and assets of the company that issues the stock.

In terms of the amount of business done (measured in dollars), the corporation is the most important type of business organization in the United States today.

In order to form a corporation, its founders must do three things. First, they must register their company with the government of the state in which it will be *headquartered*. Second, they must sell stock. Third, along with the other shareholders, they must elect a board of directors.

Registering the Corporation. Every state has laws governing the formation of corporations, but most state laws are similar. Suppose that you and your partners decide to form a corporation. You will have to file *articles of incorporation* application with the state in which you will run your corporation. In general, these articles include four items:

1. Name, address, and purpose of the corporation;
2. Names and addresses of the initial board of directors (these men and women will serve until the first stockholders' meeting, when a new board may be elected);
3. Number of shares of stock to be issued;
4. Amount of money capital to be raised through issuing stock.

If the articles are in agreement with state law, the state will grant you a corporate charter - a license to operate from that state.

Selling Stock. To continue the example of your electronic repair business, you could sell shares of either *common* or *preferred stock* in your new corporation. Common stock gives the holder part ownership in the corporation and *voting rights* at the annual stockholders' meeting. It does not guarantee a dividend - money return on the money invested in a company's stock. Preferred stock does guarantee a certain amount of dividend each year. Preferred stock also guarantees to the stockholder first claim, after creditors have been paid, on whatever value is left in the corporation if it goes out of business. Holders of preferred stock usually do not have voting rights in the corporation, although they are part owners.

If your corporation were to become large, you might find its stock traded in the local stock market as *over-the-counter stock*. Over-the-counter means that individual *brokerage*

firms hold quantities of shares of stocks that they buy and sell for investors. Should your corporation continue to grow, it would be traded on a regional stock exchange. It might be listed as an over-the-counter stock with the National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotation (NASDAQ) in one of their three lists. The largest corporations are usually listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE).

Naming a Board of Directors. To become incorporated, a company must have a *board of directors*. You and your partners, as founders of the corporation, would select the first board for your corporation. After that stockholders at their annual stockholders' meetings would elect the board. The bylaws of the corporation govern this election. Bylaws are a set of rules describing how stock will be sold and dividends paid, with a list of the duties of the company's officers. They are written after the *corporate charter* has been granted.

The board is responsible for supervising and controlling the corporation. It does not run business operations on a day-to-day basis, however. Rather, it hires officers for the company - president, vice-president(s) secretary, and *treasurer* - to run the business and hire other employees.

Exercise 8. After reading the text in Exercise 7, fill in the missing word or words:

Although a corporation is owned by many people, it is treated by the law as if it were a (1) _____. A corporation can make (2) _____, pay taxes, and own (3) _____. (4) _____ represents ownership in the corporation and a right to a portion of the (5) _____ and _____ of the company. To register a corporation, the owners must file an (6) _____ application. If it is approved, the state will issue a (7) _____, which is a license to do business. Stockholders who own (8) _____ have voting rights in the corporation. However, unlike owners of (9) _____, they are not guaranteed a dividend nor do they have first claim on corporate assets. A corporation must also select a (10) _____ and establish the (11) _____, or set of rules, in order to operate.

Two major advantages of a corporation are (12) _____ for debts and the fact that it can continue (13) _____. Disadvantages are that (14) _____ is often slow and complicated because of the levels of management involved and that corporations often pay several kinds of (15) _____ on profits and income.

Exercise 9. Summarize the advantages and disadvantages of franchising and explain what types of businesses are involved in it:

FRANCHISES

Many hotel, motel, gas station, and fast-food chains are franchises. A *franchise* is a contract in which a franchisor (fran-chy-ZOR) sells to another business the right to use its name and sell its products. The person or business buying these rights, called the franchisee (fran-chy-ZEE), pays a fee that may include a percentage of all money taken in. If a person buys a motel franchise, that person agrees to pay the motel chain a certain *fee* plus a portion of the profits for as long as his or her motel stays in business. In return, the

chain will help the franchisee set up the motel. Often, the chain will have a training program to teach the franchisee about the business and set the standards of business operations.

Advantages: *retailing*, franchisees the starting up a new based on a proven formula of doing opposed to having business and *scratch* (often in aggressive franchise operators).



As practiced in franchising offers advantage of business quickly *trademark* and business, as to build a new brand *from* the face of competition from

As long as their brand and formula are carefully designed and properly executed, franchisors are able to expand their brand very rapidly across countries and continents, and can *reap* enormous *profits* in the process, while the franchisees do all the hard work of dealing with customers face-to-face. Additionally, the franchisor is able to build a captive distribution network, with no or very little financial commitment.

For some consumers, having franchises offer a consistent product or service makes life easier. They know what to expect when entering a franchised establishment.

Disadvantages: For franchisees, the main disadvantage of franchising is a loss of control. While they gain the use of a system, trademarks, assistance, training, and marketing, the franchisee is required to follow the system and get approval of changes with the franchisor.

In response to the *soaring popularity* of franchising, an increasing number of communities are taking steps to limit these chain businesses and reduce displacement of independent businesses through limits on “formula businesses.”

Another problem is that the franchisor/franchisee relationship can easily *give rise to litigation* if either side is incompetent (or just not acting in good faith). For example, an incompetent franchisee can easily damage the public’s *goodwill* towards the franchisor’s brand by providing inferior goods and services, and an incompetent franchisor can destroy its franchisees by failing to promote the brand properly or by squeezing them too aggressively for profits.

History. Franchising dates back to at least the 1850s. One early example resulted in the characteristic look of historic hotels (bars) in New South Wales, with franchising agreements between hotels and breweries. Early American examples include the telegraph system which was operated by various railroad companies but controlled by Western Union, and exclusive agreements between automobile manufacturers and operators of local dealerships.

Modern franchising *came to prominence* with the rise of franchise-based restaurants. This trend started initially in the 1930s with traditional sit-down restaurants like the early Howard Johnson’s, and then exploded in 1950s with the development of fast food chains, of which McDonalds has been the most successful worldwide. Many retail sectors, particularly in the United States, are now dominated by franchising to the point where independently-run operations are the exception rather than the rule.

Exercise 10. After reading the text in Exercise 9, fill in the missing word or words:

A franchise is a (1) _____ in which a franchiser sells the right to use its (2) _____ and sell its (3) _____. A franchisee pays a fee plus a portion of the profits to a chain. The advantages to the franchisee are that the national chain will pay for (4) _____ campaigns that identify the franchise with the national name. The chain may also help to choose a (5) _____ for the building and arrange (6) _____ for the new owner.



Exercise 11. You'll hear a recording of part of a training session for small business people on the principles and practice of franchising. Listen to the first part of the recording. Fill the gaps in this summary:

The franchisor usually supplies:

1. an _____ product or service and a well-known _____ image.
2. an _____ manual, showing how the business should be set up and how it must be run.
3. help, advice, and training in _____ the business.
4. continuing advice, training and support during the _____ of the franchise.
5. the _____ that's required to set up and operate the business.
6. _____ of the product, which he will be able to _____ cheaply in _____. This may result in savings or, depending on the franchisor's mark-up, _____ the franchisee to buying at _____ the market price.
7. local, national and even international _____.



Exercise 12. Listen to the second part of the recording and answer these questions about it:

1. The questioner points out that...
 - a. franchisees usually require varying amounts of on-going support.
 - b. franchisors tend to reduce their on-going support a year after start-up.
 - c. not all franchisors give the same quality of support.
2. She also points out that, as a franchisee, you must find out...
 - a. what brand image and support the franchisor is providing.
 - b. what level of help you will be getting after a year or so.
 - c. what level of help you will get when you start up the franchise.
3. In the case of problems in running the franchise, you need to know:
 - a. Will the franchisor be able to solve all your problems?
 - b. Will the franchisor provide financial support in an emergency?
 - c. Will you be offered regular advice by the franchisor?
4. In the answer, the lecturer points out that the franchisee should find out what help he/she will get from the franchisor...
 - a. in recruiting staff.
 - b. in training his/her present staff in new skills.

- c. in training new staff.
- 5. You should also find out whether...
 - a. the franchisor will continue to research and develop the product.
 - b. the product has been thoroughly researched and developed.
 - c. the franchisor will charge you a levy for R&D.
- 6. You need to know whether the franchisor is...
 - a. continuing to advertise the product.
 - b. spending as much on advertising as the franchisees are charged.
 - c. spending enough money on advertising.
- 7. The lecturer goes on to say that a franchisee pays the franchisor...
 - a. a substantial capital sum.
 - b. a monthly fee.
 - c. both a capital sum and a monthly fee.
- 8. To raise money to pay for a franchise, a franchisee...
 - a. will probably have a lot of difficulty in getting a bank loan.
 - b. will probably have little difficulty in getting a bank loan.
 - c. must have an enormous amount of money in the bank.
- 9. The franchisor's income from a franchise is calculated on the basis of...
 - a. the franchisee's net profits.
 - b. the franchisee's total sales.
 - c. the franchisee's net monthly income from the franchise.
- 10. If a franchisee wants to sell the franchise to someone else...
 - a. he/she must have the franchisor's permission.
 - b. He/she must pay the franchisor a substantial commission.
 - c. He/she is not allowed to do this, he/she must sell it back to the franchisor.

Exercise 13. Writing. Answer the question below on a separate sheet of paper:

Essay 1: Some years ago you went into business for yourself as a manager of a computer firm. Business has grown to the point where you want to obtain money for expansion. What are the trade-offs in taking on a partner or forming a corporation?

Essay 2: What are some benefits and trade-offs of a sole proprietorship? Give examples.

Exercise 14. Use the following clues to fill in the vocabulary terms on the grid below:

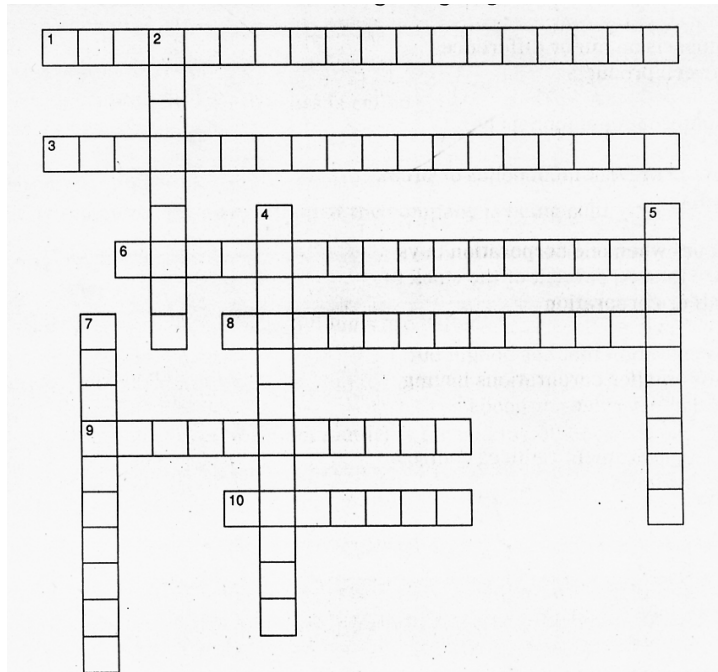
Down

- 2. A supply of the items used in a business
- 4. A temporary partnership meant to carry out a single business operation (two words)
- 5. A contract in which the right to use the name of a business and sell its products is sold to another business
- 7. The owner of a business

Across

- 1. Some of the owners only contribute money or property to the business, while other owners manage the business (two words).
- 3. A business owned by one person (two words)

6. A state license to operate as a corporation (two words)
8. Articles of _____ define the corporation, its board of directors, the shares of stock to be issued, and the amount of capital to be raised through issuing stock.
9. A business owned and operated by two or more people
10. Money needed to finance a business in the beginning stage



UNIT 7: COMPANY STRUCTURE

Exercise 1. Before you read discuss these questions:

- How many different ways of organizing or structuring a company can you think of?
- If you work for a company or organization, how would you describe the company structure?

Exercise 2. Read the text about the different ways in which companies are organized and answer these questions:

- Four main kinds of organizational structure are described in the article. What are they?
- Is one kind of organizational structure more common than the others?
- When did “delaying” take place?
- What were the reasons for delaying and what were the results?
- How does Julia MacLauchlan describe Microsoft’s organizational structure?

DOING THE BUSINESS

Roisin Ingle hears how efficient management structures are vital for success

The need for a *solid structure* within all *business entities* is “absolutely fundamental”, according to Ms. Angela Tripoli, a lecturer in Business Administration at University College Dublin. “Organizational structure concerns who reports to whom in the company and how different elements are grouped together. A new company cannot go forward without this and established companies must ensure their structure reflects their target markets, goals and available technology”.

Depending on their size and needs there are several organizational structures companies can choose from. Increasingly though, in the constantly evolving business environment, “many firms are opting for a kind of hybrid of all of them”.

The most recognizable set up is called the *functional structure* where a fairly traditional *chain of command* (incorporating senior management, middle management and junior management) is put in place. The main benefit of this system is clear lines of communication from top to bottom but it is generally accepted that it can also be a bureaucratic set up which does not favour speedy decision-making.

More and more companies are organizing themselves along *product lines* where companies have separate divisions according to the product that is being worked on. “In this case the focus is always on the product and how it can be improved”.

The importance for multinational companies of a good *geographic structure*, said Ms. Tripoli, could be seen when one electrical products manufacturer produced an innovative rice cooker which made perfect rice - according to western standards. When they tried to sell it on the Asian market the product *flopped* because there were no country managers informing them of the changes that would need to be made in order to satisfy this more demanding market.

The *matrix structure* first evolved during a project developed by NASA when they needed to *pool together* different skills from a variety of functional areas. Essentially the matrix structure organizes a business into project teams, led by project leaders, to carry out certain objectives. Training is vitally important here in order to avoid conflict between the various members of the teams.

During the 1980s a wave of restructuring went through industry around the globe. This process, known as *delaying*, saw a change in the traditional hierarchical structures with layers of middle management being removed. This development was, driven by new technology and by the need to reduce costs. The overall result was organizations that were less bureaucratic.

The delaying process has run its course now. Among the trends that currently influence how a company organizes itself is the move towards *centralization* and *outsourcing*. Restructuring has evolved along with a more “*customercentric*” approach that can be seen to good effect in the banks. They now categorize their customers and their complex borrowing needs into groups instead of along rigid product lines.

Another seen in larger are giving their freedom to innovate a competitive edge.

Ms. Julia Director of European Product in Dublin, said the company had a very structure. “There than around seven levels between the average software tester and Bill Gates”, she said.



development can be companies, which employees more in order to maintain

MacLauchlan, Microsoft’s Development Centre leading software flat organizational would not be more

Microsoft is a good example of a company that is structured along product lines. In Ireland, where 1,000 employees work on localization of the software for all Microsoft’s markets, the company is *split up* into seven business units. Each unit controls the localization of their specific products while working closely with the designers in Microsoft’s Seattle Headquarters.

It works, said Ms. MacLauchlan, because everyone who works in the unit is “incredibly empowered”.

“Without a huge bureaucratic *infrastructure* people can react a lot more quickly to any challenges and work towards the company’s objectives”.

Exercise 3. Match these definitions with the four organizational structures described in the text:

1. A cross-functional structure where people are organized into project teams.
2. A structure rather like the army, where each person has their place in a fixed hierarchy.
3. A structure that enables a company to operate internationally, country by country.
4. A structure organized around different products.

Exercise 4. Match these nouns as they occur together in the text:

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1. product | a. teams |
| 2. target | b. objectives |
| 3. borrowing | c. lines |
| 4. project | d. units |
| 5. delayering | e. company |
| 6. country | f. process |
| 7. business | g. markets |
| 8. software | h. needs |
| 9. company | i. managers |

Exercise 5. Use an appropriate phrase from the text to complete each sentence:

1. Banks need to be fully aware of their customers'
2. Silicon Valley is full of
3. Many companies are now organized along, in which each division is responsible for a group of products.
4. A matrix organization groups people into
5. Some companies are divided into different, often also called profit centres.
6. A multinational company will often have a number of, in charge of activities in different parts of the world.

Exercise 6. Match these terms with their definitions:

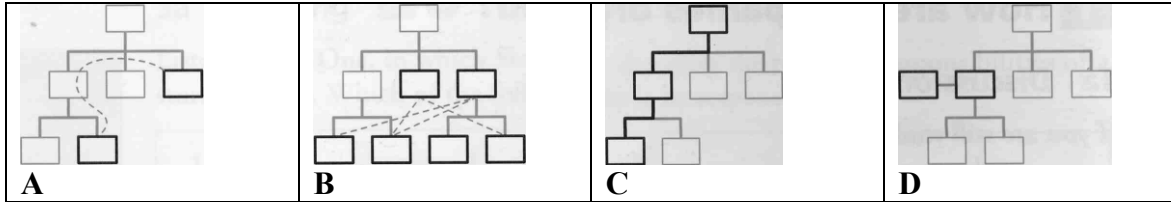
- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. business entities | a. focusing on the customer rather than the product |
| 2. set up | b. new, original |
| 3. innovative | c. companies |
| 4. flopped | d. something that makes you better than other companies |
| 5. outsourcing | e. did not succeed, failed |
| 6. customercentric | f. structure |
| 7. competitive edge | g. getting external companies to do work for your company |

Exercise 7. Complete these sentences with an appropriate preposition:

1. Organizational structure concerns who reports whom.
2. Depending its size, there are several organizational structures a company can choose from.
3. Many companies are organizing themselves product lines.
4. In the 1980s a wave of restructuring went industry.
5. Delayering was driven the need to reduce costs.
6. Microsoft in Ireland is split seven business units.

Exercise 8. Read the text below about different ways of organizing companies, and then label the diagram, according to which of these they illustrate:

line structure matrix structure functional structure staff structure



COMPANY STRUCTURE

Most organizations have a *hierarchical* or *pyramidal structure*, with one person or a group of people at the top, and an increasing number of people below them at each successive level. There is a clear line or *chain of command* running down the pyramid. All the people in the organization know what decisions they are able to make, who their *superior* (or boss) is (to whom they report), and who their immediate *subordinates* are (to whom they can give instructions).

Some people in an organization have colleagues who help them: for example, there might be an Assistant to the Marketing Manager. This is known as a staff position: its holder has no *line authority*, and is not integrated into the chain of command, unlike, for example, the Assistant Marketing Manager, who is number two in the marketing department.

Yet the activities of most companies are too complicated to be organized in a single hierarchy. Shortly before the First World War, the French industrialist Henry Fayol organized his coal-mining business according to the functions that it had to carry out. He is generally credited with inventing *functional organization*. Today, most large manufacturing organizations have a functional structure, including (among others) production, finance, marketing, sales, and personnel or staff departments. This means, for example, that the production and marketing departments cannot take financial decisions without consulting the finance department.

Functional organization is efficient, but there are two standard criticisms. Firstly, people are usually more concerned with the success of their department than that of the company, so there are permanent battles between, for example, finance and marketing, or marketing and production, which have *incompatible goals*. Secondly, separating functions is unlikely to encourage innovation.

Yet for a large organization manufacturing a range of products, having a single production department is generally inefficient. Consequently, most large companies are decentralized, following the model of Alfred Sloan, who divided General Motors into separate operating divisions in 1920. Each division had its own engineering, production and sales departments, made a different category of car (but with some overlap, to encourage internal competition), and was expected to make a profit.

Businesses that cannot be divided into autonomous divisions with their own markets can simulate decentralization, setting up divisions that deal with each other using internally determined *transfer prices*. Many banks, for example, have established commercial, corporate, private banking, international and investment divisions.

An *inherent problem* of hierarchies is that people at lower levels are unable to make important decisions, but have to pass on responsibility to their boss. One solution to this is matrix management, in which people report to more than one superior. For example, a product manager with an idea might be able to deal directly with managers responsible for a certain market segment and for a geographical region, as well as the managers responsible for the traditional functions of finance, sales and production. This is one way of keeping authority at lower levels, but it is not necessarily a very efficient one. Thomas Peters and Robert Waterman, in their well-known book *In Search of Excellence*, insist on the necessity of pushing authority and autonomy down the line, but they argue that one element - probably the product - must have priority; four-dimensional matrices are far too complex.

A further possibility is to have wholly *autonomous*, temporary groups or teams that are responsible for an entire project, and are *split up* as soon as it is successfully completed. Teams are often not very good for decision-making, and they run the risk of relational problems, unless they are small and have a lot of self-discipline. In fact they still require a definite leader, on whom their success probably depends.

- *Which of the following three paragraphs most accurately summarizes the text, and why?*

First summary:

Although most organizations are hierarchical, with a number of levels, and a line of command running from the top to the bottom, hierarchies should be avoided because they make decision-making slow and difficult. A solution to this problem is matrix management, which allows people from the traditional functional departments of production, finance, marketing, sales, etc. to work together in teams. Another solution is decentralization: the separation of the organization into competing autonomous divisions.

Second summary:

Most business organizations have a hierarchy consisting of several levels and a clear line of command. There may also be staff positions that are not integrated into the hierarchy. The organization might also be divided into functional departments, such as production, finance, marketing, sales and personnel. Larger organizations are often further divided into autonomous divisions, each with its own functional sections. More recent organizational systems include matrix management and teams, both of which combine people from different functions and keep decision-making at lower levels.

Third summary:

Most businesses are organized as hierarchies, with a clear chain of command: a boss who has subordinates, who in turn have their own subordinates, and so on. The hierarchy might be internally divided into functional departments. A company offering a large number of products or services might also be subdivided into autonomous divisions. Communication among divisions can be improved by the introduction of matrix management or teams.

- *The text mentions the often incompatible goals of the finance, marketing and production (or operations) departments. Classify the following strategies according to which departments would probably favour them:*

1. a factory working *at full capacity*
2. a large advertising budget

3. a large sales force earning high commission
4. a standard product without optional features
5. a strong *cash balance*
6. a strong *market share* for new products
7. generous *credit facilities* for customers
8. high *profit margins*
9. large inventories to make sure that products are available
10. low research and development spending
11. machines that give the possibility of making various different products
12. self-financing (using *retained earnings* rather than borrowing)

Exercise 9. Sentences 1 to 9 make up a short text about different ways in which companies can be structured. Complete each sentence, by taking a middle part from the second box and an end from the third box:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Most organizations have a hierarchical or pyramidal structure, 2. A clear line or chain of command runs down the hierarchy, 3. Some people in an organization have an assistant who helps them; 4. Yet the activities of most large organizations are too elaborate 5. Large companies manufacturing a wide range of products, e.g. General Motors, 6. Businesses that cannot be divided into autonomous divisions with their own markets 7. An inevitable problem with hierarchies is that people at lower levels 8. One solution to this problem is matrix management, in which people report to more than one superior: 9. Another, more recent, idea is to have a network of flexible groups or teams,
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. are normally decentralized into separate operating divisions, b. are unable to make important decisions, but are obliged to pass on responsibility to their boss, c. can simulate decentralization, setting up divisions that use d. instead of the traditional departments, which are often at war with each other; e. so that all employees know who their superior or boss is, to whom they report, f. e.g. a brand manager with an idea can deal directly with g. this is an example of a staff position: its holder has no line authority, h. to be organized in a single hierarchy, and require functional organization, i. with a single person or a group of people at the top,
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> j. and an increasing number of people below them at each successive level. k. and is not integrated into the chain of command. l. and who their immediate subordinates are, to whom they can give instructions. m. each with its own engineering, production and sales departments. n. internally determined transfer prices when dealing with each other. o. the appropriate managers in the finance, manufacturing and sales departments. p. they are formed to carry out a project, after which they are dissolved and their members reassigned. q. unless responsibilities have been explicitly delegated. r. usually with production or operations, finance, marketing and personnel departments.

Exercise 10. Complete the text using the correct form of the following verbs:

*achieve allocate balance deal with develop
employ establish follow require set*

The top managers of a company (1) have toobjectives and then develop particular strategies that will enable the company to (2)..... them. This will involve (3)..... the company's human, capital and physical resources. Strategies can often be sub-divided into tactics - the precise methods in which the resources attached to a strategy are (4)

The founders of a business usually establish a "mission statement" - a declaration about what the business is and what it will be in the future. The business's central values and objectives will (5) from this. But because the business environment is always changing, companies will occasionally have to modify or change their objectives. It is part of top management's role to (6) today's objectives and needs against those of the future, and to take responsibility for innovation, without which any organization can only expect a limited life. Top managers are also expected to set standards, and to (7) human resources, especially future top managers.

They also have to manage a business's social responsibilities and its impact on the environment. They have to (8) and maintain good relations with customers, major suppliers, bankers, government agencies, and so on. The top management, of course, is also on permanent stand-by to (9) major crises.

Between them, these tasks (10) many different skills which are almost never found in one person, so top management is work for a team. A team, of course, is not the same as a committee: it needs a clear leader, in this case the chairman or managing director.

Complete the following collocations:

11. to set
12. to allocate
13. to responsibility
14. to standards
15. to and good relations
16. to a crisis

Exercise 11. Complete the text using the following verbs:

*appointed attacked combined defined
constituted reviewed supervised supported*

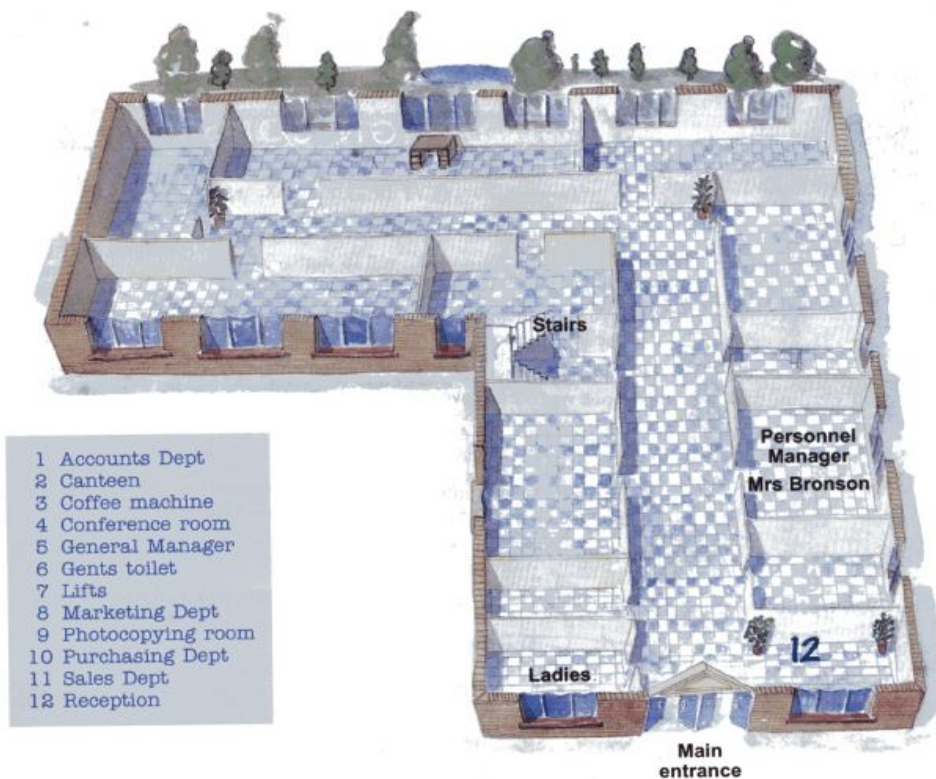
Large British companies generally have a chairman of the board of directors who oversees operations, and a managing director (MD) who is responsible for the day-to-day running of the company. In smaller companies, the roles of chairman and managing director are usually (1)..... . Americans tend to use the term president rather than chairman, and chief executive officer (CEO) instead of managing director. The CEO or MD is (2)..... by various executive officers or vice-presidents, each with clearly (3)..... authority and responsibility (production, marketing, finance, personnel, and so on).

Top managers are (4) (and sometimes dismissed) by a company's board of directors. They are (5) and advised and have their decisions and performance (6) by the

board. The directors of private companies were traditionally major shareholders, but this does not apply to large public companies with wide share ownership. Such companies should have boards (7)..... of experienced people of integrity and with a record of performance in a related business and a willingness to work to make the company successful. In reality, however, companies often appoint people with connections that will impress the financial and political *milieu*. Yet a board that does not demand high performance and remove inadequate executives will probably eventually find itself (8)..... and displaced by raiders.



Exercise 12. You'll hear a new employee being told where the different offices are in the firm he has just joined. Listen to the conversation and number the rooms that Michael is shown. The 'tour' starts at Mrs. Bronson's office:



Exercise 13. Many big firms have lots of different sections and it can be helpful to know which part of the company does what. Look at the following company departments. Which department does which job?

Human Resources:

Production:

Marketing:

Finance:

Sales, Financial Services, Quality, Training, Payroll, Production, Advertising, Accounts, Distribution, Maintenance, Marketing, Customer Service, Purchasing, Personnel, Packaging

Exercise 14. What department does which job? Match each job from the column on the left to a company department from the column on the right:

1. puts the product into boxes?	A. Training
2. pays wages and salaries?	B. Production
3. plans how to promote products?	C. Marketing
4. has systems to prevent mistakes?	D. Purchasing
5. looks after the equipment?	E. Personnel
6. deals with complaints?	F. Packaging
7. manufactures the products?	G. Sales
8. sends invoices to customers?	H. Accounts
9. buys equipment?	I. Payroll
10. arranges credit facilities?	J. Distribution
11. helps staff develop new skills?	K. Customer Service
12. sends products to the customer?	L. Financial Services
13. buys media space?	M. Quality
14. recruits new staff?	N. Advertising
15. sends representatives to visit customers?	O. Maintenance

Exercise 15. Imagine that an important visitor is coming to your firm. She has sent you this fax. Draft a fax to Ms. Trosborg arranging the date and the time you propose for the visit:

TIVOLI DESIGN CONSORTIUM

BERSTORFFSGADE 19, DK-1577 COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

Telephone: +(45) 72 14 33 21 Fax: +(45) 56 39 42 38

TO: Publicity Office/Manager

Dear Sir or Madam,

We have heard from one of our mutual customers that your company is involved in a number of interesting design projects.

As I am shortly staying in your city on business, I am writing to enquire whether it would be convenient to visit your office.

I shall be in town from 14th to 18th November. I would be free any morning from 11.30 onwards and in the afternoon of 15th November.

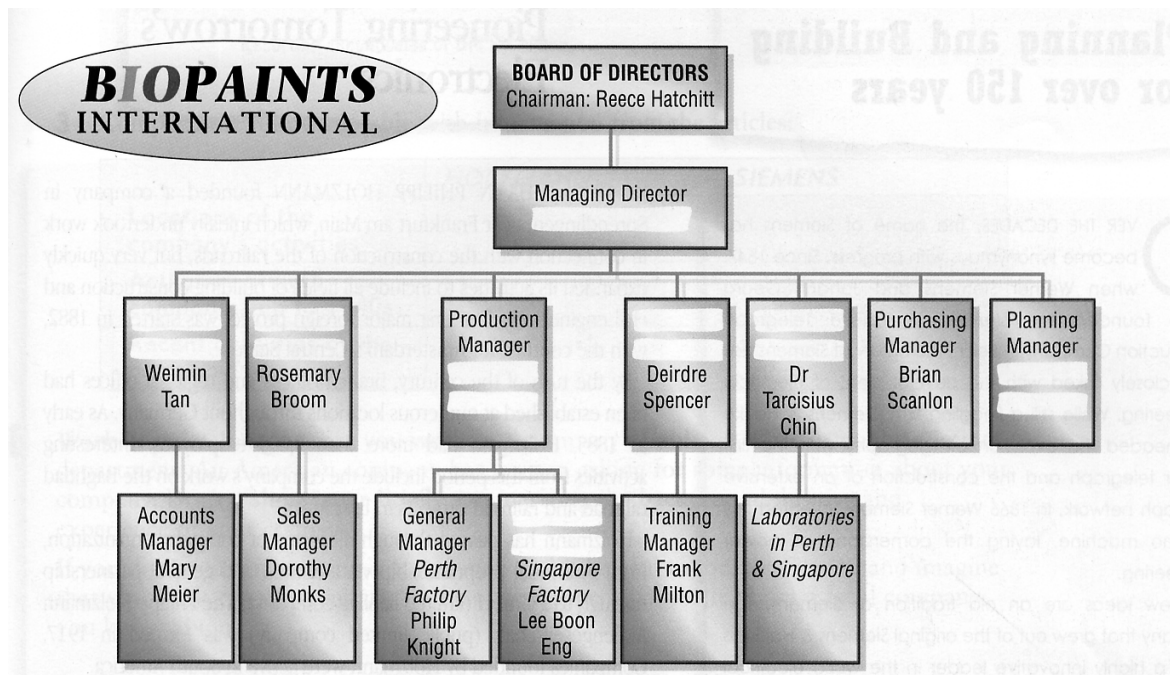
I would be extremely grateful if you could confirm whether a brief visit could be arranged on one of the days and at the times suggested.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,
Anita Trosborg
Design Director



Exercise 16. Listen to the recording and fill in the names and titles or job descriptions that are missing:



Exercise 17. Read the following passages about two companies. Decide which of the headlines goes with which passage:

**Planning and Building for Over 150 years
Pioneering Tomorrow’s Electronics**

1. Over the decades the name with progress. Since 1847, when Halske founded the Siemens & Company in Berlin, the history of the development of electrical firm, Siemens & Halske telegraphy with the first pointer extensive telegraph network. In dynamo machine, laying the



of Siemens has become synonymous Werner Siemens and Johann Georg Halske Telegraph Construction Siemens has been closely linked with engineering. While still a fledgling spearheaded the evolution of telegraph and the construction of an 1866 Werner Siemens invented the cornerstone of power engineering.

New ideas are an old tradition of Siemens. The company that grew out of the original Siemens & Halske is today a highly innovative leader in the world electrical and electronics market. Composed of Siemens AG and an array of domestic and foreign *subsidiaries*, the contemporary Siemens organization continues to set milestones on the road of progress.

Siemens maintains its own production facilities in more than 50 countries and operates a worldwide sales network. With more than 300,000 employees, it is one of the largest companies in the world electrical/electronics industry, having recorded annual sales of DM 82 billion in the 1992/93 *fiscal year*. Reliable and farsighted management is united with the youthful dynamism and *zest for* innovation that *typify* the company.

2. In 1849, Johann Philipp Holzmann founded a company in Sprendlingen, near Frankfurt am Main, which initially undertook work in connection with the construction of the railroads, but very quickly expanded its activities to include all fields of building construction and civil engineering. The first major foreign project was started in 1882, with the contract for Amsterdam's Central Station.

By the turn of the century, branch offices and regional offices had been established at numerous locations throughout Germany. As early as 1885, Holzmann had more than 5,000 employees. Interesting activities from this period include the company's work on the Baghdad railroad and railroad projects in East Africa.

Holzmann has passed company organization, from a limited and general GmbH (limited liability Holzmann limited company) was founded by Holzmann were



through all forms of individual proprietorship via partnership through to a company). The Philipp Aktiengesellschaft (public formed in 1917. Companies active in South America.

Even following the losses of *manpower* and assets during the Second World War, Holzmann was able, as early as 1950, *to recommence* its foreign activities. 1979 saw the *acquisition* of J.A. Jones Construction Company, of Charlotte, North Carolina, USA, a major American corporation active in the construction field. This was followed in 1981 by the purchase of Lockwood Green Engineers, Inc., Spartanburg, South Carolina, USA. Together with its USA subsidiaries Holzmann has responded to the changes occurring in the construction industry with a *flexible* and *versatile* corporate strategy.

The *takeover* in early 1989 of the Steinmüller Group, one of Germany's leading companies in the sectors of power engineering, process engineering and environmental protection demonstrates this.

Exercise 18. Complete the information missing in the table:

Dates	What happened?	Who did what?
1847		
1849		
	Invention of dynamo machine	
	First large foreign order begun	
1885		
	Aktiengesellschaft founded	

1950		
	Acquisition of J.A. Jones Construction Company	
1981		
1989		
	Recorded annual sales of DM 82 billion	

Exercise 19. Complete the following table with information from the articles:

	HOLZMANN	SIEMENS
Locations of the company's activities		
Activities of both companies up to 1940s		
Recent activities of the companies		

Exercise 20. Read the following text and answer some questions below:

RE-ENGINEERING THE CORPORATION

“It’s not called redundancy these days ... It’s called downsizing”

If you want to stay in step with the latest management trend, fire half your staff. That’s the advice of Michael Hammer and James Champy in their best-selling book ‘Re-engineering the Corporation’. For Business Process Re-engineering or BPR is about smashing up the corporate hierarchies we’re used to and rebuilding them from scratch. And the result is that tens of thousands of managers are losing their jobs in the name of re-inventing the corporation. In fact, some say that, if BPR really caught on, 25 million Americans would be *made redundant* tomorrow. Of course, it’s not called *redundancy* these days. It’s called *downsizing*. But it means the same thing to an out-of-work executive.

Out with vertical hierarchy

According to Tom Peters, a management guru who’s clearly more excited about BPR than the 25 million looking at *impending* unemployment, what a lot of large companies are learning is that they can do better with four layers of management than with twelve. The vertical hierarchy is out. The new, streamlined ‘horizontal network’ is in. And gone are the days of the autocratic kings of industry - the Lee Iaccocas and John Sculleys of this world - for now the customer is king.

From the bottom up

Basically, BPR is a mixture of Japanese lean, flexible, ‘just in time’ production and American enthusiasm for re-structuring companies *from the bottom up*. What it means is that, in order to remain *competitive*, we’ll all have to forget the old bureaucratic empires, divided by function into separate departments such as sales and accounts. We’ll be organizing ourselves instead around continuous business processes aimed at getting the product to the customer.

Empowerment or madness?

In fact, ‘re-engineers’ say that by the year 2000 it’ll be team-players and not leaders that businesses will chiefly be looking for. And, when it comes to decision-making, middle management may increasingly find itself bypassed altogether, as more and more

responsibility is passed down the line to cross-functional teams of junior managers and shopfloor workers. For by then these will have become largely self-managing, and the corporate pyramid will be turned completely upside down. BPR enthusiasts call this 'empowerment'. Others call it madness.

Mini-companies the way ahead

But is it even that? Or is it just a sexy new name for an old idea? In Sweden, where the top 20 firms do 80% of their business abroad, companies like the manufacturing giant, ABB, have already done something remarkably similar to re-engineering by breaking up the firm into hundreds of mini-companies. IBM had the same idea when it decided to form independent mini-companies of its own and 'Big Blue' set up thirteen little 'Baby Blues'. But, whereas ABB has managed to halve the development time of its products, IBM has not been able to *keep pace with* its smaller, fitter competitors.

The customer comes first

For BPR does seem to work better in some countries than in others. In the fast-growing economies of East Asia and Latin America, for example, it's doing well. But things don't look quite so good in the USA, and in Central Europe it's even worse. Paternalistic German bosses, in particular, find it hard to *delegate responsibility* to subordinates and yet overpaid German workers cost their companies 50% more than the average American costs theirs. Many French executives, too, still find it difficult to accept that the customer comes first. And in recession-battered Britain BPR is, more often than not, just an excuse to cut back and get rid of unwanted staff. Perhaps they should be *getting rid of* BPR instead.

What is your immediate reaction to the article? Tick the response nearest to your own or sum up what you think in a single sentence:

1. I think it paints a rather negative picture.
2. I think it oversimplifies the issue.
3. I think it's a bit one-sided.
4. I think it makes some interesting points.
5. I think it argues its case extremely well.
6. I think

Without referring back to the article, how much can you remember about:

7. mass redundancies
8. the managerial ladder
9. the customer
10. teamwork
11. mini-companies
12. cultural attitudes

Find the expressions in the article which mean:

13. the latest 'fashion'
14. right from the beginning
15. became popular
16. unemployed executive
17. management expert
18. completely restructure at all levels
19. may be excluded

- 20. can't match the competition
- 21. to economize

Exercise 21. Complete the short dialogues below using the following phrasal verbs:

get on to come up with come in for put up with back out of
get down to live up to put in for cut back on keep up with

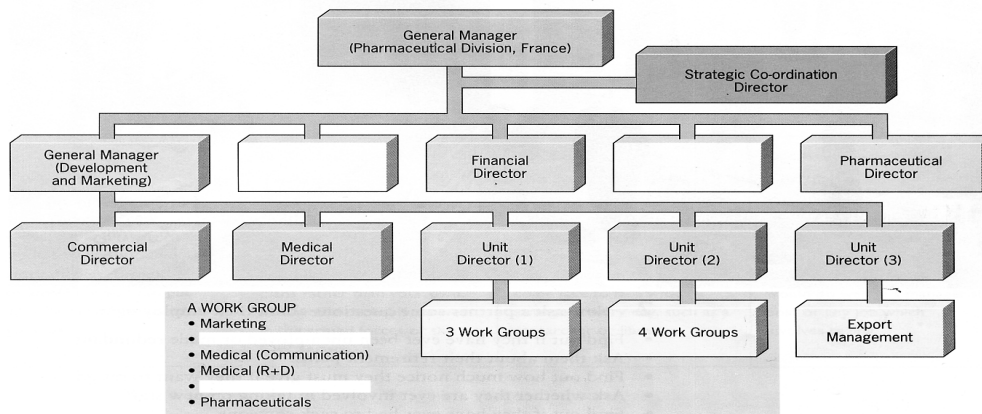
1. Has the restructuring of the production department speeded things up at all?
Not really. I'm afraid it failed to expectations.
2. How's the budget for this year looking?
I think we're going to have to spending, I'm afraid.
3. We really need to consult our legal advisors on this one.
OK, I'll them straightaway.
4. You know, in this industry it's sometimes hard to all the latest developments.
But that's what I'm paying you for!
5. You know, I'm sorry we ever got into this project in Hong Kong.
Well, its too late to it now.
6. I hear you've a promotion.
Yes. After eight years in this place, I think it's about time they gave me my own department.
7. I think everyone's here who's supposed to be here.
OK, let's business.
8. Look, if our team can't find a solution to this problem, no one can.
OK, go away and see what you can
9. A lot of people were very unhappy about the way they handled the redundancies.
I know. They've quite a lot of criticism over that.
10. If you want to stay in this job, you'll have to a fair amount of hassle, I'm afraid.
That's OK. I'm getting fairly used to it by now.

Exercise 22. Now, without referring back to the previous exercise, try to match up the halves of the following word partnerships:

1. come up	a. to business
2. cut back	b. for a promotion
3. get on	c. for criticism
4. keep up	d. to expectations
5. back out	e. with a lot of hassle
6. put in	f. with a solution
7. get down	g. of an agreement
8. come up	h. to the account department
9. come in	i. with the latest development
10. put up	j. on spending



Exercise 23. Schering is an international company engaged in agricultural and pharmaceutical activities. The French pharmaceutical subsidiary has recently changed its organizational structure. Listen to a manager describing the new structure to some colleagues from other parts of the organization and complete the organigram:



Exercise 24. Listen again and answer these questions:



Bayer HealthCare
Bayer Schering Pharma

1. Which person on the chart made the presentation?
2. Who does he report to?
3. What are the Unit Directors responsible for?
4. What three advantages of the work groups does he mention?

Exercise 25. Invent your own company and describe its organizational structure using the following verbs:

The most common verbs for describing structure are:

consists of contains includes
is composed of is made up of is divided into

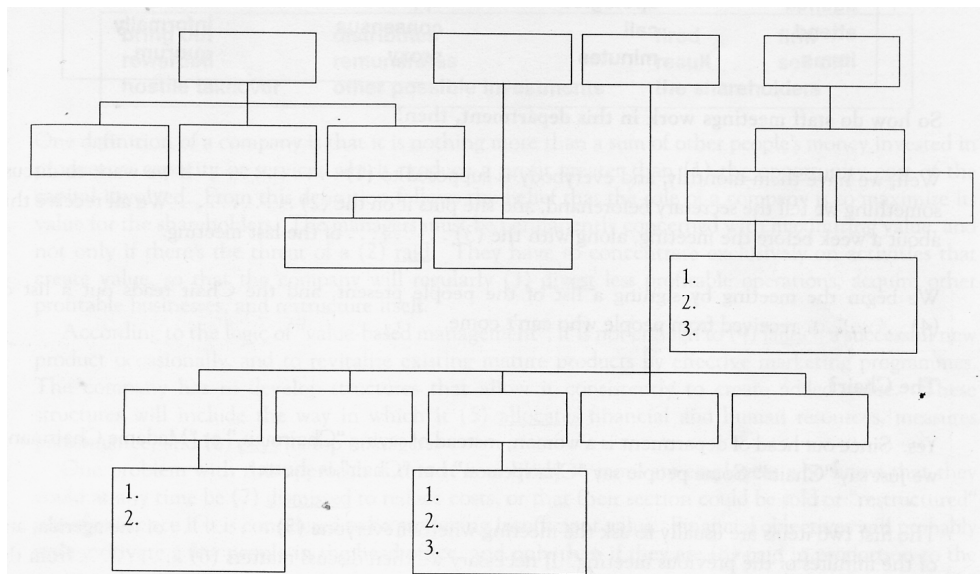
Other verbs frequently used to describe company organization include:

to be in charge of
to support or to be supported
to be accountable to
to be responsible for
to assist or to be assisted

Use the following questions to expand the topic:

1. What does your company do?
2. What is it called?
3. What kind of public image do you have?
4. How many people do you employ?
5. Where are your headquarters?
6. Do you have offices in other countries? If so, where?
7. What is your turnover, market share and net profits? Who is your main competitor?
8. Are you growing, shrinking or holding steady?
9. What are your most promising products and/or markets?
10. What problems are you having and how are you dealing with them?

Exercise 26. Read the whole text and then complete the organization chart:



I think we have a fairly typical organization for a manufacturing firm. We're divided into Finance, Production, Marketing and Human Resources departments.

The Human Resources department is the simplest. It consists of two sections. One is responsible for recruitment and personnel matters, the other is in charge of training.

The Marketing department is made up of three sections: Sales, Sales Promotion, and Advertising, whose heads are all accountable to the marketing manager.

The Production department consists of five sections. The first of these is Production Control, which is in charge of both Scheduling and Materials Control. Then there's Purchasing, Manufacturing, Quality Control, and Engineering Support. Manufacturing contains three sections: Tooling, Assembly, and Fabrication.

Finance is composed of two sections: Financial Management, which is responsible for capital requirements, fund control, and credit, and Accounting.

UNIT 8: MONEY MATTERS

Exercise 1. For each of the six questions choose one correct answer:

1. 'I've got money in the bank again, so now I'm back in the _____.'
 - a. red
 - b. black
 - c. yellow
 - d. green
2. Choose the more formal alternative for the word in bold.
'That picture cost me twenty quid.'
 - a. dollars
 - b. pounds
 - c. pence
 - d. cents
3. If you haven't got any money, you are _____.
 - a. broken
 - b. broke
 - c. smashed
 - d. shattered
4. How would you say the following amount of money? £1276
 - a. One thousand and two hundred and seventy six pounds.
 - b. One thousand, two hundred and seventy six pounds.
 - c. One thousand and two hundred, seventy six pounds.
 - d. One million, two hundred and seventy six pounds.
5. "It costs a fiver". In Britain this means _____.
 - a. fifty pence
 - b. five thousand pounds
 - c. five hundred pounds
 - d. five pounds
6. The following are all types of money. Which one do you borrow when you want to buy a house?
 - a. pocket money
 - b. mortgage
 - c. allowance
 - d. grant



Exercise 2. Read the information about the functions and characteristics of money and do the exercises below:

THE FUNCTIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF MONEY

American businesses produce, market, and distribute goods and services. Money makes it possible for businesses to obtain what they need from suppliers and for consumers to obtain goods. *Money* is defined as anything customarily used as a *medium of exchange*, a *unit of accounting*, and a *store of value*. The basis of the market economy is voluntary exchange. In the American economy, the exchange usually involves money in return for a good or service.

The Functions of Money

Most think of money and checks. and in other money might be even goods Economists by the presence certain Anything that is medium of



Americans as bills, coins, Historically, economies, shells, gold, or such as sheep. identify money or absence of functions. used as a exchange, a unit

of accounting, and a store of value is considered money. For example, Native Americans used wampum - beads made from shells. Fijians have used whales' teeth.

There are three functions of money.

Medium of Exchange. To say that money is a medium of exchange simply means that a seller will accept it in exchange for a good or service. Most people are paid for their work in money, which they then can use to buy whatever they need or want. Without money people would have to *barter* - exchange goods and service for other goods and services.

Suppose you worked in a grocery store and were paid in groceries because money did not exist. To get whatever you needed, such as clothes and housing, you would have to find people who have the goods that you want. In addition, those people would have to want the exact goods - in this case, groceries - that you have. Barter requires what economists call a *double coincidence of wants*. Each party to a transaction must want exactly what the other person has to offer. This situation is rare. As a result, people in societies that barter for goods spend great amounts of time and effort making trades with one another. Bartering can work only in small societies with fairly simple economic systems.

Unit of Accounting. Money is the *yardstick* that allows people to compare the values of goods and services in relation to one another. Money that is a measure of value functions in this way as a unit of accounting. Each nation uses a basic unit to measure the value of goods, as it uses the foot or meter to measure distance. In the United States, this base unit of value is the dollar. In Japan, it is the yen; in France, the franc. An item for sale is marked with a price that indicates its value in terms of that unit.

Using money as the single unit of accounting provides a simple and convenient way to compare the values of various items. By using money prices as a factor in comparing goods, people can determine whether one item is a better *bargain* than another. A single unit of accounting also allows people to keep accurate *financial records* - records of debts owed, income saved, and so on. Businesspeople can better calculate their profits and losses over the years by using a single money unit of accounting.

Store of Value. Money also serves as a store of value. You can sell something, such as your labor, and store the *purchasing power* that results from the sale in the form of money for later use. People usually receive their money income once a week, once every two weeks, or once a month. However, they usually spend their income at different times during a pay period. To be able to buy things between paydays, a person can store some of his or her income in cash and some in a *checking account*. It is important to note that in periods of rapid and unpredictable inflation, money is less able to act as a store of value.

The Types and Characteristics of Money

Anything that people are willing to accept in exchange for goods can serve as money. At various times in history, cattle, salt, animal hides, *gems*, and tobacco have been used as mediums of exchange. Each of these items has certain characteristics that it better or worse than others for use as money. Cattle, for example, are difficult to transport, but they are *durable*. Gems are easy to carry, but they are not easy to split into small pieces to use.

The table below lists the major characteristics that to some degree all items used as money must have. Almost any item that meets most of these criteria can be and probably has been used as money. *Precious metals*, however, particularly gold and silver, are especially well suited as mediums of exchange, and have often been used as such throughout history. It is only in more recent times that paper money has been widely used as a medium of exchange.

Mediums of exchange such as cattle and gems are considered *commodity money*. They have a value as a commodity, or good, aside from their value as money. Cattle are used for food and transportation. Gems are used for jewelry.

Representative money is money backed by - exchangeable for - some commodity, such as gold or silver. It is not in itself valuable for nonmoney uses, but it can be exchanged for some valuable item. Like commodity money, the amount of representative money circulation, or in use by people, is limited because it is linked to some *scarce good*, such as gold. At one time the United States government issued representative money in the form silver and gold certificates. In addition, private banks accepted deposits of gold or silver and issued paper money, called bank notes. These were a promise to convert the paper money into coin or *bullion* on demand. The banks were supposed to keep enough gold or silver in reserve - on hand to *redeem* their bank notes. Often, they did not.

Today all United States money is *fiat money*. Its *face value* occurs through government *fiat*, or order. It is in this way declared *legal tender*.

Characteristic	Description
Durable	Money must be able to <i>withstand</i> the <i>wear and tear</i> of being passed from person to person. Paper money lasts on the average of only one year, but old bills can be easily replaced. Coins, in contrast, last for years.
Portable	Money can be carried around easily. Though paper money is not very durable, people can easily carry large sums of paper money.
Divisible	Money must be easily divided into small parts so that purchases of any price can be made. Carrying coins and small bills makes it possible to make purchases of any amount.
Stable in value	Money must be stable in value. Its value cannot change rapidly or its usefulness as a store of value will decrease.
Scarce	Whatever is used as money must be <i>scarce</i> . That is what gives it value.
Accepted	Whatever is used as money must be accepted as a medium of exchange in payment for debts. In the United States, acceptance is based on the knowledge that others will continue

	to accept paper money, coins, and checks in exchange for desired goods and services.
--	--

Exercise 3. After reading the text in Exercise 2, fill in the missing word or words:

Money, regardless of what form it takes, has three major functions. When sellers are willing to accept it as payment for goods or services, money functions as a 1) _____
 _____. As a 2) _____, money allows people to compare the values of various items and to keep accurate records. Money in a convenient form serves as a 3) _____, allowing people to save for the future.

Whatever is used as money must be 4) _____, which is what gives it its value. Money, to be easy to handle and use, must be 5) _____ and 6) _____ into small parts. Finally, money must have 7) _____ value and be 8) _____ to withstand normal use.

Certain items such as furs or minerals used in barter are referred to as 9) _____ money. Currency backed by some 10) _____ such as gold is called 11) _____ money. In the United States and other countries, government decree creates 12) _____ money, also known as 13) _____. This type of money is backed mainly by society's 14) _____ in its value.

Exercise 4. Read the following text and summarize the notion of money and its basic types:

TYPES OF MONEY IN THE UNITED STATES

Money Is More Than Cash

When you think of money, you may think only of paper bills and coins. What does it mean to have "money in the bank"?

Money and Near Moneys

Money in use today consists of more than just *currency*. It also includes deposits in *checking* and *savings accounts* in banks and savings institutions, plus certain other investments.

Currency. All United States *coins in circulation* today are *token coins*. The value of the metal in each coin is less than its *exchange value*. A quarter, for example, consists of a mixture of copper and nickel. If you melted down a quarter - which is illegal - the value of the resulting metal would be less than 25 cents. The *Bureau of the Mint*, which is part of the *Treasury Department*, makes all coins. Of the currency in circulation in the United States today, about 9 percent is in coins.



Most of the nation's currency is in the form of *Federal Reserve notes*. Federal Reserve banks issue these notes. The *Bureau of Printing and Engraving*, also part of the Treasury Department, prints all Federal Reserve notes. They are issued in *denominations* of \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100. The Treasury Department has also issued United States notes in \$100 denominations only. These bills have the words *United States Note* printed across the top and can be distinguished from Federal Reserve notes by a red Treasury seal. United States notes make up less than 1 percent of the *paper money* in circulation. Both Federal Reserve notes and United States notes are *fiat money* or *legal tender*.

Checks. A *checking account* is money deposited in a bank that a person can *withdraw* at any time by writing a check. The bank must pay the amount of the check when it is presented for payment, that is, *on demand*. Such accounts used to be called *demand deposits*. Today we call these *checkable deposits*, and a variety of financial institutions offer them. Commercial banks used to be the only financial institutions that could offer *checkable accounts*. Today all *thrift institutions* - *mutual savings banks*, *savings and loan associations* (S&Ls), and credit unions - offer checkable deposits.

Credit Cards and Debit Cards. Even though many people use their *credit cards* to purchase goods and services, the credit card itself is not money. It does not act as a *unit of accounting* nor as a *store of value*. The use of your credit card is really a loan to you by the issuer of the card, whether it is a bank, retail store, gas company, or American Express. Basically, then, credit card claim on money that you will have later. Credit cards *defer* rather than complete transactions that ultimately involve the use of money.



The *debit card* automatically withdraws money from a checkable account. When you use your debit card to purchase something, you are in effect giving an instruction to your bank *to transfer money* directly from your bank account to the store's bank account. The use of a debit card does not create a loan. Debit card "money" is similar to checkable account money.

Near Moneys. Numerous other assets are almost, but not exactly, like money. These assets are called *near moneys*. Their values are stated in terms of money, and they have high *liquidity* in comparison to other investments, such as stocks. Near moneys can be turned into currency or into a *means of payment*, such as a check, relatively easily and without the risk of loss of value.

For example, if you have a bank savings account, you cannot write a check on it. You can, however, go to the bank and withdraw some or all of your funds. You can then redeposit it in your checking account or take some or all of it in *cash*.

Time deposits and savings-account balances are near moneys. Both pay *interest*, and neither can be withdrawn by check. Time deposits require that a depositor notify the financial institution within a certain period of time, often 10 days, before withdrawing money. Savings accounts do not usually require such notification.

The Money Supply

How much money is there in the United States today? That question is not so easy to answer. First, the money supply must be defined and agreed upon. Currently, two basic definitions are used, although others exist. The first is called M1 and the second M2. Both definitions include all the paper bills and coins in circulation. *M1*, the narrowest definition of the money supply, consists of moneys that can be spent immediately and against which checks can be written. It includes currency, *traveler's checks*, and *checkable deposits*. A

broader definition of the money supply, *M2*, includes all of *M1*, plus such near moneys as money market mutual fund balances and Eurodollars.

Exercise 5. After reading the text in Exercise 4, fill in the missing word or words:

Most of the nation's currency is in the form of (1) _____ and (2) _____ or _____. Money is also in the form of (3) _____ that a person can draw against for purchases. Today, these accounts are also called (4) _____. Since the 1980s, commercial banks and (5) _____ offer these accounts along with many other financial services.

Money can be represented by (6) _____, which provide "loans" to users. (7) _____, on the other hand, simply withdraw money that a person already has in an account. However, most people do not like to lose the (8) _____ they enjoy when writing checks. Personal assets such as stocks and bonds are called near money because they have high (9) _____ for their owners. (10) _____ deposits and (11) _____ are two other examples of near money.

The money supply is designated as *M1* and *M2*. *M1* includes all currency, (12) _____, and checking accounts. *M2* is a broader definition of the money supply and includes all of *M1* plus (13) _____ and (14) _____.

Exercise 6. Insert the following words in the appropriate space:

bonds commercial monetarist prices tight velocity

Following the (1) argument that the average level of (2) and wages is determined by the amount of money in circulation, and its (3)..... of circulation, many central banks now set money supply targets. By increasing or decreasing the money supply, the central bank indirectly influences interest rates, demand, output, growth, unemployment and prices. The central bank can reduce the reserves available to (4) banks by changing the reserve requirements. This reduces the amount of money that banks can create and makes money (5)..... or scarce. Alternatively, the central bank can engage in what are called open market operations, which involve selling short-term government (6) (such as three-month Treasury bills) to the commercial banks, or buying them back.

Exercise 7. Now do the same with the paragraph:

credit inflation output unemployment interest rates the exchange rate aggregate demand

When money is tight,

1. rise, because commercial banks have to borrow at a higher rate on the inter-bank market.
2. falls, because people and businesses borrow less at higher rates.
3. falls, because people and businesses buy less, as they have less money.

4. falls too, because with less consumption, firms produce less.
5. rises, because companies are producing and selling less, and so require less labour.
6. falls, because there is less money in circulation.
7. will probably rise, if there is the same demand but less money, or if there is higher demand, as foreigners take advantage of the higher interest rates to invest in the currency. Increasing the money supply, by making more reserves, available, has the opposite effects.

Exercise 8. Choose the correct alternative to complete each sentence:

1. Money in notes and coins is called
a. cash b. capital c. reserves
2. The dollar, the mark and the yen are all
a. currencies b. funds c. monies
3. Money borrowed from a bank is a
a. deposit b. income c. loan
4. Borrowed money that has to be paid back constitutes a
a. debt b. fund c. subsidy
5. All the money received by a person or a company is known as
a. aid b. income c. wages
6. The money earned for a week's manual work is called
a. income b. salary c. wages
7. The money paid for a month's (professional) work is a
a. loan b. salary c. wages
8. Money placed in banks and other savings institutions constitutes
a. capital b. deposits c. finance
9. Money paid by the government or a company to a retired person is a
a. pension b. rebate c. subsidy
10. The money that will ultimately be used to pay pensions is kept in a
a. budget b. deposit c. fund
11. The money needed to start a company is called
a. aid b. capital c. debt
12. The money paid to lawyers, architects, private schools, etc. is called
a. fees b. instalments c. wages
13. Regular part payments of debts are called
a. deposits b. loans c. instalments

14. Part of a payment that is officially given back (for example, from taxes) is called a
a. gift b. instalment c. rebate
15. Estimated expenditure and income is written in a
a. budget b. reserve c. statement
16. A person's money in a business is known as his or her
a. deposit b. fund c. stake
17. Money given to producers to allow them to sell cheaply is called a
a. loan b. rebate c. subsidy
18. Money given to developing countries by richer ones is known as
a. aid b. debt c. subsidy

Exercise 9. Choose the right answer:

1. When you retire at the age of sixty-five, you receive a(n)from the government.
a) allowance b) fine c) grant d) pension
2. If production in that factory exceeds the target, the workers get a
a) bonus b) donation c) gratuity d) premium
3. Income tax is to one's annual income.
a) associated b) based c) dependent d) related
4. The of living has risen by 25% in the last six months.
a) cost b) expenditure c) expense d) price
5. The kidnappers demanded a of \$ 1,000,000.
a) fine b) penalty c) ransom d) reward
6. The World Bank has criticized the United States for not giving enough financial to the East European countries.
a) aid b) allowance c) loan d) premium
7. You can your basic wage by working longer hours.
a) effect b) help c) implement d) supplement
8. A salesman is paid a on the goods he sells.
a) commission b) percentage c) provision d) salary
9. The President admitted taking and had to resign.
a) bribes b) fees c) fines d) premiums
10. In our country of \$250 is paid weekly to a family with more than three children.
a) an allowance b) a fee c) an income d) a wage
11. Mr. Mean cannot bear to even the smallest sum of money for a charity appeal.
a) give in b) let out c) part with d) pay off
12. Mr. Rich earns \$8,000 a monthand \$5,000 a month net.
a) bulk b) gross c) mass d) wholesale
13. You can only this postal order at a post office.
a) alter b) cash c) exchange d) pay
14. If they are not more careful with their accounts, they will go
a) bankrupt b) broken c) penniless d) poor
15. The Finance Minister will be making a today about new rates of income tax.
a) declaration b) notice c) statement d) talk
16. If I had another \$25,000 a year, I would consider myself

- a) well deserved b) well done c) well-made d) well off
17. All the workers in our firm get a Christmas of \$100.
a) bonus b) fine c) prize d) reward
18. "Can you something for the orphans?", he asked, rattling a collecting-box.
a) give b) leave c) provide d) spare
19. Before starting a business, you have to raise the necessary
a) capital b) currency c) investment d) savings
20. The usual reason for exemption from tax does not in this case.
a) apply b) concern c) impose d) regard
21. Mrs. Unemployed is finding it difficult to pay the on her insurance policy.
a) bonuses b) fees c) fines d) premiums
22. Our company made a record last year.
a) benefit b) earn c) profit d) winning
23. While you are away from the office on business trips, you will be given a daily \$50 towards meals and accommodation.
a) allowance b) fine c) permit d) reward
24. I hate the beginning of each year when all the start coming in and I have to find the money to pay them all.
a) accounts b) bills c) estimates d) receipts

Exercise 10. Give the names for the defined money expressions:

1. A fixed amount which is paid, usually monthly, to workers of higher rank	a s _ _ _ _ _
2. An amount of money which you lend to someone	a l _ _ _ _ _
3. A sum of money which is owned to someone	a d _ _ _ _ _
4. Money which is in the form of coins and notes, not cheques	c _ _ _ _ _
5. An amount of money you receive, usually weekly, in return for labour or service	a w _ _ _ _ _
6. Money paid by divorced father to his former wife for the upkeep of his children	a _ _ _ _ _ y
7. Tax on imported articles paid to the customs	_ _ _ _ _ y
8. Paid at a restaurant after eating	a _ _ _ _ l
9. Extra percentage paid on a loan	i _ _ _ _ _
10. Money paid for professional services, e.g. to a doctor	a f _ _ _ _ _
11. Money paid by the state, usually to students	a g _ _ _ _ _
12. Money paid by a company or the state on your retirement	a p _ _ _ _ _
13. Paid as a punishment for breaking the law	a f _ _ _ _ _
14. Paid to the government for services that the state provides	_ _ _ _ _ s
15. Paid while traveling, especially on public transport, buses, train, etc.	a f _ _ _ _ _

Exercise 11. Put each of the following words or phrases into its correct place in the text below:

banks beads buy coins change currency depositing earn exchange rate goods investments money paper bills savings accounts sell shells value

Money is what people use to (1)..... things. People spend money on (2)..... and services. Many people save part of their money by (3)..... it in a bank. People (4)..... money by performing services. They also earn money from (5)....., including government bonds, and from (6)..... .

(7)..... can be anything that people agree to accept in exchange for the things they (8)..... or the work they do. Ancient peoples used such varied things as (9)....., (10)..... and cattle as money. Today, most nations use metal coins and (11)..... . Different countries' (12)..... and bills look different and have different names.

A person can (13)..... his money for the money of any other country according to the (14)..... . Usually, such rates are set by the central (15)..... of a country. The (16)..... of a country's (17)..... may change, depending on the economic and political conditions in that country.

Exercise 12. Match the definitions with the correct money word:

1. an allowance	a. money paid to authors or investors according to the sales of their work
2. a bonus	b. a sum of money used to make more money from something that will increase in value
3. commission	c. the money which a building society or bank lends to someone to buy a house
4. a deposit	d. the money that a person pays to an insurance company to protect against loss or damage
5. a dividend	e. money, usually from a relative, to live on
6. an investment	f. an additional payment which is a reward to those who work for a company for their extra work
7. a legacy	g. the amount of money borrowed from a bank, greater than that which is in your account
8. maintenance	h. money received from someone in his or her will
9. an overdraft	i. the amount of money that goes to a shareholder
10. a premium	j. money paid by divorced or separated people to support the former husband or wife
11. royalties	k. part of the value of a company that you may buy
12. a share	l. part-payment of money which you make to stop the seller from selling his goods to others
13. a mortgage	m. an amount of money, related to the value of goods sold, which is paid to a salesman for his services

Exercise 13. Choose the correct answer:

1. The going for the job is \$7 an hour.

- a) pay b) price c) rate d) wage
2. When you buy a house you can claim tax on the mortgage.
a) aid b) assistance c) benefit d) relief
3. Inflation is the first problem that the new government will have to
a) clasp b) grasp c) seize d) tackle
4. Mr. Teenager's will be held in trust for him until he is 21. Then he will be free to spend it.
a) dowry b) heirloom c) heritage d) inheritance
5. When the company was declared bankrupt, all its fixed were claimed by its creditors.
a) assets b) benefits c) funds d) sums
6. Our country has never had a large in its balance of payment.
a) abundance b) addition c) overflow d) surplus
7. Miss Cheating is in trouble because she has not paid her National Insurance for ten years.
a) contributions b) subscriptions c) subsidies d) tributes
8. People in financial difficulties sometimes fall to unscrupulous money lenders.
a) fool b) prey c) sacrifice d) scapegoat
9. Because Mr. Sacked has just lost his job, his aunt's legacy came as a useful
a) advantage b) benefit c) profit d) windfall
10. The government has introduced currency controls which will make it more difficult to holiday abroad.
a) extreme b) striking c) stringent d) strong
11. If you don't complete your income tax, you may have to pay more than is necessary.
a) account b) document c) report d) return
12. As a result of increased productivity, the workers received a pay increase.
a) fundamental b) palpable c) substantial d) tangible
13. \$150? \$250? Let's the difference and say \$200.
a) agree b) avoid c) decrease d) split
14. Newly coins always look clean and shining .
a) minted b) moulded c) pressed d) printed
15. For some jobless people, joining the queue is a humiliating experience.
a) benefit b) dole c) grant d) ration
16. If a man is legally separated from his wife, is he still for her debts?
a) answerable b) bound c) chargeable d) liable
17. The two men a coin to see who should take care of the business on the weekend.
a) hurled b) lobbed c) threw d) tossed
18. No-one knows precisely how much she earns a month, but \$4,000 can't be very of the mark.
a) broad b) distant c) far d) wide
19. The between the rich and the poor is very evident in the Western World.
a) deviation b) differentiation c) difference d) distance
20. The salary is \$35,000 per annum, with annual of \$2,000 for five years.
a) annexes b) bonuses c) increments d) prizes
21. The government's policy is to firms in trouble to prevent unemployment.
a) contribute b) endow c) grant d) subsidize
22. Being a teacher, I shop at stores which offer a to teachers.

- a) deduction b) discount c) rebate d) subsidy
23. Share prices on the Stock Exchange plunged sharply in the morning but slightly in the afternoon.
- a) recovered b) regained c) restored d) retrieved
24. The firm will go bankrupt if it cannot meet its
- a) charges b) duties c) liabilities d) promises
25. Mr. Businessman needed \$10,000, but as his capital was up in shares, he borrowed it from his bank.
- a) bound b) knotted c) locked d) tied

Exercise 14. Complete the following sentences. Each (-) represents one letter:

1. I spend about \$1,5 a week on bus _ _ _ es.
2. I had to pay _ _ _ _ on the Turkish carpet I brought in through the Customs yesterday.
3. Now that Mr. Old had retired, he lives partly on his _ _ _ s _ _ _ and partly on the _ _ t _ _ _ _ from his post office savings account.
4. In spite of its size his family was quite _ _ _ _ off, because he brought in a good _ _ l _ _ _ .
5. Gold would be a good _ _ v _ _ _ _ _ t; it's bound to increase in value.
6. Due to inflation the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ of living went down by fifteen _ _ _ - c _ _ _ .
7. I couldn't buy the house because the bank refused to let me have a m _ _ _ _ _ g _ .
8. If you borrowed money from him, you are under an _ _ l _ _ _ _ _ _ to give it back.
9. You must stop wasting your money on silly things and start _ _ v _ _ _ . This is the only solution to your _ _ n _ _ _ _ _ troubles.
10. One dollar is _ _ u _ _ to over 20.000 zl.
11. The main advantage of a _ _ _ _ u _ book or _ _ _ d _ _ card is that you don't have to carry cash around with you.
12. I carry loose change in my pocket and _ _ _ _ s in my leather _ _ l _ _ _ .



Exercise 15. Listen to the recording and complete the information missing from this report of a company's financial performance:

LVMH advances in slowing market

LVMH, the French luxury goods group which owns a string of prestigious brand names ranging from Louis Vuitton luggage to Hennessy cognac, saw net profits rise by _____ to FFr 1. 29 bn (\$ _____) from FFr _____ in the first half of the year in spite of the downturn in the luxury products industry. The group saw overall group sales in the first six month of this year rise by _____ to FFr _____ from 9.26bn in the same period last year.

Operating income showed a _____ from 2.34bn. borne the brunt of the economic sales to FFr 4.44bn from FFr profits slipped to FFr 1.26bn Luggage and leather products instability, but managed to FFr _____ from 827m on 2.15bn. Perfumes and launch of Dune, a new Christian under the Givenchy umbrella. _____ and operating _____. LVMH earlier one of its classic scents.



marginal increase to FFr Wines and spirits, which have slowdown, suffered a fall in _____, while operating from 1.51bn. were also affected by Japan's increase operating profits to sales up to FFr 2.33bn from cosmetics benefited from the Dior fragrance, and Amarige, Sales rose to FFr 2.54bn from profits to FFr 330m from this week relaunched Miss Dior,

Exercise 16. Use a dictionary to find the difference in the following groups:

1. make a *profit* & make a *loss*
2. *extravagant* & *frugal/economical*
3. a *current account* & a *deposit account*
4. a *loan* & a *mortgage*
5. to *deposit* money & to *withdraw* money
6. a *wage* & a *salary*
7. *broke* & *bankrupt*
8. *shares, stocks, and dividends*
9. *income tax* & *excise duty*
10. to *credit* & to *debit*
11. a *bank* and a *building society*
12. a *discount* & a *refund*
13. something which was a *bargain*, something which was *overpriced* and something which was *exorbitant*
14. *worthless* & *priceless*
15. save *money* and invest *money*
16. *inflation* and *deflation*
17. *income* and *expenditure*
18. to *lend* and to *borrow*

Match the sentences in column A with the sentences in column B. Use the words in bold to help you:

Column A	Column B
19. The managing director believes the company should start producing pocket computers.	A. I'm really looking forward to spending my pension.
20. I always put my money in a building society and not in a bank.	B. The <i>cost of living</i> seems to go up every day.
21. I can't afford to buy a new car right	C. Of course, its always so difficult to <i>economize</i> .

<p>now. I don't have enough money.</p> <p>22. I find Christmas a very expensive time.</p> <p>23. I came into a lot of money recently when my uncle died.</p> <p>24. Look at this cheque that came in the post this morning from the Inland Revenue.</p> <p>25. I've been spending too much recently.</p> <p>26. In my country, there are a lot of very poor people and only a few rich ones.</p> <p>27. I lost my job last month.</p> <p>28. I retire next month.</p> <p>29. Prices are rising quickly everywhere.</p> <p>30. The January sales start tomorrow.</p>	<p>D. Shops all over the country are making huge <i>reductions</i> on just about everything.</p> <p>E. I always seem to run up a huge <i>overdraft</i> at the bank.</p> <p>F. Of course, the potential global <i>market</i> for them is enormous.</p> <p>G. Fortunately I receive <i>unemployment benefit</i>.</p> <p>H. There is a very uneven <i>distribution of wealth</i>.</p> <p>I. The interest they pay me is much higher.</p> <p>J. It's the first time I've <i>inherited</i> something.</p> <p>K. It seems to be some kind of tax <i>rebate</i>.</p> <p>L. Maybe I should consider getting one <i>on credit</i>.</p>
---	---

Exercise 17. Now read this passage and complete the gaps with one of the words or expressions from Exercise 16. You may need to change the form of some of the words:

'Financial advice from a father to a son'

In the play 'Hamlet' by William Shakespeare, a father gives his son some financial advice. 'Neither a borrower nor a lender be', he says. He is trying to tell his son that he should never 1) _____ money from anyone because it will make it difficult for him to manage his finances. Likewise he should never give a financial 2) _____ to a friend because he will probably never see the money again, and will probably lose his friend as well.

The play was written over four hundred years ago, but today many parents would give similar advice to their children. Imagine the conversation they would have now:

Son: Right dad, I'm off to university now.

Father: All right son, but let me give you some sound financial advice before you go.

Son: Oh come on dad.....

Father: Now listen, this is important. The first thing you should do is to make sure you balance your 3) _____ - the money you receive from me - and your 4) _____ - the money you spend. If you spend too much, you will end up with an 5) _____ at the bank. Don't expect me to pay it for you.

Son: But it's so difficult. Things are so expensive, and the 6) _____ goes up all the time. 7) _____ is running at about 10%.

Father: I know, but you should try to 8) _____. Avoid expensive shops and restaurants. Also, put your money in a good 9) _____. They offer a much higher rate of 10) _____ than banks. Also, avoid buying things 11) _____.

Son: Why?

Father: Because shops charge you an 12) _____ amount of money to buy things over a period of time. It's much better to 13) _____ a little bit of money each week

so that when you see something you want, you can buy it outright. Try to wait for the sales, when shops offer huge 14)_____ and you can pick up a 15)_____. And try to get a 16)_____.

Son: How do I do that?

Father: Easy. When you buy something, ask the shop if they'll lower the price by, say, 10%. Next, when you eventually get a job and are earning a good salary, try to 17)_____ the money in a good company. Buy 18)_____ in government organizations or 19)_____ in private companies.

Son: OK dad, I've heard enough.

Father: One final piece of advice, son.

Son: What's that dad?

Father: To thine own self be true.

Son: You what?



Exercise 18. Now you will hear someone reading out the report below. Write down the numbers in the gaps as you hear them:

Profit before tax at _____ was ahead by _____ on turnover of _____, up by _____. We must allow for the _____ review of chemists' labour and overhead costs, as well as the net impact of currency fluctuations. Adjusting for these, profits were ahead by _____ on turnover up by _____. Retail Division turnover at _____ increased by _____, and profits at _____ were up by _____. UK sales and profits increased by _____ and _____ respectively, before property disposal surpluses. Industrial Division achieved sales of _____, an increase of _____, with profits of _____, ahead by _____. At comparative exchange rates these increases become _____ and _____ respectively. The UK retail sales increased by _____ from an unchanged sales area.

Exercise 19. Read the following text and answer the questions below:

CREDIT OUT OF CONTROL

Regulation is taboo to the business community, but do we need more control over credit?

They say money makes the world go round. But it isn't money: it's credit. For when the corporations of the world buy, they buy on credit. And if your credit's good, no one asks to see the colour of your money. Indeed, if everyone were to demand immediate payment in cash, the world would literally go bust. But as Trevor Sykes points out in his book, 'Two Centuries of Panic', "there are few faster ways of going broke than by buying goods and then passing them on to customers who cannot pay for them". As if getting orders wasn't tough enough, these days getting paid is even tougher. And with the amount of cross-border trade increasing every year, credit is rapidly going out of control.

Companies on brink of collapse

In Germany, Denmark and Sweden, whose governments strictly regulate business-to-business relations, companies pay on time. They have to. Late payers may actually be billed by their creditors for the services of a professional debt collector. But in Britain companies regularly keep you waiting a month past the agreed deadline for your bill to be

paid. That's why a Swedish leasing agreement can be drafted on a single page, but a British one is more like a telephone directory. The French and Italians too will sit on invoices almost indefinitely and push creditor companies to the brink of bankruptcy.

Money management the key

But bad debt does not. Ninety years ago the legendary round the streets of Osaka in a rickshaw. They are not angry now, for today they are the biggest securities company in Japan. Nomura knew what distinguishes the operation from the poorly managed one is the way it manages its money. And increasingly a key feature of successful money management is the skill with which a company can stall its creditors and at the same time put pressure on its debtors.



necessarily mean bad business. Tokushichi Nomura was racing rickshaw to escape angry creditors. Nomura is the biggest securities company in Japan. Nomura knew what all good financial directors effectively managed commercial one is the way it manages its feature of successful money

Minimizing the risk

So how can the risk of bad debt be minimized? From the supplier's point of view, pre-payment would be the ideal solution: make the customer pay up front. But it is a confident supplier indeed who would risk damaging customer relations by insisting on money in advance. For the goodwill of your biggest customers - those who by definition owe you the most money - is vital to securing their business in the future. And the prospect of a bigger order next time puts you in a difficult position when payment is late again this time.

Instant access

We might expect modern technological advances to have eased this cashflow situation, but they haven't - quite the reverse. In the past it was common for companies to employ credit controllers who carefully processed letters of credit and bank guarantees. Now you get a telephone call, the computer runs a simple credit check and you deliver straightaway. Buyers have almost instant access to goods ... and to credit.

Be prepared for losses

For more and more companies it's a no-win situation. Charge interest on outstanding debts, and you risk alienating customers with genuine cashflow problems. But cut your losses by selling those debts on to a factoring agency, and it'll be you, not your debtor, who ends up paying the factor's commission. In order to recover what you're owed you'll effectively have to write some of it off. Such is the delicate balance of power between debtor and creditor. For though debtors do, of course, show up in a company's current assets, it is hard cash, not promises to pay, that finances new projects. People forget their promises and creditors have better memories than debtors.

Which of the following topics does the article discuss?

1. European attitudes to credit.
2. The credit-worthiness of Japanese.
3. Risk limitation.
4. National debt.
5. Information technology.

Look back at the article and find the expressions which mean:

1. to see evidence that you have the necessary capital.
2. you can't get what you want, no matter what you do.
3. to accept a modest loss in order to prevent a huge one.

Exercise 20. Choose the most suitable word for each space:

Someone once described the age we live in as that of a vanishing world, one in which the familiar is constantly disappearing for ever and technological change is often difficult to (1)..... with. So it should come as no surprise to most of us to hear that yet another part of everyday life is (2)..... to go for ever.

Still, when I read recently that within the next decade money as we (3)..... it will probably cease to exist in technologically advanced countries, I had to read the article twice to make sure it wasn't April 1st. (4)..... to Professor Gerry Montague of the Institute for Economic Reform, the familiar (5)..... and banknotes will soon be replaced entirely by credit cards of various kinds. And the shop of the future (the 'retail outlet' as Prof. Montague puts it) will be (6) directly to the network of banking computers. The assistant

bank account code (7)..... you have politely. You won't have (8)..... for change you have left your may not even have a (9)..... as such, as be able to read your



will simply key in your number and the spent, and thank you to dig deep in your or pretend at the pub that money at home. You number for your the computer may by then handprint. So no more

credit card frauds (10)..... . But I am afraid that I shall (11) money. I have felt strongly attached to it, ever since I received my first pocket money when I was five, and kept it in a money-box. Even if my credit card of the future will be able to tell me exactly how much (12)..... power I have left in the computer files, even if it lights up and plays a happy (or sad) tune at the same time, nothing will be able to replace the sheer pleasure I gained from (13)..... the coins in my moneybox. Not to (14)..... the other obvious problems which will be caused by (15)..... of real money – like how to start a football match, for example!

- | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| 1. a) keep | b) manage | c) cope | d) survive |
| 2. a) about | b) almost | c) ready | d) tending |
| 3. a) earn | b) know | c) use | d) need |
| 4. a) Thanks | b) Contrary | c) According | d) Accustomed |
| 5. a) banks | b) coins | c) change | d) pence |
| 6. a) taken | b) alone | c) responsible | d) linked |
| 7. a) money | b) charge | c) cost | d) amount |
| 8. a) pockets | b) wallet | c) cheque book | d) cash |
| 9. a) wealth | b) savings | c) account | d) payment |
| 10. a) arrested | b) either | c) stolen | d) however |
| 11. a) miss | b) spend | c) waste | d) borrow |
| 12. a) more | b) financial | c) economical | d) spending |
| 13. a) rattling | b) withdrawing | c) estimating | d) throwing |
| 14. a) tell | b) confront | c) guess | d) mention |
| 15. a) a shortage | b) an expense | c) an absence | d) a replacement |

Exercise 21. In each sentence choose one or more appropriate words:

- a. Harry gains/gets/makes over £20 000 a year.
- b. Mary was awarded a grant/scholarship/subsidy to study child psychology.
- c. How much did you give/pay/take for your new car?
- d. Their house fetched/produced/sold for a lot more than they expected.
- e. I'm going to the bank to get out/remove/withdraw the money for the rent.
- f. The manager disappeared with the receipts/takings/wages from the concert.
- g. By the time Kate retired she was a fortunate/prosperous/wealthy businesswoman.
- h. We had a good holiday but it was rather costly/expensive/valuable.
- i. We would appreciate it if you would close/settle/pay your bill as soon as possible.
- j. Unfortunately the old painting I found turned out to be priceless/valueless/worthless.

Exercise 22. Choose the most suitable word or phrase underlined in each sentence:

- a. I haven't got enough money, I'm afraid. Could you borrow/lend me some?
- b. It's a good school, but the fares/fees are rather high.
- c. This car is too expensive. We can't afford/pay it.
- d. It was a very good meal. Can we have the account/bill please?
- e. There's a small flat to hire/let in Bridge Street.
- f. How much do you earn/gain in your new job?
- g. She's a good dentist, but she doesn't charge/spend too much.
- h. I bought this coat in the sales. It was decreased/reduced a lot.
- i. Jack made his fortune/treasure buying and selling property.
- j. How much do you reckon/value that house would cost?

Exercise 23. Replace each word or phrase underlined with a word or phrase from the list which has the opposite meaning:

*cash generous profit save well off purchase worthless
expensive poverty take out*

- a. I was surprised by how mean Charles was.
- b. Janet says that she is very hard up at the moment.
- c. Last year their business made a huge loss.
- d. I'd like to pay in £100 please.
- e. That part of Spain always seems very cheap to me.
- f. Most people in the city live in great prosperity.
- g. The manager insisted that I paid by cheque.
- h. Some people manage to spend most of their money.
- i. Jean was able to make only one sale, during the morning.
- j. The old painting I found in the loft turned out to be valuable.

Exercise 24. Choose the most suitable response to each sentence a-j from the sentences 1-10. Use each response once only:

<p>a. Who do I make the cheque out to?</p> <p>b. We seem to be spending a lot of money lately.</p> <p>c. The house has burnt down! What are we going to do?</p> <p>d. How much do you want for this drawing?</p> <p>e. Did you inherit this house?</p> <p>f. Your dog must have cost a lot of money.</p> <p>g. Do we still owe the bank any money?</p> <p>h. How much do you make a year?</p> <p>i. Can we change money at the hotel to pay the bill?</p> <p>j. Why are you putting so much money in the bank?</p>	<p>1. Sorry, but it's not for sale.</p> <p>2. I'm saving up to buy a new motorbike.</p> <p>3. Perhaps we should try to economize a bit.</p> <p>4. Yes, my Aunt Clara left it to me.</p> <p>5. Well, we've nearly paid it all back.</p> <p>6. To JB Woolbury PLC.</p> <p>7. Actually I got it for nothing.</p> <p>8. I think they accept travellers cheques anyway.</p> <p>9. I've got quite a good salary actually.</p> <p>10. Don't worry, we're insured.</p>
--	--

Exercise 25. Use the word in capitals at the end of each line to form a word that fits in the space in the same line:

<p>Money! Money! Money!</p> <p>Helen had always dreamed of becoming a (1) woman, and imagined living in a (2)..... mansion, and how her friends would praise her (3) when she gave them expensive presents. In reality she was usually hard up. She had some (4)..... and a small life (5), but her antique shop was not really very (6)..... . Every time she took money out of the bank, the (7)..... checked her account, and told her how little there was in it! Helen had taken out a (8)..... a month before. How could she repay it? Then one day she noticed an old painting in her shop. She had thought it was (9)..... but as she brushed away the dust, she saw the (10) at the bottom. It said 'Renoir'! She was rich at last!</p>	<p>WEALTH</p> <p>LUXURY</p> <p>GENEROUS</p> <p>SAVE</p> <p>INSURE</p> <p>PROFIT</p> <p>CASH</p> <p>LEND</p> <p>WORTH</p> <p>SIGN</p>
--	--

Exercise 26. Match each person from the list with a suitable description. Use each name once only:

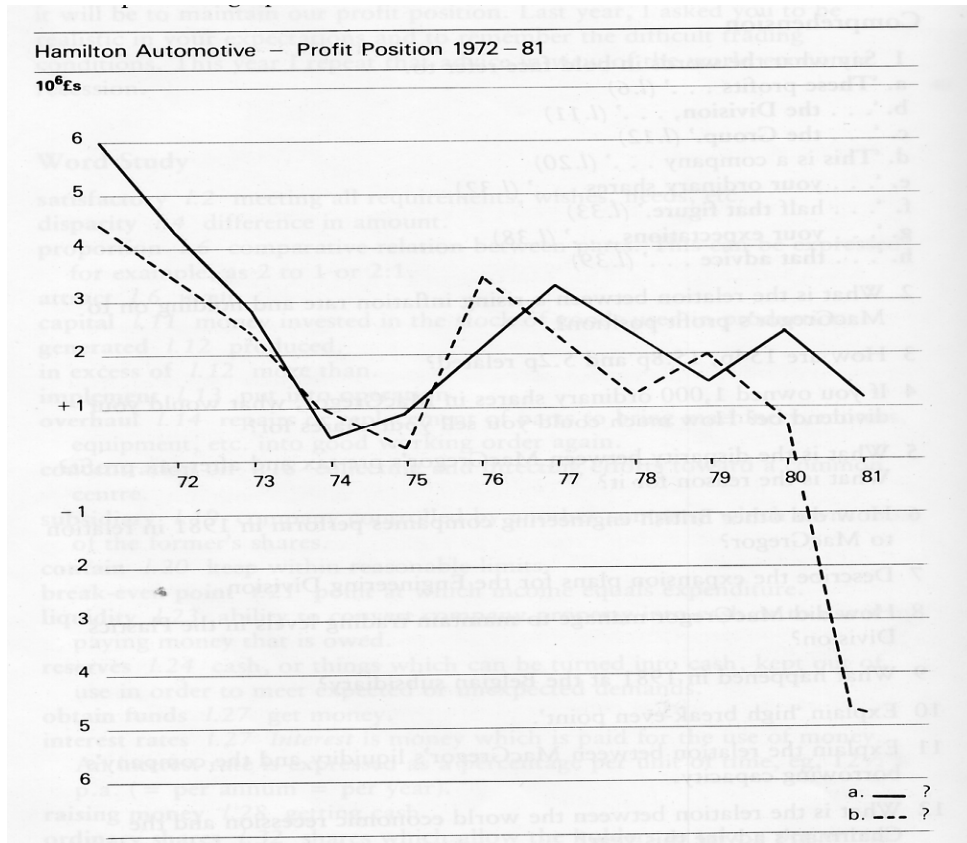
- accountant cashier heir manager pensioner*
agent customer investor miser swindler

- a. Someone who likes to keep money and not spend it.
- b. Someone who inherits money or property.
- c. Someone who runs a bank.
- d. Someone who has retired.
- e. Someone who keeps or checks financial records.
- f. Someone who buys things in a shop.

- g. Someone who pays out money in a bank.
- h. Someone who represents others in business.
- i. Someone who puts money into a business.
- j. Someone who cheats people out of money.



Exercise 27. While you are listening to the conversation between Mr. Tyler, a Personnel Director, Mr. Curry, a Financial Director, and Mr. Brown and Mr. Scott, both Trade Union Representatives, do 1, 2, 3 and 4 below:



1. Complete the graph.
2. What two reasons are given for the substantial losses in 1980?
3. Why can't the government increase its shareholding in Hamilton's at the moment?
4. What action is favoured by some of the shareholders?

UNIT 9: TELEPHONING

Exercise 1. Make up sentences from the following words and phrases:

back	call you	Can you	for a moment?
get	hang	This is a terrible line. I'm afraid	hang
I'm afraid I don't have their number, but if you wait I'll	I'll	I'll	I've been calling all morning and I can't
look	on	I'll have to	put you
it	through	through	to them.
to him right now.	up	up	when I've got more information.



Exercise 2. You'll hear part of a talk in which a training officer is giving advice to some trainees on telephone techniques. Listen to the recording and fill the gaps in the summary:

1. Identify yourself by giving your _____ and your _____ in the company.
2. Make sure you're talking to the _____.
3. Say right away what you're calling about. Be _____, and don't waste time.
4. If it's a _____, say that you'll _____ at once. Then start the call again.
5. Speak slowly and clearly, but in a friendly voice. _____ while you're speaking.
6. Don't use _____ terms or _____, because the other person may not understand these as well as you do.
7. Give important information, like figures, _____, _____, dates and so on, slowly and carefully.
8. Don't _____ the other person even if you think you know what he or she is going to say.
9. Don't phone during the other person's _____ - find out what time it is in the other country before you call.
10. _____ all the important information you're given by the other person.

Exercise 3. Fill the gaps with suitable words from the list:

busy (US)/engaged (GB)

dialing(US)/dialing(GB)

off the hook ringing

collect call (US)/transferred charge call (GB)

person-to-person call(US)/personal call (GB)

area code

1. To make a call: first listen for the _____ tone and dial the number. With any luck, you'll hear a tone telling you that the number is _____. If the other phone is being used you'll hear the _____ tone.

2. To make an international call: first dial the international code, then the country code, then the and finally the number you require.
3. If you want the other person to pay for the call you can make a
4. If you want to talk to a particular person you can make a
5. If you don't want to be interrupted, you can leave the phone

Exercise 4. Read this newspaper article and do the exercise below:

THE MOBILE PHONE

There are now over one million subscribers in the UK - the Scandinavians are the most users. Almost one in a hundred Swedes has a mobile phone compared to one in five hundred for the UK. Elsewhere in Europe the use of the mobile phone has been limited.

The growth in the UK is due to the deregulated telecommunications market introduced: at the moment, the cost of owning a portable phone in the UK is the cheapest in Europe.

Using a portable phone in Sweden is more than twice as expensive as in the UK and in France and Germany it costs almost five times as much.

The introduction of mobile phones is slowly increasing around Europe. The German government has authorized a third cellular network to cope with new demand. In Italy a consortium is competing to provide the country's second system. It has been calculated there will be 30 million portable phones in use in Europe by the year 2000. In Eastern Europe the figure will be around 1.5 million.



MARKET IS BOOMING

million telephone subscribers are now in use in Europe. But Scandinavians are the most enthusiastic mobile phone users. Almost one in a hundred Swedes has a mobile phone compared to one in five hundred for the UK. Elsewhere in Europe the use of the mobile phone has been limited.

partly due to its deregulated telecommunications market and the competition this has introduced: at the moment, the cost of owning a portable phone in the UK is the cheapest in Europe.

Using a portable phone in Sweden is more than twice as expensive as in the UK and in France and Germany it costs almost five times as much.

Correct the false statements. Which of these statements are true according to the report?

1. The U.K. has the highest percentage of mobile phone users in Europe.
2. Mobile phones are more popular in Scandinavia than in EC countries.
3. Using a mobile phone in France is five times as expensive as in Sweden.
4. By the end of this century, there will be more than one million portable phones in Eastern Europe.

Now check that you know what these words mean by choosing the correct answer.

5. A telephone **subscriber** is
 - a. a person who has a telephone
 - b. a person who has shares in the telephone company
 - c. a person who works in telecommunications
6. **To cope with** a demand is to
 - a. meet and satisfy it
 - b. to stimulate and encourage it
 - c. to provide competition for it
7. When a market is **deregulated**
 - a. a standard system has been imposed
 - b. prices have been kept as low as possible
 - c. government control has been reduced

8. A **consortium** is

- a. a group of companies in competition for a contract
- b. a state authority
- c. a group of companies working together

Exercise 5. Read the following article which gives you advice on making telephone calls. Discuss it in groups:

You are probably used to making informal calls to family and friends. When making calls to companies, however, some special rules and conventions apply. This article explains how to call someone in a company that you do not know personally (the most common kind of formal call made by students) and give you some models and language that you can use.

General rules

When making a formal call, three rules should influence your choice of words:

- **Be brief.** Do not waste the receiver's time.
- **Be clear.** Explain the background and purpose of your call.
- **Be polite.** Recognize the receiver's point of view.

These rules can sometimes conflict. If you are too brief, you may confuse the receiver or appear impolite. Try to balance the three rules.

Making a call to someone you do not know

The most difficult calls to make are calls to people that you do not know. Usually, the purpose of your call will be to make a request for information or a meeting. This kind of call can be divided into sections according to the function each serves:

- Locate the person
- Make request
- Make arrangement
- Close the call

In the following examples, we will imagine that you are calling Mr. Lau to arrange a visit to his office.

Locate the person

If the person you want to speak answers the call, this part is simple. If the receiver gives her name when he answers your call, you can skip to the next stage. If the receiver does not give his name, you can confirm that you have the right person:

Hello, is that Mr. Lau?

More often the number that you have will connect you to an operator or secretary. In

this case you will have to ask to speak to Mr. Lau:

Hello, I'd like to speak to Mr. Lau Kam-Cheong, please.

If Mr. Lau is not available, you will need to find out when you can speak to him:

Could you tell me when he will be available?

If the person you are calling has a busy schedule, you may have to call several times. When you are finally connected, it is best to pretend that this is your first call. Do not mention how difficult it was to make contact!

Sometimes, you will not know the name of the person who might be able to help you. In this case, you can state your request and then say:

Could you put me through to someone who might be able to help me?

Locating someone at a company from person to person. Try not to let

Make request



can be frustrating if you are passed your frustration show!

Making a request involves three background, and making the request

stages: introducing yourself, giving itself.

Introduce yourself by giving your name and explaining who you are:

I'm ..., I'm a first-year student at Hong Kong University....

If you have been given the receiver's name by someone else, you should also mention this:

Mr. Chan from Eurasia Products suggested that I call you....

Give the background to your request by explaining why you are making it:

I'm doing a project on work experience and I need to arrange a visit to a company in your field....

Make your request politely and clearly. Make sure that the receiver knows exactly what agreeing to your request will involve: how much of her time will it involve and what will she or her staff will have to do:

I wonder if I could pay a visit to your office for an hour or so sometime in the next two weeks, to talk to one of your staff about....

Make arrangement

If the person you are calling agrees to your request, it is important to make a clear arrangement. If you are arranging a meeting, for example, arrange the time and place and make sure you know where to go and what to do when you get there. Make a note of all the information so that you do not need to call back again to find out something you have missed.

If the person you are calling cannot agree to your request, he may modify it. Listen carefully and try to fit in with his schedule.

If the person you are calling cannot agree to your request at all, ask if he knows someone else who can help:

Do you know anyone else who might be able to help me?

Whether the receiver can help you or not, thank her and close the call politely.

Close the call

As the caller, it is your job to close the call when you have got the information you need. Unless the receiver shows that he wants to talk, it is not polite to chat once your business is finished. If there is a difficult silence at the end of the call, it is probably because you are not doing your job of closing the call. You can do this by confirming the arrangement:

So, I'll come to your office on Monday at 10....

thanking the receiver,

Thank you very much for your help....

and saying goodbye

Goodbye....

In each case, wait for the receiver's response before you go on to the next stage. Wait until you have heard the receiver say goodbye before you hang up.



Exercise 6. You'll hear three messages which you are taking on behalf of your colleague, Mr. Collins. Listen to the recording and fill the gaps in these notes:

1. SUSAN GRANT of Richmond Studios called about order for 1 x MQ 20, sent 3 weeks ago - on _____ of this month.

Sent you cheque for £ _____ to get it at special offer price but no _____ of order.

Please confirm receipt of order and _____.

Any problems, phone Susan Grant on 0303 _____.

When can she expect _____?

Address: _____ High Street, Woodbridge, _____, IP12 4SJ

2. PETER _____ of Eastern Enterprises in _____ called:
 Can't _____ on _____ afternoon because of problem with hotel - no room because of _____.
 All other hotels in town full because of _____.
 Will come on Monday morning (_____) if OK with you.
 Please tell him if this change of date is _____.
 Please call him if you have ideas for _____ on 617 _____.

3. _____ called:
 Staying 2 extra days in _____ and trying to get flight back on _____. Direct flight is full – they've put him on _____.
 May not be back till _____.
 If not back, please take over at meeting on Tuesday with _____.
 All info in file on his desk with _____'s name on.
 Please collect O.F. from _____ Hotel first thing in the morning.
 Any problem: leave a message at his hotel (_____) or send fax (_____).

Exercise 7. Fill in the gaps with the following words:

automatic call dial dialing tone directory engaged exchange operator receiver subscriber's number trunk code Yellow Pages

You need to make a telephone 1) _____. Then make sure you have your correspondent's number close at hand. Telephone numbers consist of a 2) _____ and a 3) _____. If you don't know your contact's number, look it up in the telephone 4) _____ of the 5) _____. The latter contains the telephone numbers of businesses and traders in your area. The next thing you do is lift the 6) _____ and 7) _____ or press the number. You will then hear a 8) _____. If the number is 9) _____ you will hear an engaged tone. Bad luck, you will have to ring back later. In a company, the first person who answers the phone will often be the 10) _____. He - but still more often: she - will put you through to the person you require. The operator operates the telephone 11) _____. In an increasing number of businesses however manual exchanges are replaced by direct lines or 12) _____ exchanges.

Exercise 8. Read this dialogue and choose the best answer:

Receptionist: Thank you for phoning Maple Dental Clinic. Sylvia 1) *speaks/speaking/calls*. How can I help you?
Thelma: Hi Sylvia. 2) *This be/It's/I am* Thelma Woods calling. How are you today?
Receptionist: I'm fine, Mrs. Woods. How are you?
Thelma: Well, actually, I have a bit of a sore tooth. I was hoping Dr. Morris would have some time to see me this week.

Receptionist: I'm 3) *afraid/scared/worried* he's booked this week. I can put you in for 2 pm next Tuesday. How does that sound?

Thelma: That would be great.

Receptionist: I'll have to give you the address of our new office.

Thelma: Oh, that's right, you moved.

Receptionist: Yes, we moved downtown. Do you have a 4) *pen handy/the handy pen/the available pen*?

Thelma: Could you hold on a 5) *buzz/moment/time* please. ...Okay, go ahead Sylvia.

Receptionist: Okay, we are at 723 Baltic Avenue. Suite 004.

Thelma: 6) *If you could/Please can you/Would you mind* spelling that for me?

Receptionist: Sure. That's seven-twenty-three Baltic – B 7) *for Bear/as if Brave/as in Bravo*, A as in Alpha, L as in Lima, T as in tango, I as in India, and C.

Thelma: OK, great. I'll see you on Tuesday then.

Receptionist: OK, 8) *Great for/Pleased to/Thanks* for calling. See you then.

Thelma: Thanks. Bye.

Exercise 9. Read this dialogue and choose the best answer:

Leslie: 1) *Hello?/Hi?/Yes?*

Cameron: Hi, is this Leslie?

Leslie: Yes. 2) *Who are you/And you/Who's this?*

Cameron: It's Cameron here. Is Maria 3) *inside/in/where?*

Leslie: No, she just 4) *came/stepped/gone out* for a moment. Can I take a message?

Cameron: Yes, thanks. 5) *Could you/Would you mind/Can you* be ask her to meet me at the Capitol 4 movie theatre at 7 pm tonight?

Leslie: Sure. Just let me write that down. Oh, Cameron. Could you 6) *hold off/holding/hold* for a second? I have to take another call.

Cameron: No problem.

Leslie: Hi. Sorry about that. Now could you please 7) *say again/repeat/review* that information? I didn't have a pen handy.

Cameron: Sure. It's the Capitol 4 theatre at 7 o'clock.

Leslie: Okay, I've got it. Is there anything else?

Cameron: No, that's great.

Leslie: Okay. Uh-oh, there's my other line again. I'd better 8) *call/run/hang on*.

Cameron: Okay, thanks again. Bye for now.

Leslie: 9) *Bye bye/Bye too/See you again*.

Exercise 10. Read this dialogue and choose the best answer:

Hostess: Pepi's Pizza. How can I 1) *call/answer/help* you?

Customer: Hi. I'd like to order a pizza please.

Hostess: Okay. I'll have to transfer your call to our take-out department. 2) *One/This/A* moment please.

Recorded Message: Thank you for calling Pepi's Pizza. All of our operators are busy working 3) *today/and away/at the moment*. Please hold for the next available person.

Take-out Clerk: Thank you for waiting. Naoko is 4) *hear/speaking/talks*. Is this for take-

out or delivery?

Customer: Delivery please.

Take-out Clerk: Can I have your name and address please?

Customer: My name is...

Take-out Clerk: Sorry, it's really busy in here. Could you 5) *speak out/speaking/speak up* a little please?

Customer: Oh, sure. This is Angie Smith. My address is number two Front Street.

Take-out Clerk: Is that an apartment or a house?

Customer: It's an apartment. Number seventeen.

Take-out Clerk: Okay. And what would you like to order today?

Customer: I'd like a large pepperoni pizza with mushrooms, olives and extra cheese.

Take-out Clerk: I'm sorry, my English isn't 6) *better/very strong/easy*. Could you slow down a little please?

Customer: No problem. That's a large pizza.

Take-out Clerk: Large pizza. Okay.

Customer: And I'd like it with pepperoni and mushrooms.

Take-out Clerk: Pepperoni and mushrooms. Is there anything else?

Customer: Yes, olives and extra cheese please.

Take-out Clerk: Okay. I've 7) *got your message/got information/got it all down*.

Customer: Great. And how long will that be?

Take-out Clerk: It will be about thirty minutes, Miss Smith.

Customer: And how much will it cost?

Take-out Clerk: Um...could you please 8) *hold off/holding/hold on* while I check with the kitchen?

Customer: Don't worry about it. I have to go. I have another call 9) *came/to come/coming through*. Thank you. Bye for now.

Take-out Clerk: Okay. Thanks for calling. Bye.



Exercise 11. It isn't always easy to understand people over the phone. You'll hear some orders being placed but each caller is talking quickly or unclearly. Listen carefully and work out what the callers are saying. Tick (✓) the information that is given:

300 kilos of white mice		300 kilos of white rice	
18 cents per kilo		80 cents per kilo	
2 boxes striped pyjamas		2 boxes ripe bananas	
£115 per box		£150 per box	
The total price is 4,295 francs.		The total price is 4,259 francs.	
Our phone number is 456894.		Our phone number is 456984.	
40 kilos @ £14 per kilo		14 kilos @ £40 per kilo	
Order number: GJ 404		Order number: JG 404	
90 items will cost \$500		500 items will cost \$900	
Item code: RAE 77		Item code: AEI 77	

Exercise 12. Put your chairs back to back and practice speaking on the phone. Work in groups of two. You will be taking in turns to role-play a phone call. Read the following instructions:

Student A. You are Mr/Ms. Peterson, in charge of shipping customers' orders and answering queries about delayed shipments.

These orders have been held up for the reasons given:

- ARG 4581 – delay due to rejection by Quality Control. Revised shipment date: 30th of this month.
- RAJ 4581 – delay due to staff sickness in Production Dept. Revised shipment date some time next week. Air freight at no extra charge.

Student B. You are Mr/Ms. LaRue, a customer. You are the caller.

- Call Mr/Ms. Peterson to find out whether the goods you have ordered have been dispatched yet.
- The order number date you placed the 16. If they haven't him/her to hurry them
- Ask *exactly* when you goods to arrive. If can call you back with (023 1550 extension

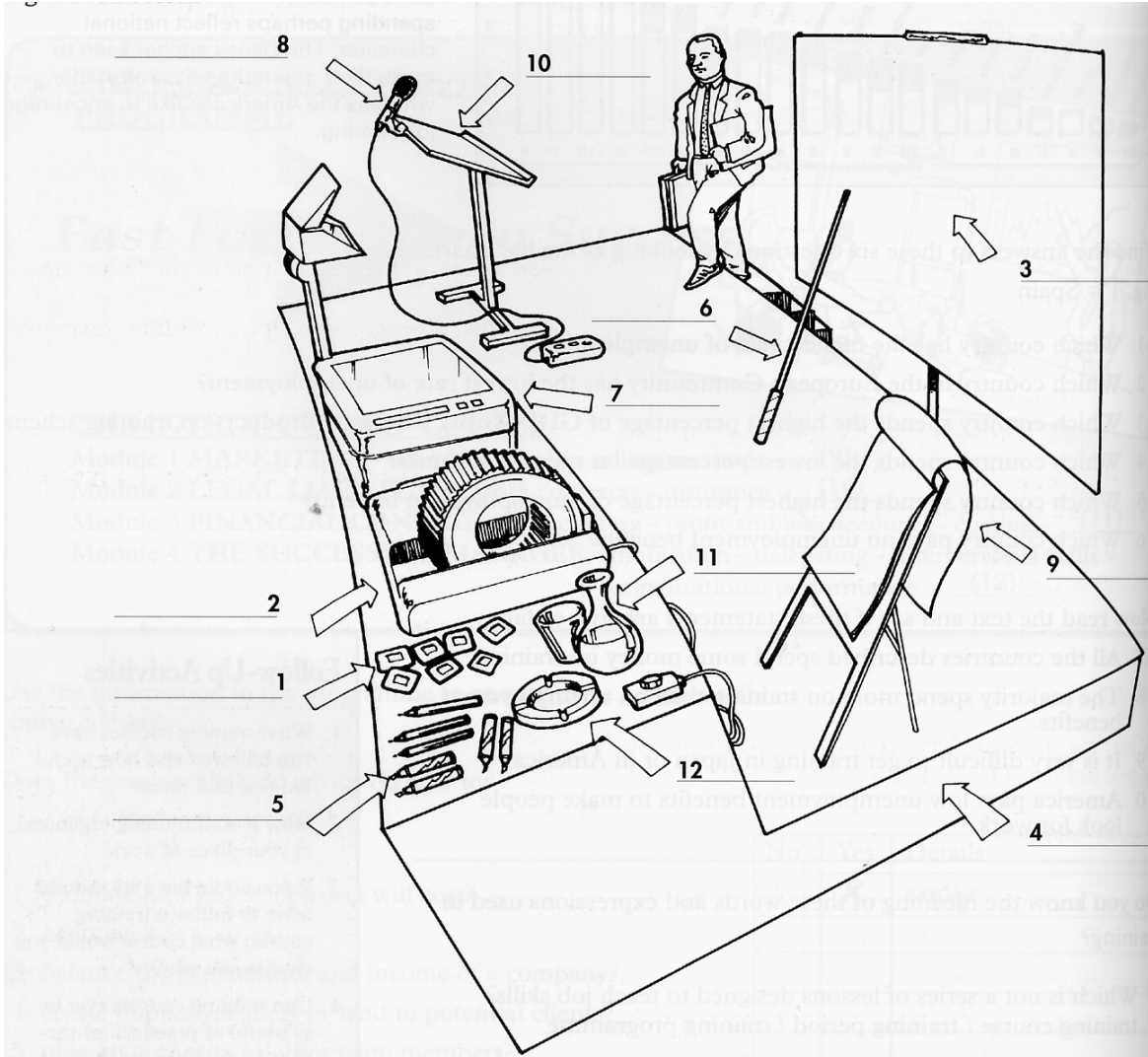


was RAJ 4581. The order was January been sent, try to get up. can expect the necessary, he/she this information 018).

UNIT 10: GIVING A SUCCESSFUL PRESENTATION

Exercise 1. A speaker is going to address delegates at an international conference. All the special equipment and audio-visual aids have been prepared. Identify the ten items in the list:

e.g. 10 = Lectern



*lectern overhead projector podium/platform whiteboard/screen
marker pens pointer slides microphone flipcharts slide projector*

There are three other items on the table - small and yet important: a glass, a 11) _____ of water and an 12) _____.

Exercise 2. Read the following text about making a successful presentation:

Most presentations are divided into 3 main parts (+ questions):

1	INTRODUCTION	Questions
2	BODY	
3	CONCLUSION	
	Questions	

As a general rule in communication, repetition is valuable. In presentations, there is a golden rule about repetition:

1. Say what you are going to say,
2. say it,
3. then say what you have just said.

In other words, use the three parts of your presentation to reinforce your message. In the introduction, you tell your audience what your message is going to be. In the body, you tell your audience your real message. In the conclusion, you summarize what your message was.

Introduction

The introduction is a very most important - part of the first impression that You should concentrate on right. You should use the



important - perhaps the your presentation. This is your audience has of you. getting your introduction introduction to:

1. welcome your audience
2. introduce your subject
3. outline the structure of your presentation
4. give instructions about questions

The following table shows examples of language for each of these functions. You may need to modify the language as appropriate.

Function	Possible language
1. Welcoming your audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Good morning, ladies and gentlemen</i> • <i>Good morning, gentlemen</i> • <i>Good afternoon, ladies and gentleman</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Good afternoon, everybody</i>
2. Introducing your subject	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I am going to talk today about...</i> • <i>The purpose of my presentation is to introduce our new range of...</i>
3. Outlining your structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To start with I'll describe the progress made this year. Then I'll mention some of the problems we've encountered and how we overcame them. After that I'll consider the possibilities for further growth next year. Finally, I'll summarize my presentation (before concluding with some recommendations).</i>
4. Giving instructions about questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Do feel free to interrupt me if you have any questions.</i> • <i>I'll try to answer all of your questions after the presentation.</i> • <i>I plan to keep some time for questions after the presentation.</i>

Body

The body is the 'real' presentation. If the introduction was well prepared and delivered, you will now be 'in control'. You will be relaxed and confident.

The body should be well structured, divided up logically, with plenty of carefully spaced visuals.

Remember these key points while delivering the body of your presentation:

- do not hurry
- be enthusiastic
- give time on visuals
- maintain eye contact
- modulate your voice
- look friendly
- keep to your structure
- use your notes
- signpost throughout
- remain polite when dealing with difficult questions

Conclusion

Use the conclusion to:

1. Sum up
2. (Give recommendations if appropriate)

3. Thank your audience
4. Invite questions

The following table shows examples of language for each of these functions. You may need to modify the language as appropriate.

Function	Possible language
1. Summing up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To conclude,...</i> • <i>In conclusion,...</i> • <i>Now, to sum up...</i> • <i>So let me summarize/recap what I've said.</i> • <i>Finally, may I remind you of some of the main points we've considered.</i>
2. Giving recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In conclusion, my recommendations are...</i> • <i>I therefore suggest/propose/recommend the following strategy.</i>
3. Thanking your audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Many thanks for your attention.</i> • <i>May I thank you all for being such an attentive audience.</i>
4. Inviting questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I would be happy to answer any questions.</i> • <i>If you have any questions, I would be pleased to answer them.</i> • <i>I would welcome any comments/suggestions.</i> • <i>Now I'll try to answer any questions you may have.</i> • <i>Can I answer any questions?</i> • <i>Do you have any questions?</i> • <i>Are there any final questions?</i>

Questions

Questions are a good opportunity for you to interact with your audience. It may be helpful for you to try to predict what questions will be asked so that you can prepare your response in advance. You may wish to accept questions at any time during your presentation, or after your presentation. To keep a time for questions, make it clear during the introduction. Normally, it's your decision, and you should make it clear during the introduction. Be polite with all questioners, even if they ask difficult questions. They are showing interest in what you have to say and they deserve attention.



opportunity for you to It may be helpful for you to questions will be asked so response in advance. You questions at any time to keep a time for questions Normally, it's your make it clear during the

Exercise 3. Here are the introductions to two different presentations. Separate the two presentations and put them in the correct order:

- a. At the end I will suggest practical ways in which you as managers can motivate both yourselves and the people who work for you.
- b. Good morning ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to our session on the dynamics of motivation.
- c. Then I will give a short demonstration of our prototype and explain what we have already achieved.
- d. Please feel free to raise questions at any time on technical or financial aspects of the project and I shall do my best to answer them.
- e. To begin with, I shall outline the main goals of the project.
- f. I would like to ask you to keep any questions you may have until the end, when I hope we will also have time to discuss your personal experiences and particular work situations.
- g. Finally, I shall move on to the major commercial applications and potential returns on investment.
- h. I will then turn to what we really mean by motivation, and look at the internal and external factors that play a part in creating it.
- i. Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. I would like to talk to you this afternoon about why we feel our interactive video project is worth investing in.
- j. I shall start by looking at why motivation is so important and why the ability to motivate is a vital management skill.

Presentation 1	Presentation 2
_____b_____	_____i_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Exercise 4. Read this introduction to a presentation. Choose the correct words or phrases in italics:

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen and welcome (1) *in/to/for* our seminar on corporate property management. I would like to (2) *begin/starting/commence* by (3) *drawing/telling/outlining* some of the main (4) *explanations/matters/issues* in corporate property management (5) *so that/for/in order* you will be able to judge whether your company is devoting sufficient time to this question. I will then (6) *look/turn/change* to some of the legal and financial (7) *queries/aspects/pieces* of property management, and will (8) *tell/look/explain* how your companies may be affected by current and future legislation. I will (9) *illustrate/give examples/discuss* of the kinds of problems our clients have faced and explain what was done to solve them. I will finish (10) *by/with/in* giving a brief resume of the consultancy service that we offer, and I will explain what you (11) *need/shall/should* do if you would like to look into the matter further.

As we are rather (12) *hurried/pressed/short* for time, I would be grateful if you could (13) *rest/stay/save* any questions you may wish to (14) *rise/raise/arise* until the end, when I will (15) *do/make/have* my best to answer them.



Exercise 5. Listen to Mr. Lopez' presentation. Below are some notes made by one of his colleagues. Unfortunately he has misunderstood some of Mr. Lopez' points. To help correct these points, write true or false against each statement.

- a. Mr. Lopez is English.
- b. We are planning to launch the product next week.
- c. The new product is an orange-flavoured drink.
- d. Citrus Incorporated have not produced a lemon drink for two years.
- e. Everyone thinks there is a gap in the market.
- f. Market studies prove that the market is shrinking.
- g. We are aiming at a new type of consumer.
- h. The container design is unchanged.
- i. The design of the packaging will mean that the product is cheaper.
- j. The drink comes in both bottles and cans.
- k. The flavour is rather artificial.
- l. The calorie-content of the drink is relatively low.



Exercise 6. Listening comprehension.

- Why is it important for you to be able to present information effectively?
- Who do you give presentations to?
- What are the most important ingredients in an effective presentation?

Listen to the presentation on Time Management and answer these questions:

1. The speaker wants to show you how you can be more effective at work: true or false?
2. What two things does she say stop you from being effective at the moment?
3. What are the three ways in which you can subject yourself to high levels of stress?
4. What is the result of stress?
5. Typically, stress is related to jobs with high salaries: true or false?
6. What is one thing she suggests you do to reduce your working hours?
7. If you want to delegate work, you have to decide what to delegate and..
8. To help you manage your time more effectively, what does she suggest you start saying to other people?

Now listen again for specific language and answer these questions:

9. What phrase does she use to introduce her presentation? ('I'd like ...')
10. What phrase does she use to introduce her examples? ('First...')
11. She uses two phrases when she is referring to her chart: what are they? ('...this chart... .As...')
12. What does she say to signal that she wants to talk about her second point?
13. How does she show that she wants to develop this point? ('I would like to...')

14. Give the phrases that indicate she is listing points.
15. How does she show she is going to give her conclusion?

Do you think it is a good presentation? Give reasons for your answer.



UNIT VOCABULARY

UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION INTO BUSINESS ENGLISH

1. annual business
2. bad business
3. blue-collar worker
4. booming business
5. business
6. business competition
7. business corporation
8. business hours
9. challenge
10. consumer demand
11. customer
12. dirty business
13. finance
14. firing
15. for-profit business
16. freelance
17. human resource management
18. incentive
19. increment
20. job security
21. just-in-time inventory
22. marketing
23. monkey (funny) business
24. non-profit business
25. operating costs
26. perks
27. personal business
28. personalized sales
29. prestige
30. production
31. profit
32. promotion
33. retail
34. revenues
35. self-employed
36. sickness benefit
37. team spirit
38. to be in business
39. to be out of business
40. to build up business
41. to mind one's own business
42. to obtain a loan
43. to pay bills
44. to raise capital

45. to resign
46. unsociable hours
47. white-collar worker
48. wholesale
49. workaholic

UNIT 2: RECRUITMENT

1. applicant
2. application
3. background
4. bonus
5. candidate
6. career
7. challenge
8. commodity
9. competitive
10. computer-literate
11. consumer demand
12. covering letter
13. customer
14. CV (curriculum vitae)/resume
15. demeanor
16. employment agency/recruitment agency
17. essential/crucial/vital/important
18. eye contact
19. final decision
20. for-profit business
21. fringe benefits
22. from scratch
23. group discussion
24. human resources/staff/personnel
25. income
26. intelligence
27. job slots
28. laborer
29. labour rate
30. labour turnover
31. letter of application
32. marital status
33. non-profit business
34. operating costs
35. promotion
36. recession
37. recruitment/hiring/employment
38. redundancy
39. referee
40. reference

41. respect
42. result
43. shortlist
44. team spirit
45. to accept a job
46. to apply for a job
47. to appoint
48. to be (go) on the dole
49. to be appropriate
50. to be in business
51. to be on offer
52. to be out of business
53. to build up business
54. to conduct the interview
55. to cut back
56. to dig for dirt
57. to establish rapport
58. to fill out/in
59. to go up the career ladder
60. to make an advantage of smth
61. to meet qualifications for the job
62. to mind one's own business
63. to neglect
64. to offer the job
65. to raise capital
66. to recruit/to hire/to employ
67. to reduce unemployment
68. to retain
69. to take advantage of smth
70. to turn down the job
71. trainee
72. unpaid leave
73. wage/salary
74. wholesale

UNIT 3: WRITING CV AND LETTER OF APPLICATION

1. affiliation
2. award
3. background
4. bi-lingual
5. blocked or open punctuation
6. career
7. challenge
8. consistently
9. cover letter
10. CV (curriculum vitae)
11. date of birth

12. education
13. experience
14. fluent
15. graphology
16. interest
17. job objective
18. letter of application
19. miscellaneous
20. nationality
21. native language
22. qualifications
23. reference
24. skill
25. sludge pile
26. tenured position
27. to enclose
28. to toss
29. training
30. work history

UNIT 4: JOB INTERVIEWS

1. appearance
2. arms folded across your chest
3. attributes
4. body language
5. bottom line
6. casual
7. casual Fridays
8. cheap commodity
9. confidence
10. eye contact
11. family status
12. follower
13. follow-up letter
14. gesture
15. impression
16. inappropriate questions
17. intelligent
18. intimidating
19. inviting
20. job offer
21. leader
22. marital status
23. neat
24. outcome
25. panel
26. politeness

27. posture
28. reliability
29. self-confident
30. skill
31. spontaneous
32. stylish
33. team player
34. thank you note/follow up letter
35. to afford
36. to be anxious
37. to bring smth up
38. to disrupt
39. to entail
40. to establish rapport
41. to fit in
42. to handle adversity
43. to interact
44. to rehearse
45. to reiterate
46. traits
47. weird questions

UNIT 5: BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

1. absentee
2. accessible/approachable
3. accountability
4. accuracy
5. adversarial
6. arrogant
7. assertive
8. attitude
9. awareness
10. boardroom
11. bribe
12. business suit
13. canteen culture
14. casual clothes
15. casual/dress down Fridays
16. chaotic
17. company/corporate culture
18. competitive edge
19. conservative
20. cornerstone
21. corporate social responsibility (CSR)
22. credible
23. decision-making
24. deference for = respect

25. devious
26. distance
27. efficiency
28. embedded
29. entertaining
30. ethics
31. eye-contact
32. familiarity
33. formal clothes
34. forms of address
35. gesture
36. handful of smth
37. handshaking
38. hard-working
39. heated discussion
40. hospitable
41. hospitality
42. humiliation
43. indifferent
44. individualistic
45. inevitable
46. interruption, to interrupt
47. janitorial staff
48. lazy
49. lively
50. long-hours culture
51. macho culture
52. management layers
53. mean
54. meticulous
55. misconduct
56. misunderstanding
57. modest
58. narrow-minded
59. nasty
60. negotiations
61. noisy
62. patient
63. pay-for-performance
64. polite
65. precedence
66. probity
67. progressive
68. promotion by seniority
69. prompt delivery
70. public holiday
71. public-spirited
72. punctuality

73. quality-conscious
74. quiet
75. relaxed
76. remote
77. reserved
78. rude
79. sales rep
80. serious
81. smart casual
82. smokescreen
83. social rank
84. stereotypes
85. stony silence
86. subordinate
87. superior
88. taskforces
89. team of equals
90. to be engaged in
91. to be familiar with
92. to be likened
93. to cross one's legs
94. to differentiate by position
95. to diffuse tension
96. to evolve
97. to fold one's arms
98. to frown
99. to generate new ideas
100. to reinforce team-spirit
101. to underestimate
102. to withdraw
103. tolerant
104. transparency
105. trustworthy
106. unfriendly
107. unkempt
108. unobtrusive
109. unpredictable
110. unshaven
111. verbal combat
112. well-groomed hands
113. well-organized
114. working breakfast
115. working schedule

UNIT 6: TYPES OF BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS

1. "off-the-shelf" company
2. agreement of association (company, etc.)

3. articles of incorporation
4. assets
5. association
6. bankruptcy
7. board of directors
8. bond
9. bookkeeping
10. business incubator
11. bylaws, statutes
12. CJSC (closed joint stock company)
13. collateral
14. common stock
15. company
16. competitor
17. contract
18. contractual disputes
19. corporate charter
20. corporate entity
21. corporation (incorporation)
22. costly
23. dividends
24. entrepreneur
25. expenses
26. factors of production
27. financial backer
28. financial gain
29. financial statement
30. for-profit corporation
31. franchise
32. franchise agreement
33. franchisee
34. franchisor
35. fraud
36. from time immemorial
37. general partnership
38. goodwill
39. individual (private entity)
40. inventory
41. investment
42. joint venture
43. joint-stock company
44. law of the jurisdiction
45. legal person (entity)
46. legislation
47. limited liability
48. limited partnership
49. LLC (limited liability company)
50. losses

51. mandatory arbitration
52. market share
53. memorandum of association
54. net worth
55. nominate contract
56. OJSC (open joint stock company)
57. opportunity costs
58. organization
59. over-the-counter stocks
60. partnership
61. personal income tax
62. preferred stock
63. premises (real estate)
64. profit vs loss
65. proprietor
66. proprietorship
67. receipts
68. record keeping
69. regulations
70. reward
71. risk
72. royalty fee
73. shares (stocks)
74. sole proprietorship
75. sole trader
76. startup
77. stock market
78. stockholder (shareholder)
79. supply
80. time factor
81. to assign
82. to bear risks and losses
83. to charge
84. to come to prominence
85. to contribute money
86. to evolve
87. to found a company
88. to give rise to litigation
89. to go bankrupt
90. to issue (e.g. shares)
91. to lodge a complaint
92. to make (conclude) contracts
93. to make a transaction
94. to open a bank account
95. to owe
96. to own
97. to pay the debts
98. to raise capital

99. to reap profits
100. to register a company (corporation, etc.)
101. to run a company (corporation, etc.)
102. to soar popularity
103. to sue (to be sued)
104. to terminate the contract
105. to track expenses
106. trademark
107. trade-off
108. treasurer
109. unlimited liability
110. voting rights
111. word of mouth

UNIT 7: COMPANY STRUCTURE

1. acquisition
2. array
3. assembly line
4. assets
5. at full capacity
6. autonomous
7. borrowing
8. business entity
9. cash balance
10. chain of command
11. contain/include
12. corporation
13. credit facilities
14. “customercentric” approach
15. decentralization
16. delayering
17. downsizing
18. empowerment
19. farsighted
20. fiscal year = financial year
21. fledgling firm
22. flexible
23. from the bottom up
24. functional structure
25. hierarchical structure
26. hierarchy
27. incompatible
28. individual proprietorship
29. infrastructure
30. inherent problems
31. innovative
32. line authority

33. line structure
34. manpower
35. manual
36. market share
37. matrix structure
38. merger
39. milestone
40. output
41. outsourcing
42. product line
43. production facilities
44. profit margin
45. pyramidal structure
46. retained earnings
47. sales force
48. staff structure
49. subordinates
50. superior = boss
51. takeover
52. to assist
53. to back out of
54. to be accountable to = to be responsible for
55. to be divided into
56. to be in charge of
57. to come in for
58. to come up with
59. to consist of/to be composed of/to be made up of
60. to cut back on
61. to delegate responsibility
62. to demolish
63. to fire up
64. to flop
65. to get down to
66. to get on to
67. to get rid of smth
68. to impede
69. to keep pace with
70. to keep up with
71. to lay the cornerstone
72. to live up to
73. to maintain
74. to make redundant
75. to pool together
76. to put in for
77. to put up with
78. to recommence
79. to report to
80. to spearhead

81. to split up
82. to typify
83. transfer prices
84. versatile
85. zest for
86. Company structure:
 - a. Board of Directors
 - b. Chairman (GB), President (US)
 - c. Managing Director = MD (GB), Chief Executive Officer = CEO (US)
 - d. Production Department
 - e. Marketing Department
 - f. Finance Department
 - g. Research and Development Department (R&D)
 - h. Personnel Department
 - i. Market Research Dept.
 - j. Sales Dept.
 - k. Purchasing Dept.
 - l. Accounts Dept.
 - m. Conference Room
 - n. Reception
 - o. Planning Dept

UNIT 8: MONEY MATTERS

1. aggregate demand
2. aid
3. alimony
4. allowance
5. bargain
6. barter
7. bid
8. blackmailer
9. bribe
10. buck = dollar
11. building society
12. business venture
13. cash
14. cashier
15. checkable deposit
16. checking account
17. coinage
18. commodity money
19. consumption
20. convertibility
21. cost of living
22. credit card
23. currency
24. current account

25. debit card
26. deflation
27. demand deposits
28. deposit account
29. depreciation
30. devaluation
31. discount
32. distribution of wealth
33. dividend
34. double coincidence of wants
35. down payment
36. durable
37. duty
38. exchange value
39. excise duty
40. exorbitant
41. expenditure
42. extravagant
43. face value
44. fare
45. fee
46. fiat money/paper money
47. fine
48. fraud
49. free of charge
50. frugal/economical/thrifty
51. gratuity
52. gross-profit
53. hard up
54. heir
55. income
56. income tax
57. increments
58. inflation
59. inheritance
60. installment
61. interest
62. interest rate
63. intrinsic value
64. invoice
65. legacy
66. legal tender
67. liquidity
68. maintenance
69. managed currency
70. means of payment
71. medium of exchange
72. miser

73. monetary unit
74. money circulation
75. mortgage
76. near money
77. nest-egg
78. net profit
79. on credit
80. overdraft
81. overpriced
82. penalty
83. pocket money
84. premium
85. priceless
86. principal
87. prosperous
88. purchasing power
89. quid = pound
90. ransom
91. rebate
92. reduction
93. refund
94. relief
95. representative money
96. return
97. reward
98. royalty
99. sale
100. savings
101. savings account
102. scarce goods
103. scarce/tight money
104. settlement of debts
105. share
106. standard of value
107. store of value
108. subsidy
109. supplement
110. surplus
111. swindler
112. time deposit
113. to be backed by
114. to be broke/bankrupt
115. to be in the black
116. to be in the red
117. to borrow
118. to deposit money
119. to haggle
120. to inherit

121. to invest money
122. to lend
123. to pay off
124. to put money aside
125. to redeem
126. to save money
127. to squander
128. to tackle
129. to toss
130. to withdraw money
131. token coin
132. transaction
133. traveler's check
134. turnover of money
135. unemployment benefit
136. unit of accounting
137. wear and tear
138. well off
139. will
140. windfall
141. worthless

UNIT 9: TELEPHONING

1. answering machine/ansaphone
2. area code
3. collect call/transferred charge
4. country code
5. dialling tone (US: dial tone)
6. direct line
7. engaged tone (US: busy tone)
8. extension number
9. have the wrong number
10. home number
11. mobile phone (US also: cell phone)
12. number unobtainable
13. off the hook
14. operator
15. person-to-person call/personal call
16. receiver
17. subscriber
18. switchboard
19. the line's busy
20. to catch something
21. to connect
22. to dial
23. to dial a wrong number
24. to fix an appointment

25. to get back to somebody on something
26. to put somebody through
27. to return somebody's call
28. work number
29. Can I take a message?
30. Can she call you back when she gets in?
31. Can we fix an appointment?
32. Could you speak more slowly, please?
33. Could you spell that for me, please?
34. Does Thursday suit you?
35. Good morning, this is Heike Hohner calling from Germany.
36. I look forward to hearing from you soon.
37. I'd like to leave a message for ...
38. I'd like to speak to Mr./Ms. Smith, please.
39. I'll get back to you on that.
40. I'll give her the message as soon as possible.
41. I'm afraid he's away on business.
42. I'm afraid she's not in the office today.
43. I'm calling about ...
44. I'm returning your call.
45. I'm sorry, the line's busy/engaged.
46. Just a moment, please. I'll put you through.
47. Let me check my diary.
48. Sorry, I didn't catch that.
49. Thank you. Bye.
50. Thanks for your help.
51. What was your name again, please?
52. Would you like to call back later?
53. You're welcome. Bye.

UNIT 10: GIVING A SUCCESSFUL PRESENTATION

1. audience rapport
2. body language
3. flip chart
4. handout
5. lectern
6. O.H.T. - abbr. overhead transparency
7. overhead projector - O.H.P. abbr.
8. podium/platform
9. pointer
10. slide
11. to commence
12. to illustrate/to give examples
13. to outline
14. visual aids
15. whiteboard

TAPESCRIPTS

UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION INTO BUSINESS ENGLISH

Exercise 10.

Conversation 1.

1st woman: I think it's time that smoking was forbidden once and for all in all offices.

1st man: I agree entirely. And I think the management should be firm on this. It should be abolished on the firm's premises.

2nd woman: Now wait a minute. I can't say I share your views on that. The staff should be asked to vote first.

2nd man: Now, that's just what I was thinking. We don't live in a dictatorship, you know. I think grown people should be allowed to decide for themselves if they want to smoke or not.

3rd man: Maybe, but don't you think non-smokers' health can suffer if the smokers are allowed to continue?

3rd woman: Quite right, I couldn't agree more. And it might also be a way of educating people to live and work in a more healthy fashion.

Conversation 2.

1st man: You know what, I think all companies should offer their employees free lunches.

1st woman: Quite right, I couldn't agree more with that. After all of we have to work here all day and have no time to go home in the lunch hour it's only fair.

2nd man: I can see what you mean. But what happens if the canteen food doesn't suit you? Or just isn't tasty?

2nd woman: That's a good point. But I still think free lunches are a good idea. The company should have to give the employee the money to buy their own, if the lunches are not satisfactory.

3rd man: Yeah, I'm all in favour of that. The company made very high profits last year. They can afford it.

4th man: I couldn't agree more. They could offer a wide variety of dishes to suit all tastes. It would be only fair.

3rd woman: Hm, I see things rather differently myself. I would like my lunch hour left to myself to decide where and what I eat.

Conversation 3.

1st man: It's quite clear that overtime should be abolished so that people without jobs can find work.

1st woman: Yes, I'm all in favour of that. It would mean that lots of extra jobs could be created.

2nd man: Well, my opinion, for what it's worth, is that the employers are not prepared to take on additional staff. They say it would be too expensive.

2nd woman: Now, that's just what I was thinking. And another thing. If overtime is cut, it'll simply mean that we'll have to work twice as hard in normal working hours for the same money.

3rd man: I don't think it's a good idea either. The people who are unemployed are not necessarily the ones who have the skills to do our jobs.

4th man: Perhaps, but don't you think we need to demonstrate to the management that we are prepared to consider alternatives to increased overtime. Anyway, my wife and family are sick of not seeing me as much as they could.

3rd woman: That's a good point and we should also emphasize that the company should take on unemployed people and retrain them in the necessary skills they might not possess.

Conversation 4.

1st man: You know, I believe that we managers should have far more control over what employees do.

1st woman: You know, that's exactly what I think. We need to know what work they are doing at every point during the day. That is the only rational way to organize an office today.

2nd man: I can't say I share your views on that. My employees are not machines. They're human beings. In my experience you get work done far more efficiently if you allow employees to work at their own pace.

2nd woman: Now, that's just what I was thinking. The important thing is to allow each individual to work at a certain number of tasks, but not to watch over them too closely. They do a better job that way.

3rd woman: I can see what you mean, but my experience shows that only certain employees can be left entirely alone. The rest need watching closely or else they waste the firm's time. And they are here to work after all.

3rd man: Maybe, but don't you think, there is a limit to how closely we should watch our staff? After all, I don't know about you, but I only have one pair of eyes. I can't watch 25 people all at once and do my own work at the same time.

UNIT 2: RECRUITMENT

Exercise 8.

Linda: Excuse me, Mr. Lyle. Here's Mr. Frame to see you.

Lyle: Thank you, Linda. Good morning, Mr. Frame. Please come in.

Frame: Good morning, Mr. Lyle.

Lyle: Please take a seat. May I introduce you to Mr. Coates here, our Training Manager.

Frame: How do you do, Mr. Coates.

Coates: Good morning, Mr. Frame. I hope you had a pleasant journey? No trouble finding us?

Frame: No. No trouble at all, thanks.

Lyle: That's fine. Now then, let's look at your application form. H'mm. Well, first of all, Mr. Frame, can you tell us why you want to train as a manager with us here at Galaxy Limited?

Frame: It's um...it's a job I'm interested in, and I really want to work in industry, Mr. Lyle. And your company is one of the best known.

Coates: You say it's a job you're interested in? What do you mean?

Frame: Well, of course I have no experience as a manager, and I don't know very much about making chocolates. But the job description you sent me when I applied was very interesting. I mean, I decided I wanted a job like this when I was at university.

Lyle: Yes, there's a note about it here. Let's see. That was three years ago. In London, wasn't it?

Frame: That's correct. I finished there in 1978 and then I went to business school for two years.

Coates: Where you passed your diploma?

Frame: Yes. Just last month.

Lyle: Well, certainly your references are very good, Mr. Frame. But you say you finished at business school only last month. Is this your first interview?

Frame: No, this is my second. And I have two more this week.

Coates: Are they all for this sort of job? Same sort of vacancy?

Frame: Yes, they are. It's what I want to do for a living.

Lyle: Excuse me. Come in? Ah, Linda. Coffee, is it?

Linda: Tea, actually.

Coates: Oh well, it's hot and wet, right?

Linda: Right. Tea, Mr. Frame?

Frame: Thank you, yes.

Linda: Milk?

Frame: Yes, please.

Lyle: Thank you, Linda. We can manage from here.

Coates: What subjects did you like most at business school?

Frame: The work on personnel. I liked that the most, really.

Coates: Can you explain why?

Frame: I think it's because I like working with people. And I'm very interested in personnel recruitment and training.

Lyle: Fine. And what about hobbies?

Frame: I enjoy sport. I play football and tennis.

Coates: Do you study at all?

Frame: I go to evening classes for German lessons.

Lyle: Well, I think that's all that Mr. Coates and I want to ask you for now. Is there anything that you want to ask us?

Frame: Um...yes, there is. How long is the training? Is it a very long programme?

Coates: It's a two-year programme. You work with a number of different managers during this time in a number of different offices. At the end of the two years we decide on the work that you're best at.

Frame: I see. And what about conditions? Can you tell me anything about holidays and, um, things like that?

Lyle: To start, there are four weeks of holiday a year. Then there is the firm's canteen, of course –

Coates: - very good value for money, our canteen –

Lyle: - and the starting salary for our Trainee Managers is between £4,500 and £5,500 a year. Your starting salary depends on your age, you see, and on your experience, qualifications, and so on.

Frame: I understand.

Lyle: Good. Is there anything else you want to ask us?

Frame: No, I don't think so.

Lyle: That's fine, then. Well, Mr. Frame, thank you very much for coming to see us. We hope to be able to let you know about the job in about two weeks.

UNIT 3: WRITING CV AND LETTER AND APPLICATION

Exercise 2.

The most important thing about applying for a job is that the letter you send should be clear, positive and short. You obviously have to include basic information like your name and address, and a number where they can contact you during the day, but I'd leave out

other personal information. Don't state your age, for example, you can put in your date of birth if you wish, but I think it's preferable to let the employer work that out from the dates of your education. And there's certainly no need to include anything about your family. Don't mention children or parents! I think work experience is more important than education, unless of course you're applying straight from school.

Those are the essentials. Then there are a few less important details. Mention spare-time interests if you can make them memorable, not just things like reading and stamp collecting. And put in your achievements, if you've done something you're particularly proud of. And if it's a big company, don't forget to say exactly what job you're applying for.

Exercise 4.

Here are ten golden rules for a letter of application.

Do write clearly.

Don't use a pencil: write in ink on plain writing paper, or type if you can.

Do include your phone number if you have one.

Do include the name and address of the firm, and a reference number if there is one.

Do find out the name of the person you're writing to, and how to spell it.

Do state the reason why you're writing in the first paragraph.

Don't sound negative or pessimistic, or over-confident either.

Don't give the impression that you're not going to stay long in the job.

Don't finish the letter *Yours faithfully* unless you have started *Dear Sir*.

Do write your name clearly under the signature.

Exercise 8.

Tutor: Hello. Jonathan Briggs, isn't it?

JB: Yes, that's right.

Tutor: Do come in and sit down.

JB: Thanks.

Tutor: Right. Well, Jonathan, as we explained in your letter, in this part of the interview we like to talk through your application form...your experience to date, etc...and then in the second part you go for a group interview.

JB: Group interview...yes, I understand...

Tutor: So...your first degree was in Economics?

JB: Yes, but I also did Politics as a major strand.

Tutor: And you graduated in 1989. And I see you have been doing some teaching...

JB: Yes, I worked as a volunteer teacher in West Africa. I was there for almost three years in total from 1990 to...umm...1992.

Tutor: How interesting. What organization was that with?

JB: It's not one of the major ones. It's called Teach South.

Tutor: Oh, right. Yes, I have heard of it. It operates in several African countries, doesn't it? And what kind of school was it?

JB: A rural co-operative.

Tutor: Oh, a rural co-operative, how interesting...and what did you teach?

JB: A variety of things in different years...ummm...I did...with Forms 1 to 3 mainly Geography and some English with Form 5. Then in my final year I took on some Agricultural Science with the top year...that's Form 6.

Tutor: Right. Quite a variety then...

JB: I also ran the school farm.

Tutor: How interesting...

JB: I'll be honest with you. At the end of the first year I really wanted to leave and come home.

Tutor: Why was that?

JB: Well...I was very homesick at first and missed my family...

Tutor: Umm...I can quite understand that.

JB: ...and I also found it frustrating to have so few teaching resources, but I did decide to stay and in the end I extended my tour to a third year.

Tutor: Right. Things must have looked up then?

JB: Yes. We set up a very successful project breeding cattle to sell locally.

Tutor: Really?

JB: And then after a lot of hard work we finally got funds for new farm buildings.

Tutor: And you wanted to see things through?

JB: Uh-huh.

Tutor: And is that why you want to train to teach Geography?

JB: Yes. I've had a couple of jobs since then but I now realize I like teaching best. And I chose Geography because...because it is my favourite subject...and also because I think it has so many useful applications.

Tutor: Well...you certainly have had some interesting work experience. I'll ask you now to go on to the next stage of...

UNIT 4: JOB INTERVIEWS

Exercise 2.

First interview

Interviewer: Good morning, Miss...

Sue Jones: Miss Jones. Good morning.

Interviewer: Miss Jones, yes, right. Hi. Um...now, you'd like to join our team, I gather.

Sue Jones: Yes, I would.

Interviewer: That's...that's very good. Er...I'd like to know a little bit about you. Perhaps you could tell me...perhaps we could start...if you could tell me a bit about your education.

Sue Jones: Oh yes, right. Well, I left school at 18 and for the first two years I went to Gibsons, you might know them, they're an engineering firm.

Interviewer: Ah, yes, right.

Sue Jones: Um...and after that, I wanted to do a course, so I...I did a one-year full-time PA course and went back to Gibsons. I was PA to the Export Director. I stayed there for another two years and...and then moved on to my present company. Um...that's Europa Marketing...um...Mr. Adair, the marketing director, offered me a job because Gibsons had...had worked quite a lot with Europa Marketing.

Interviewer: Oh, yes, Europa Marketing...yes.

Sue Jones: And I've been with them for three years now...um...first with the Marketing Director and...and now I'm with the Sales Director.

Interviewer: That's all very interesting, Miss Jones. Urn...I...I'd like to know, what did you enjoy most at school? What was the course that you enjoyed most?

Sue Jones: Ah...foreign languages I liked best.

Interviewer: Foreign languages?

Sue Jones: We did French and German. Yes.

Interviewer: Mhm. And are you quite fluent in those now or...?

Sue Jones: Yes, a bit rusty now, but...um...obviously the more travel I can do the more I can use my languages and I'd like to learn another language. I'd like to add Italian as well.

Interviewer: Italian?

Sue Jones: Yes.

Interviewer: Very good, very good, that...that might be very useful. Now...er...tell me a little bit about...er...the work you're doing at present.

Sue Jones: Um...well Europa Marketing is a marketing and public...public relations company.

Interviewer: Yes, I've heard of it.

Sue Jones: And they do...they do consultancy work for companies operating in the UK and European markets. Er...our clients come from all over the world...um...we deal with some of them by...by post, but most of them come to our offices and at least once during a project. I assist the Sales Director by arranging these visits, setting up meetings and presentations and I...I deal with all her correspondence. I've not been able to go with her on any...on any of her trips abroad, but I...I've been to firms in this country, several times on my own...um...to make these arrangements.

Interviewer: It sounds as if you're very happy there, Miss Jones. I'm curious why you'd like to leave them and join our company?

Sue Jones: Well...um...I know the reputation of Anglo-European and it has a very good reputation. And I feel that I would have more scope and opportunity in your company and the work would be more challenging for me. I might be able to possibly travel and use my languages because at the moment most of my work is...is rather routine secretarial-type work and I like the idea of more...um...challenges in my life really...

Interviewer: Yes, aha, aha.

Second interview

Interviewer: ...yes, well, your CV seems pretty well up to scratch. Now, I wonder, can you tell me more about yourself?

Tom Richards: Um...well, I...

Interviewer: Yes?

Tom Richards: I...I'm...well, I think I'm serious...serious-minded, I...calm...

Interviewer: You're calm?

Tom Richards: Yes, well, yes, I like a joke, though, good sense of humour. I don't panic in a crisis and I...I enjoy working with all kinds of people. I...I even like...um...p...people who are, you know, bad-tempered or something like that.

Interviewer: Yes, but wh...where do you see yourself in let's say five years' time?

Tom Richards: Um...well, I...sort of the long-range thing. Well, I...I see myself in the public relations and...er...well, one day I must admit I would rather like to open up my own consultancy in my own home town.

Interviewer: Mhm, what is it specifically about Anglo-European PR that attracted you?

Tom Richards: Er...well, first of all, I want to leave my present employers because they're a small company and...er...I know about Anglo-European PR, I mean, they're a...they're a good company, larger. I think I'll have more scope...er...the work will be more challenging. I mean, quite a lot of what I do at present is quite boring, it's...it's routine secretarial work.

Interviewer: And...and you'd like to move on?

Tom Richards: Yes, if I could, you know, hopefully to a job that gives me more opportunity. So I can use my initiative.

Interviewer: Mhm.

Tom Richards: Can I just ask you this question? Excuse me...I'd like to know if I get this job with Anglo-European, would I be able to...um...work abroad in one of your overseas branches?

Interviewer: Oh, yes, certainly.

Tom Richards: Oh, good.

Interviewer: Um...our staff regularly do six-month placements in other branches.

Tom Richards: Six. Oh well, that's good.

Interviewer: So I'm sure you might...

Tom Richards: Um...that's what I'm interested in.

Interviewer: Mhm. Can I...d...I know we're all human beings here and I'd like to know wh...what you consider your strengths and your weaknesses.

Tom Richards: Um...strengths and weaknesses? Haha. Well, I...I mentioned before, I think my sense of humour...er...and my ability to work with all types of people is a particular strength.

Interviewer: Yes.

Tom Richards: My weakness? I don't know, I suppose I'm a bit of a perfectionist...I...I'm quite often dissatisfied with what I've done. I always think I can do it better, you know, or in a different way.

Interviewer: I wouldn't call that a weakness, I'd call that a strength.

Tom Richards: Well...ah...well, that's good, well...I mean, apart from that I...I suppose I get a little bit sort of full of the 'Wanderlust' and that's why I want to travel. I'm easily bored with repetition and...er...and procedure.

Interviewer: Do you have a lack of commitment?

Tom Richards: No, not at all. No...er...once my goals are set and I've got the right sort of initiative then...er...I...I'm as committed as anybody.

Interviewer: Not one of these people who wanders off?

Tom Richards: No, not at all.

Interviewer: Now...um...i...is there anything else you'd like to ask me?

Tom Richards: Aha...yes, if I can get down to the nitty-gritty: would the salary be reviewed at the end of the year?

Interviewer: Yes, the salary wi...the salary would be reviewed every six months. And after six months you'd also be eligible to hare the company's bonus scheme.

Tom Richards: Oh, I didn't know that. Oh, that's good, yes.

Interviewer: Right, well...um...time is pressing on, I'm afraid, so thank you very much for coming to see me and we'll be in touch with you before the end of the week.

Tom Richards: Good. Well, thank you for seeing me.

Interviewer: Goodbye.

Tom Richards: Bye.

UNIT 5: BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

Exercise 5.

1. Alex White, a new employee, meets Chris Grey.

Alex White: I'd like to 1) introduce myself. My name's Alex White and I'm the new export sales coordinator.

- Chris Grey: Oh, yes. I've heard of you. How 2) do you do? I'm Chris Grey. 3) Pleased to meet you....
2. Liz Jones, a colleague from Canada, is visiting the office in London.
 Tony Harris: Ms. Smith, I'd 4) like you to meet Mrs. Jones. Mrs. Jones is from our sales office in Toronto.
 Liz Jones: Hi!
 Claire Smith: 5) How do you do, Mrs. Jones? I've been 6) looking forward to meeting you.
 Liz Jones: Oh, please 7) call me Liz.
 Claire Smith: And I'm Claire.
 Liz Jones: Hi.
 Claire Smith: Well, Liz, did you 8) have a good journey?
 Liz Jones: Yeah, not too bad...
3. Miss Lucas, a visitor from Argentina, is introduced to Mr. Evans.
 Mrs. Green: Mr. Evans, 9) have you met Miss Lucas? She's from Argentina.
 Mr. Evans: Yes, I think we've met before. It's 10) good to see you again!
 Miss Lucas: That's right, hello again. 11) How are you?
 Mr. Evans: Fine, thanks...

Exercise 15.

Speaker 1 Polly, from Zaire

Polly: My name is Polly Matembeka. I'm from Zaire. I don't know if you know the country, where is it? In Africa, in the mid land of Africa. It's a huge country which has got about nine borders.

Interviewer: I'd just like to ask you a bit about work in Zaire. Can you tell me how long the working day is - what time people start and finish work?

Polly: Usually people start at 8 o'clock and finish about 4.00. But it depends on the factory or the company you are working in. There are those who are well-organized who want to start at 7.30 and finish just 30 minutes before. And those who start at 8.30. So it depends on the management.

Interviewer: So it depends on the company, somewhere between 7.30 and 8.30 in the morning.

Polly: Yeah.

Interviewer: And do people stop for lunch?

Polly: Yes, they stop at, er, 12.30 normally for one hour and a half and then they come back.

Interviewer: Do they go home for lunch?

Polly: Some of them, but there is some restaurants nearby to sell food and people who are not, don't have cars or for who their homes are very, are not very near the company wish to go just nearby and buy some food and then come back to work.

Interviewer: What time do people finish work?

Polly: They finish about 4 o'clock.

Interviewer: What do they do after work, in their leisure time?

Polly: That's very interesting because you know in my country people love, you know, the time after the work so some of them go to drink some beer, local beer, a kind of lager which is very popular and then they go back home after having some beer somewhere but it depends on each other.

Interviewer: And what sort of clothes do people wear to work?

Polly: They wear smart clothes, because when you are not smart I think you can't work. The boss can ask you to go back, to go back home and...but it's really forbidden to wear, you know, whatever you like. There is special clothes for work. Especially suits.

Interviewer: And ties?

Polly: No, we don't wear ties in Zaire.

Interviewer: Too hot?

Polly: No, it's political reason.

Interviewer: Oh, I see.

Polly: About 20 years ago, or 22 years, the President forbade people to wear ties, until now, but since the last year they start again.

Speaker 2 Mohammed, from Bangladesh

Interviewer: And how long is the normal working day?

Mohammed: Well, we start at 7.30 and we end at two o'clock in the afternoon. That's the normal working day.

Interviewer: And which days of the week are holidays?

Mohammed: Fridays. Yeah? Fridays.

Interviewer: What sort of clothes do people wear in offices?

Mohammed: Oh, normal clothes er, are um, trousers and shirts.

Interviewer: Tie?

Mohammed: Um, tie? No, not usually, unless there is something formal.

Interviewer: What do people do in the evenings?

Mohammed: Uh, you see, uh, um, from two o'clock they are free, so usually they do a little bit of shopping in the afternoon and er, usually they stay with their families and take their children out and...

Exercise 16.

Speaker 1

Interviewer: What do most people want to do when they visit Zaire?

Polly: When people visit Zaire they want to visit people and go to visit sights, touristic sights which are very popular in Africa. I don't know if you have heard about safari... You can take your safari from Kenya until Zaire because it's only one land, one savannah. It's very beautiful. It's very attractive and we've got a lot of rivers and very beautiful.

Interviewer: When visitors come, do they manage to meet local people?

Polly: There is a difference between people who visit the country especially American people and European people. When the American come they usually go straight to people and stay with them. They come with cars, big cars for travelling and they stay with local people. But European want to stay in hotels and go to visit people and then come back to hotels which is, you know, very different.

Interviewer: And do you find that visitors are willing to try the local food?

Polly: Yes, yes I think so. Especially the American, when they come they usually go straight to those low restaurants when they can find only local foods. And they want to try them.

Interviewer: Is it very spicy?

Polly: Not really, not very spicy - we usually cook with vegetables, it's not very spicy.

Interviewer: Do you think there are any customs that tourists particularly have problems with?

Polly: Yes, we have too many customs. Ok, when tourists come in Zaire, I told you that they go straight to people. And people are very...you know, they don't mind meeting

other people. You know we are sociable when someone comes in a family you have to take him to the neighbour; 'Oh, I've...I've got a visitor and so on and so on; so maybe in five minutes everybody comes to visit us and you'd be surprised to find a huge number of people around you, trying to ask you questions and so on, which is very strange.

Speaker 2

Interviewer: Do foreigners have difficulty in adjusting to your customs? Are there are customs that cause them problems?

Mohammed: I don't think there is any.

Interviewer: Are you ever irritated by the behaviour of foreign visitors?

Mohammed: No not at all, (laugh) no.

Interviewer: What do you feel about visitors who, who don't try to learn the language for example?

Mohammed: Well, er, I, we don't mind and er, we expect that they, they won't be able to learn our language because it's, it's a difficult language.

Interviewer: What about people who don't try the local food?

Mohammed: Ah, ah, what I, I have a feeling that they try our local food because that's different, that's something er, specially, you know, er, hot and (Mm) so they do try often..

Interviewer: And like it?

Mohammed: Yeah. They, they do say they like it.

Interviewer: Um, does it bother you if people wear holiday clothes all the time, I mean very informal clothes?

Mohammed: No, no, we rather expect them to wear holiday clothes, yeah.

Interviewer: And what about people who come to Bangladesh and see nothing but the tourist sights?

Mohammed: Well, okay, er, Bangladesh is full of er, ordinary people, and I think it would be better for the tourists to see ordinary people rather than those few tourist sights.

UNIT 6: TYPES OF BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS

Exercise 11, 12.

Speaker: Now I'll assume you all know what a franchise is. Yes? So let's have a look at the roles of the franchisor and the franchisee. In most cases the franchisor usually supplies seven things.

Firstly, an established product or service and a well-known brand image. And then he'll supply an operating manual, showing how the business should be set up and run. He'll also supply help, advice and training in setting up the business. He'll normally give continuing advice and training during the life of the franchise. And then he'll normally supply all the equipment that's required to set up the business. Then he'll continue to supply a stock of the product, which he'll be able to obtain cheaply in bulk. This may result in savings, or depending on the franchisor's mark-up, commit the franchisee to buying at above market price. And lastly, he'll be responsible for local, national and even international advertising.

Questioner: Sorry to interrupt, but I think it's important to emphasize that the on-going support you mention may vary a lot from franchise to franchise. The brand image of the product and the level of help you get at start-up are visible. But what is likely to happen after, say, twelve months of operating the franchise is much harder to foresee. For example, if things go wrong and your profits are low, you need to know what kind of help you're likely to get – do the franchisor's advisers or trouble-shooters visit regularly? Do

they have a mobile back-up team to take over in an emergency? I think it's important to be clear about things like that. Are there any other things like that you need to be beware of?

Speaker: Oh, yes. Yes, I agree with you about the importance of this. Yes, there are many other aspects of continuing support. You need to know if there will continue to be refresher courses to retrain staff – and if there are, will these courses be good and how much will they cost? You'll also want to know if the franchisor is devoting part of his profits to on-going research and development of the product. And you also want to be sure that, if he's charging you a levy for advertising, that this money's actually being spent in advertising. That kind of thing. But let's discuss this later on.

Questioner: Thank you. Yes.

Speaker: Now, if we look briefly at the other side of the operation: what the franchisee brings to the business. The first thing he brings – I'll call the person he, though of course it may well be a she! The first thing he brings is capital: he has to pay a capital sum to buy the franchise for a particular territory: for a big hamburger franchise this could be as half as much as half a million pounds. Of this, normally, 30% would be the franchisee's own capital, and 70% from a bank. Banks look very favourably on franchises.

He also has to pay a monthly fee to the franchisor, this is usually based on percentage of sales – not profits. There may also be an advertising levy.

He also has various commitments under the terms of his contract, some of which have a good side and a bad side. For instance, he's committed to following the franchisor's methods. Also he can't sell the franchise without the franchisor's agreement. You also know that he's obliged to show the franchisor all his documents and sales figures and he is also committed...

UNIT 7: COMPANY STRUCTURE

Exercise 12.

Mrs. Bronson:...Margaret, I'd like to introduce you to Michael Hill from our Australian branch.

Margaret: Hello, Michael, pleased to meet you.

Michael: How do you do?

Margaret: How's your first day doing?

Michael: Oh, very well, thank you. It's...it's all very interesting.

Mrs. Bronson: I was just telling Michael what the set-up here is – who's where and what's what, so to speak. I was wondering if I could hang him over to you now?

Margaret: Oh, yes, sure, fine. Um...would you like to come this way...

Michael: See you later, Mrs. Bronson.

Mrs. Bronson: Yes, sure.

Michael: What was...what was the room next door to Reception? I heard a strange noise coming from it.

Margaret: Oh, right, yes, that's where the photocopier is.

Michael: Oh, I see. That's what it was.

Margaret: Yes, we've had a new one installed. It's very fast but it makes even more noise than the old one, unfortunately. Right, let's go this way now.

Michael: OK.

Margaret: Um...opposite Mrs. Bronson's office just here is the General Manager's office...

Michael: General Manager, fine.
Margaret: I'll expect he'll speak to you later.
Michael: OK.
Margaret: And, um if...we go right down the corridor, on the right-hand side are the lifts.
Michael: Fine.
Margaret: And on the left are the stairs.
Michael: OK.
Margaret: So they're handy opposite each other.
Michael: Right, fine.
Margaret: And, er, in there by the stairs also is the coffee machine.
Michael: Oh, right, very useful.
Margaret: Yes, the most important thing of all. You'll meet most of the members of staff there, I should think.
Michael: Fine.
Margaret: And, er, if you keep going down the corridor, on the right-hand side, just down here, you can see the conference room.
Michael: Great.
Margaret: And, as we go round the corner on the right, here is the sales department.
Michael: Sales, OK.
Margaret: And as we come round the corner on the left is the purchasing department.
Michael: OK.
Margaret: And, if you can see, just down the end of the corridor is our marketing department.
Michael: Oh, that's where they are, right, fine.
Margaret: That's right, next to you actually, in the accounts department.
Michael: Right.
Margaret: Which is just on the right here.
Michael: Huhu.
Margaret: And on the left opposite, is the canteen.
Michael: Oh, very important.
Margaret: It's open at lunchtime and in the afternoon as well.
Michael: Oh, great.
Margaret: Between three and four.
Michael: Ok, right.
Margaret: And if we come in here on the right, then. That's your desk over by the window.
Michael: Oh, that's marvelous.
Margaret: Yes. With a lovely view of the park.
Michael: Oh, isn't that beautiful?
Margaret: It's better than the view from my office.
Michael: Right. Oh, well that's marv...Just one thing, I wondered if you could perhaps tell me where the...where the gents toilet is while we're about it?
Margaret: Oh, right, yes, of course. Erm. It's at the end of the corridor just opposite reception.
Michael: Right. Thank you. I'll...I'll see you in a minute.
Margaret: Right, OK...

Exercise 16.

Presenter: Today we are talking to Philip Knight about the structure of Biopaints International. Philip's the General Manager of the Perth factory. Philip, do you think you could tell us something about the way Biopaints is actually organized?

Philip Knight: Yes, certainly. Er...we employ about two thousand people in all in two different locations. Most people work here at our headquarters plant. And this is where we have the administrative departments, of course.

Presenter: Well, perhaps you could say something about the department structure?

Philip Knight: Yes, certainly. Well, now first of all, as you know we've got two factories, one here in Perth, Australia, and the other in Singapore. Lee Boon Eng is the other General Manager, over here in Singapore.

Presenter: And you are completely independent of each other, is that right?

Philip Knight: Oh, yes. Our two plants are fairly independent. I mean, I am responsible to George Harris, the Production Manager, and we have to co-operate closely with Rosemary Broom, the Marketing Manager.

Presenter: Mm, yeah.

Philip Knight: But otherwise, as far as the day to day running is concerned, we're pretty much left alone to get on with the job. Oh, and I forgot to mention finance. The Finance Director is Weimin Tan. She's a very important woman. And her task is to make sure the money side of things is OK. The accountant and such people, they report to her directly.

Presenter: Is that all?

Philip Knight: Oh, no, no. There's Personnel too.

Presenter: Oh, yes.

Philip Knight: That's quite separate. Deirdre Spencer is Personnel Manager. And the Training Manager reports to her, of course.

Presenter: What about Research and Development? Isn't that a separate department?

Philip Knight: Well, in terms of the laboratories, there are two: one at each production plant. But it's a separate department and it has a separate head. And that's Dr. Tarcisus Chin.

Presenter: Are there any other features worth mentioning?

Philip Knight: There's the planning department – Chow Fung is in charge of that. And a purchasing department – they buy in the materials for production.

Presenter: Yes, and what about the board of directors and the chairman?

Philip Knight: Yes, well they're at the top, aren't they, of course? I mean, a couple of the executives are directors themselves. The Managing Director, of course, that's Robert Leaf and then there's...

Exercise 23-24.

A: OK. Let's look at the new organization of Schering, France. Can everybody see that?

B: Yes.

C: Yes, it's fine.

A: At the top here we have the General Manager and he has six people who report to him. There's the Director responsible for strategic coordination. Then there's me. I'm responsible for development and marketing. Then there's the Production Director, the Financial Director, the Personnel Manager and the Pharmaceutical Director. Any questions so far?

C: No, none.

B: It's very similar to the Nordic countries.

A: OK. Let's look at my team in more detail then. As you can see, I have a Commercial Director, a Medical Director and then there are three Unit Directors. Two of them are responsible for domestic sales and one for foreign sales. But the interesting thing about these units is the work groups. As you can see, one unit has three work groups and another has four.

B: That is rather different.

C: What's the point of having these groups?

A: They have a lot of advantages. Firstly, each one works in a different medical field so they can develop the necessary specialized knowledge. Secondly, it's very motivating for the staff. Each group is a separate profit centre. They are totally in control of their own budgets so they have a lot of responsibility.

B: How big are the groups?

A: There are six people in each one. There's someone from marketing and someone from manufacturing. Then there are two doctors, one responsible for medical communication and the other working on research and development. There's someone from the sales force and someone from the Pharmaceutical Department. So each person represents a different section of our organization. And that's another big advantage. There's a wide range of expertise to draw on when they're making decisions.

C: Yes, I see what you mean.

B: It's very interesting indeed.

UNIT 8: MONEY MATTERS

Exercise 15.

LVMH advances in slowing market

LVMH, the French luxury goods group which owns a string of prestigious brand names ranging from Louis Vuitton luggage to Hennessy cognac, saw net profits rise by 7% to FFr 1.29 bn (\$ 239 million) from FFr 1.21 billion in the first half of the year in spite of the downturn in the luxury products industry.

The group saw overall group sales in the first six months of this year rise by 4.5% to FFr 9.68 billion from 9.26bn in the same period last year.

Operating income showed a marginal increase to FFr 2.35 billion from 2.34bn.

Wines and spirits, which have borne the brunt of the economic slowdown, suffered a fall in sales to FFr 4.44bn from FFr 4.76 billion, while operating profits slipped to FFr 1.26bn from 1.51bn.

Luggage and leather products were also affected by Japan's instability, but managed to increase operating profits to FFr 890 million from 827m on sales up to FFr 2.33bn from 2.15bn.

Perfumes and cosmetics benefited from the launch of Dune, a new Christian Dior fragrance, and Amarige, under the Givenchy umbrella.

Sales rose to FFr 2.54bn from 2.05 billion and operating profits to FFr 330m from 321 million.

Exercise 18.

Profit before tax at £210.4m was ahead by 10.6% on turnover of £2,126.1m, up by 4.6%. We must allow for the 1995 review of chemists' labour and overhead costs, as well as the net impact of currency fluctuations. Adjusting for these, profits were ahead by 12.8% on turnover up by 7.3%.

Retail Division turnover at £1,832m increased by 4.2%, and profits at £130.7m were up by 11.1%. UK sales and profits increased by 5.5% and 10.6% respectively, before property disposal surpluses.

Industrial Division achieved sales of £404.9m, an increase of 5.7%, with profits of £66.6m, ahead by 3.7%. At comparative exchange rates these increases become 11% and 15.6% respectively. The UK retail sales increased by 5.5% from an unchanged sales area.

Exercise 27.

Tyler: This meeting has been called, gentlemen, because of the serious financial situation in which Hamilton's now finds itself. I'm sure this comes as no surprise. We have been told by the Board, in short, to reduce costs.

Brown: This isn't going to be another call for more redundancies, is it, Mr. Tyler?

Tyler: I'm not asking for anything at all at this stage, Mr. Brown. I merely want to explain the position clearly to you so that you can inform your members. We need a full and open discussion on the matter.

Scott: I'm glad to hear that. At our last meeting, when Mr. Brown here explained that our Union wanted more information on all financial matters, you told him to let the managers do the managing. Now it seems that a 'full and open discussion' is convenient from management's point of view. So, perhaps Mr. Curry will now fill us in on some of the financial details.

Curry: I have the latest figures here with me, Mr. Scott. They are the worst in the company's long history - even worse than the trough we experienced in 1975. In point of fact, a trading profit of just over one million pounds was turned into an overall loss of substantially more than four million pounds.

Brown: And what do you say was the cause of that?

Curry: Amongst other things, an overseas tax charge of five million pounds, and an unusual cost of ten million pounds which was incurred after we had been advised to close down our unprofitable Asian operation.

Brown: That's all behind us now. It's this current year we should be worrying about.

Curry: Worry is the right word to use, Mr. Brown. We calculate that with the fall in world demand, we will be working at only three-quarters capacity next year.

Brown: So we are talking about redundancies.

Tyler: Mr. Brown, please. We are also talking about finding ways of making the company more competitive, surely. That means finding about 90 million pounds to invest in new plant and equipment.

Scott: And where is the 90 million pounds going to come from?

Tyler: Well, for example, we could ask the government if they would be prepared to support an increase in our bank borrowing. After all, our exports are worth over fifty million pounds to the country.

Scott: And there are the hundred and fifty thousand people who work for this company all over the UK, and the thousands of other workers employed by our components suppliers.

Tyler: We haven't forgotten that, Mr. Scott. I said at the beginning of this meeting that things were very serious. However, the government is considering its policy very carefully at the moment.

Brown: What? Is the government going to increase its shareholding in Hamilton's?

Tyler: We have been asked to find out if there is any way in which the government could take up more shares in the company. The advice we've received on the matter, however,

is that at the moment such a move would be against regulations. We are working on that problem now.

Curry: In the meantime, our shareholders are far from happy about recent developments. There is talk of an extraordinary meeting of the shareholders and a number of them have said that the company should be sold.

Brown: Hamilton's would go to a foreign company, then.

Scott: Yes, and if history is any guide, they would sell off the most profitable parts of Hamilton's, and our members would face even -

Tyler: Let us talk more realistically, gentlemen. Although some of our shareholders may want to make a sale of this kind, I'm sure the government would not allow it.

Curry: And, indeed, should the government decide to take up a large number of shares, they may very well consider selling them to Hamilton's employees at an attractive rate.

Scott: Ah, Mr. Curry, I think we are getting to the point of this meeting at last. But before you start introducing plans like that, remember that our members are looking for immediate improvements in their wages.

Tyler: Mr. Scott, do you know that over half of the present shareholders have holdings that are worth little more, on average, than twenty pounds?

Scott: Meaning?

Tyler: Meaning that it is quite common to have a small investment in a company. Surely - Mr. Scott, Mr. Brown - surely, the greater our employees' share in the company, the better the incentive to make the company profitable.

UNIT 9: TELEPHONING

Exercise 2.

Training officer: Right. I think the best thing is if I give you some rules. If you make notes now, you can ask questions and we can discuss what I've said afterwards. Is that OK? . . . All right.

Right, first of all, give your name slowly and clearly. Identify yourself and your position in the company, all right? Just make sure you're talking to the correct person. Right, after that, say right away what you're calling about, don't expect the other person to guess this or work it out. Plenty of mistakes are made that way! Be brief, remember that the other person may have other things to do than to talk to you on the phone.

Right, also if it's a bad line, say that you'll call back at once. Then ring back and start the call again. OK? Speak slowly and clearly, but in a friendly voice and *smile*! All right? The other person can hear if you smile. Don't let the other person misunderstand your attitude as being, you know, unfriendly.

Ah, right, don't use technical terms or abbreviations, because the other person may not understand these as well as you do. Also give important information, like figures, names, quantities, dates and so on, slowly and carefully. Repeat all the important information. Make sure that the other person has noted it down correctly - especially numbers, which are often the most difficult thing to understand over the phone. Also let the other person finish speaking - don't interrupt him or her even if you think you know what he wants to say. That's...they'll take it as very rude.

Ah...if possible, don't phone during the other person's lunch hour or just before they're about to stop work for the day, right? Find out what time it is in the other country before you call. I mean, think about it from your own point of view, I mean if you're heading off for a sandwich you don't want to have to be on the phone for an hour or so before...

Also note down all the important information you're given by the other person. OK? You don't want to have to waste the phone bill calling up again.

Now, if you do all this, you can prevent misunderstandings occurring. OK, well, if you have any questions, anybody?

Exercise 6.

1. This is Susan Grant. I'm calling about my order for one MQ 20, which I sent you by post about three weeks ago on behalf of my company, Richmond Studios. I sent Mr. Collins a cheque for £425 with my order, so that I could get it at the special offer price you advertised till the end of the month. The problem is that I haven't received any acknowledgement of the order. Could you please confirm that you have received my order and that you can ship me the goods at the special price. If there's likely to be any delay or any other problem, could you please phone me, Susan Grant, 0303 518136. The order was sent on the 5th of this month. I'd like to know when I can expect delivery, please. The company address is 14 High Street, Woodbridge, Ipswich (IPSWICH), IP12 4SJ.

Thanks very much.

2. Hello, this is Peter Redford, calling from Eastern Enterprises in Boston. I've got a meeting with Mr. Collins on Friday afternoon. I'd like you to tell him that I'll be unable to make it, I'm afraid. The reason is that there's a problem with the hotel accommodation I booked over the telephone: they've had a fire and now they can't let me have a room. I've tried other hotels in the town, but they're all full because of the convention. The only thing I can do is to come up to see Mr. Collins on Monday morning, that's the 23rd, if that's OK. I'll assume this change of date is OK if I don't hear from you. Oh, if Mr. Collins has any good ideas for solving the accommodation problem, please call me at this number: 617 032 0876. OK? My name again is Peter Redford – that's REDFORD. OK. Thank you very much. Goodbye.

3. This is Alex Brown. I'd like...I'd like you to give Mr. Collins a message when he gets back. Here's the message: I've got to stay an extra two days here in Los Angeles and I'm trying to get a flight back on the 14th. The problem is that the direct flight is full, so they've put me on the waiting list. This means I may not be back in the office till Wednesday, that's the 17th. If this is the case, I'd like Mr. Collins to be ready to take over if I can't make it to the meeting on Tuesday with Orion International (that's ORION). All the information he requires is in the file which is on my desk. It's the one with Olivia Flaubert's name on (that's OLIVIA FLAUBERT). He'll need to pick her up from her hotel first thing in the morning, she'll be staying at the Talbot Hotel (that's TALBOT). If there's any problem you can leave a message for me at my hotel (on um...213 666 4529) or send a fax to the hotel for my attention (on 213 875 4114).

Exercise 11.

1. Could you please send us 300 kilos of white rice?
2. It's very good value at the moment: the price is only 18 cents per kilo.
3. We require two boxes of ripe bananas, please.
4. Er...the price per box is £115. Is that OK?
5. So the total price is going to be 4,295 francs, all right?
6. Our phone number is 456984 is you need to contact us.
7. So I'd like to order 40 kilos at £14 per kilo.
8. Our order number is JG 404.
9. Have you got that? 500 items are going to cost \$900.

10. And...er...here's the item code: it's RAE 77 – got that? RAE 77.

UNIT 10: GIVING A SUCCESSFUL PRESENTATION

Exercise 5.

Good morning ladies and gentlemen; we haven't all met before so I'd better introduce myself. I'm Luis Lopez from the Development Department of Citrus Incorporated...I should say before we start that I hope you'll excuse my English, I'm a little out of practice; ...Anyway, I'm going to be talking this morning about a new product which we are planning to launch in two months' time; its called KOOL-OUT, that's K-O-O-L dash O-U-T, and it's a lemon-flavoured drink

Well, I'll start with the background to the product launch; and then move on to a description of the product itself; finally, I'm going to list some of the main selling points that we should emphasize in the advertising and sales campaign. I think if you don't mind, we'll leave questions to the end...

Now firstly, as you all know, we have had a gap in our soft-drink product range for the last two years; we have been manufacturing mixed-fruit drinks and orange drinks for the last ten years, but we stopped producing lemonade two years ago; I think we all agreed that there was room on the market for a completely new lemon-flavoured drink... . Secondly, the market research indicated that more and more consumers are using soft drinks as mixers with alcohol so, in other words, the market itself has expanded. This brings me to my next point which is that we have a rather new customer-profile in mind; I must emphasize that this product is aimed at the young-professional, high-income, market and not the traditional consumer of old-fashioned lemonade. At this point we must consider the importance of packaging and design, and if you look at the video in a moment, you'll see that we have completely re-vamped the container itself as well as the label and slogan ... Now to digress for just a moment, the more sophisticated packaging means a high unit cost, and this may be a problem in the selling area, but we'll have a chance to discuss that aspect later...so...to go back to my earlier point, this is a totally new concept as far as Citrus Incorporated are concerned; as you see we are using both the new-size glass bottle and the miniature metal cans. Finally, let's look at the major attractions of the product. In spite of the higher price it will compete well with existing brands; the design is more modern than any of the current rival products, and incidentally the flavour is more realistic and natural... it's low calorie, too.

O.K., so just before closing, I'd like to summarize my main points again...We have KOOL-OUT, a new design concept, aimed at a relatively new age and income group; it's designed to be consumed on its own, as a soft drink, or to be used as a mixer in alcohol-based drinks and cocktails. It comes in both bottle and can and this will mean a slightly higher selling price than we are used to; but the improved flavour and the package design should give us a real advantage in today's market...Well, that's all I have today for the moment, thank you for listening, now if there are any questions, I'll be happy to answer them...

Exercise 6.

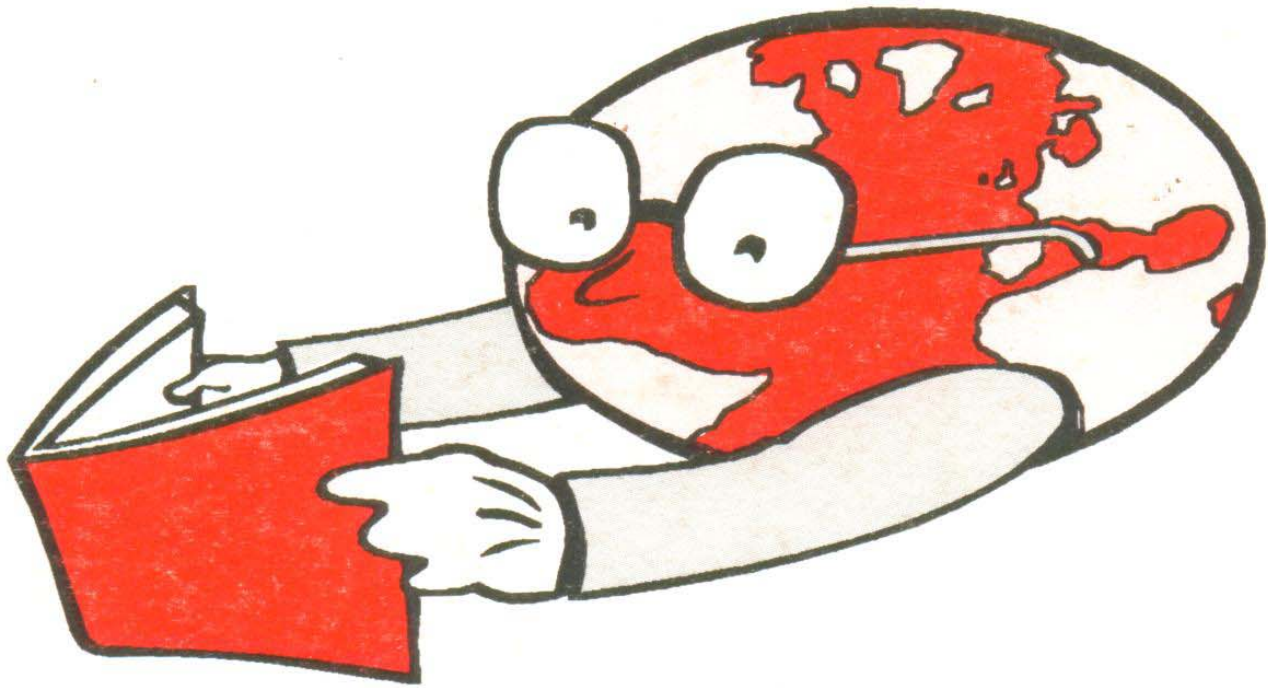
Do you find it difficult to say 'no'? I'd like to talk this morning about how managing your time more effectively can make you a better worker and to show you that other people's demands on your time can make you less effective. First of all, if you regularly work very long hours, are in the office most evenings and weekends, and rarely take a holiday, you

might think that this is necessary in order to justify your salary. But in fact, what you are doing is subjecting yourself to high levels of stress which in the long term will force you to take time off through illness - so, why not organize your time now so that you remain effective at work and lead a balanced life? If you don't believe me, this chart shows you how many stress-related diseases we now suffer from. As you can see, these diseases are most common not necessarily in jobs where salary levels are high but where the level of responsibility is high. Remember that not only you but also your family suffers as a result of stress. Turning to my second point, if you spend part of your working day doing things for others which they could do for themselves and if you work longer hours than the people you work with, then perhaps it is time for you to delegate. I would like to develop this point and I hope I can give you some practical suggestions as to how you can do this. First of all you have to decide what to delegate. Secondly you have to decide who to delegate to. Make sure the person wants and accepts the extra responsibility and has the necessary experience to do the job well. Give them all the support they need but do not do the job for them. This will help you to use your time more effectively. To conclude, if you have difficulty saying 'no' to other people, start saying 'yes' to yourself. Believe me, you will notice the difference.

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كيف نترجم!!



إعداد

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كيف تتخرج؟!

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جميع حقوق النشر بكافة صورها محفوظة
للمؤلف

الطبعة الأولى أغسطس ١٩٩٧

يطلب من : شركة معاهد التدريب والتعليم الأهلي IPE

ص ب ٦٣٢٠ حولي - ٣٢٠٣٨ الكويت

تليفون : ٥٧٣٧٨١١ - ٥٧٣٧٨١٢

إهداء

إلى أبي وأمي ...
نبع العطاء الصافي ..
أهدي هذا الكتاب

محمد يوسف

من وصية الجاحظ للكتاب (٧٧٥ - ٨٦٨ م
/ ١٥٩ - ٢٥٥ هـ) :

ينبغي لمن كتب كتابا ألا يكتبه إلا على أن الناس كلهم له
أعداء ، وكلهم عالم بالأمور ، وكلهم متفرغ له . ثم لا يرضى
بذلك حتى يدع كتابه غفلا ، ولا يرضى بالرأي الفطير . فإن
لابتداء الكتاب فتنة وعجبا ، فإذا سكنت الطبيعة ... أعاد النظر
فيه ، فتوقف ...

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مقدمة

شاءت الأقدار اقحامي في مجال الترجمة التحريرية ، فسلكت جميع دروبها مترجما ومدرسا للترجمة بعد دراسة أصولها ونظرياتها بالجامعة الأمريكية بالقاهرة . وإذا بي في نهاية المطاف وبعد عشر سنوات من الخبرة في هذا الحقل ، أجد في نفسي الجرأة على وضع هذه المساهمة المتواضعة في شرح أسس هذا الفرع من المعرفة ووضع الارشادات التي يمكن للمبتدئ الذي يرغب في اقتحام هذا المجال أو لمن يمارس الترجمة بالفعل أن يهتدي بها ويستفيد منها .

والترجمة هي عملية قديمة قدم الزمن ولم يعد هناك شك في أن كل نهضة فكرية أو علمية لابد أن يسبقها حركة ترجمة نشيطة وتبدأ بها . ففي العصور القديمة ، قامت حركة ترجمة فاعلة ومؤثرة من اللغة اليونانية إلى اللغة اللاتينية ، بعد أن أفل نجم الحضارة

الآغريقية ، وبدأ الرومان يآحتلون مواقعها يقطع بذلك تاريخ الآداب الكلاسيكية وآثارها الباقية .

وقد ظلت أوربا قابعة في ظلام العصور الوسطى حتى سقوط القسطنطينية وانتقال كنوزها من آثار الآغريق والرومان إلى مدن الغرب الكبرى آنذاك ، فنشطت حركة ترجمة واسعة تنقل تلك الآثار إلى اللغات الأوربية حديثة النشأة : الانجليزية والفرنسية والأسبانية ، والتي تطورت معظمها عن اللاتينية ، وعن عناصر من لهجات أو لغات اقليمية تتفاوت في التأثير والقوة من بلد إلى آخر .

إن التاريخ لعصر النهضة يبدأ بأعمال الترجمة تلك ، واستقرار المنقولات وهضمها وتمثلها ، ثم تأثيرها في تكوين العقل الأوربي .

وللترجمة في تاريخ الثقافة العربية عدة تجارب لها شأن عظيم ، فقد تم نقل أغلب تراث الأمم التي سبقت العرب كالفرس والروم خلال القرنين السابع والثامن وما بعدهما إلى العربية بواسطة

الترجمة السريانية ، ثم عن اليونانية مباشرة . وأخذ العرب يتعلمون اللغات الأجنبية بعد استقرار الإسلام في البلاد المفتوحة ، فاستطاعوا نقل الكثير إلى العربية .

وفي العصر العباسي بصفة عامة مرت الترجمة بحركة انتشار واسعة ، ويسر لذلك أن العراق كان يموج بالأطباء والفلاسفة والمنجمين . وقد مرت الترجمة في هذا العصر بعدة مراحل ، بدأت بترجمة الطب والفلك والرياضيات والفلسفة والمنطق ، وانتهت بترجمة الكتب في مختلف العلوم والآداب . وأدى ذلك إلى اتساع في المعارف وتطور في أساليب التفكير وتعاضم في شأن الفرق الإسلامية التي تقوم مناهجها على الجدل ، ثم أدى ذلك إلى ازدهار النحو وظهور البلاغة ، كما يسر ولوج المسلمين إلى العلوم الفلسفية كالألهوت والمنطق .

وما يقال عن التجريبتين السابقتين يقال أيضا عن التجربة الأخيرة التي بدأت منذ أواسط القرن التاسع عشر ، حين أنشأ رفاة الطهطاوي " مدرسة الألسن " في مصر للترجمة عن اللغات الأوربية ، فشملت كافة العلوم .

ومنذ ذلك الحين أصبحت الترجمة تتجه لتصبح علماً له قواعده وأسسها ، بعد أن كانت فنا يعتمد على قدرات المترجم ونبوغه .

إن دور الترجمة هو دور خطير وبخاصة في الآونة الأخيرة ، حيث يجب أن تتواكب الحركة الفكرية في أي بلد مع التطورات السريعة التي تطرأ في العلوم الاجتماعية المختلفة ، ولن يكون ذلك إلا عن طريق نقل أفكار الدول المتقدمة لتسترشد بها الدول النامية في طريقها نحو التنمية الشاملة ، وحتى تستطيع هذه الدول مسايرة التقدم العلمي الحادث حولها فتزدهر وتحتل موقعها الحضاري المناسب .

ولعل الأمر المحبط للنفس هو تلك النظرة إلى الترجمة على أنها مجرد نقل لأعمال الغير الذين تتجه الأضواء لابرار أعمالهم دون اضافة الأهمية المؤكدة على ترجمتها ، فلا تتسع بذلك دائرة فهمها والانتفاع بها بين المنتمين إلى لغات أخرى . وهذه نظرة قاصرة لما

فيها من اغفال لدور المترجم وتقليل من قدره ، نرجو أن تتغير
سريعا .

ولعل كل ذلك هو ما دفعني للتفكير في التفرغ لاتمام هذا
العمل والله آمل أن يفيد منه العاملين في هذا الحقل ، أو من
يهمون بالدخول إلى حلبته

والله من وراء القصد

محمد حسن يوسف

الكويت : ٤ أغسطس ١٩٩٧

قبل أن تبدأ

عزيزي القارئ لابد لك قبل أن تبدأ في قراءة هذا الكتاب ، أن تعرف ما هي القواعد اللزوم توافقها في الترجمة الجيدة :

١. يجب أن تكون الترجمة نسخة كاملة طبق الأصل من الأفكار الموجودة في النص الأصلي .
٢. يجب أن يحتفظ الأسلوب وطريقة الكتابة بنفس الخصائص الموجودة في النص الأصلي .
٣. يجب أن تعكس الترجمة كل عناصر السهولة والوضوح الموجودة في النص الأصلي .

كما يجب أن تعرف المتطلبات التي يجب توافقها في المترجم الجيد :

١. يجب على المترجم الجيد كشرط رئيسي أن يكون على معرفة كاملة بقواعد كل من اللغة المنقول منها واللغة المنقول إليها .

٢. يجب أن يكون على وعي تام بالخلفية الثقافية للغة المنقول منها واللغة المنقول إليها .
٣. يجب على المترجم أن يكون على علم واف بالموضوع الذي يترجمه .
٤. يجب أن يقوم بتصحيح ما يبدو له كتعبيرات غير هامة أو غير واضحة تكون موجودة في النص الأصلي .
٥. يجب أن يتمتع بوجود حس أدبي لديه وأن يكون قادرا على نقد النص من الناحية الأدبية طالما سيكون عليه الحكم على مدى صحة الأسلوب وتقييمه .
٦. يجب أن يتمتع بقدر كبير من المعلومات وأن يكون واسع الاطلاع .

كذلك فان من الهام أن نلقي الضوء على أهمية استخدام القواميس الملائمة في عملية الترجمة ، إذ توفر القواميس المعلومات بشأن كلمات اللغة . وبالإضافة للقواميس العامة في إحدى اللغات ، هناك القواميس ثنائية اللغة ، التي تسرد الكلمات الخاصة بإحدى اللغات وما يعادلها بلغة أخرى . كما أن هناك القواميس المتخصصة في مجالات معينة من المعرفة ، وعلى سبيل المثال فهناك قواميس

متخصصة للتعامل مع المفردات المستخدمة في حقول الطب والقانون والاقتصاد ، كما توجد القواميس المتخصصة في اللغات العامية واللهجات المحلية لمنطقة معينة .

ولن تستطيع اخراج ترجمة جيدة ما لم تستشر عدد من القواميس الجيدة ، ويجب الأخذ في الاعتبار دائما أن الكلمات التي تبدو سهلة المعنى للوهلة الأولى قد تكون هي سبب المشكلة في عدم وضوح معنى النص المترجم ، إذ قد تأخذ في سياق معين معنى آخر غير المعنى الشائع المعروف لها ، وبذلك فيكون من الواجب استشارة القواميس حتى يتم التوصل إلى المعنى الدقيق المراد منها .

الفصل الأول

الترجمة : ماهيتها وكيفيةها

الترجمة : ماهيتها وكيفيةها

تمهيد

نحاول في هذا الفصل وضع تعريف للترجمة وشرح منهجية الخطوات التي تتم بها . على أننا نحاول هنا توضيح بعض الحقائق العامة بشكل سريع ، قبل أن نفضلها بشكل دقيق فيما بعد ، وذلك لتهيئة ذهن القارئ لفهم عملية الترجمة .

يُعرف Forster الترجمة الجيدة على أنها " الترجمة التي تفي بنفس الغرض في اللغة الجديدة مثلما فعل الغرض الأصلي في اللغة التي كُتبت بها " . ويصف Orr عملية الترجمة بأنها مطابقة لعملية الرسم إلى حد ما ، فيقول " إن الرسام لا يستخرج كل تفصيل في المنظر " ، فهو ينتقي ما يبدو أفضل بالنسبة له . وينطبق نفس الشيء على المترجم ، " إنها الروح - وليس المعنى الحرفي وحسب - التي يسعى المترجم لتجسيدها في ترجمته الخاصة " .

ويردد Edwards نفس وجهة النظر ، فيقول " ننتظر وجود صدق حقيقي تقريبي في الترجمة ... وكل ما نريد الحصول عليه هو نقل أصدق إحساس ممكن للنص الأصلي . ويجب أن تصل إلينا

السمات والمواقف والانعكاسات بنفس الشكل الذي كانت عليه في ذهن المؤلف وقلبه ، وليس من الضروري أن يتم ذلك بالدقة التي انطلقت بها من فمه " .

ويطالب معظم علماء الترجمة بالاهتمام بالمعنى وليس بالمفردات اللغوية ، ذلك أنه إذا لم تقم الترجمة بالوظيفة الايصالية ، أي إذا لم يكن لها معنى لدى المتلقي ، فإنها في هذه الحالة لا تكون قد بررت وجودها .

وبالإضافة إلى ما تنقله التراجم من معنى ، فيجب أن تنقل أيضا " روح وأسلوب النص الأصلي " . ذلك أن المعنى الحرفي يقتل الترجمة ، ولكن الروح تمنحها الحياة .

وتتمثل الهفوة الأساسية التي يقع فيها الكثير ممن يقومون بترجمة الأدب في فشلهم في أن يكونوا " طبيعيين " في التعبير . فهم في الواقع يجعلون القارئ يعي جيدا أن عملهم ما هو إلا ترجمة حيث يذهب الجزء الأعظم من مجهودهم في البحث عن عبارات مرادفة ولكن لا يستخدمها القارئون لهذه الترجمة في لغاتهم .

ولذلك يرى Goodspeed أن " أفضل التراجم ليست تلك الترجمة التي تُبقي نُصب عين القارئ وإلى الأبد حقيقة أن هذا العمل ما هو إلا ترجمة وليس تأليفا أصليا ، وإنما هي تلك الترجمة التي تجعل القارئ ينسى مطلقا أنها ترجمة وتجعله يشعر أنه ينعم النظر في

ذهن الكاتب القديم مثلما يعمن النظر في ذهن كاتب معاصر . ولا يعتبر هذا الأمر في الواقع أمرا سهلا في تنفيذه ، ولكنه رغم ذلك يعتبر المهمة التي يجب أن يلتزم بها أي مترجم جاد في عمله " .

ومن هنا فان أكبر معيار مقنع لنوعية أي عمل يكمن في حقيقة أنه لا يمكن أن يُترجم إلا بصعوبة ، لأنه إذا انتقل فورا وبسهولة إلى لغة أخرى دون أن يفقد جوهره ، فذلك يعني أنه لا يحتوي على أي جوهر معين أو أنه على الأقل لا يعتبر عملا من الأعمال الفريدة .

ويعتبر الأسلوب السلس والطبيعي - رغم الصعوبات البالغة في إنتاجه خصوصا عند ترجمة نص ذي نوعية عالية - هاما في توليد استجابة لدى المتلقين النهائيين له تتشابه مع استجابة المتلقين الأصليين لذلك الأسلوب . فيجب أن تكون الترجمة اصطلاحية وممتعة ، ليس للباحث وحسب ، بل وللقارئ المتعلم أيضا . ويسعى المترجم لتكوين انطباع لدى قرائه يتشابه أو يكاد مع ذلك الانطباع الذي ينتج عن النص الأصلي .

وفي هذا يقول Prochazka إن " الترجمة يجب أن نحدث في ذهن القارئ نفس الانطباع الذي يحققه انطباع النص الأصلي على قرائه " .

وهكذا فان الترجمة الجيدة يجب أن تلبى المتطلبات الأساسية

التالية :

١. تعكس المعنى بوضوح

٢. تنقل روح وأسلوب النص الأصلي

٣. تصاغ بتعبير طبيعي وسلس

٤. تولد استجابة مشابهة في ذهن قارئها

ويتضح من كل ما سبق أن التضارب بين المحتوى والشكل (أو بين المعنى والأسلوب) سيكون تضاربا حادا في بعض النقاط المعينة ، ويجب أن يفسح أحدهما المجال للآخر في بعض الأحيان . ولكن يتفق المترجمون عموما على وجوب إعطاء الأولوية للمعنى قبل الأسلوب حينما لا يكون هناك حل وسط موفق . وما يجب علينا محاولته هو إيجاد خليط فعال من " المعنى والأسلوب " ، لأن هذين الوجهين يعتبران متحدين بشكل لا يقبل التجزئة . ويؤدي التمسك بالمحتوى ، دون اعتبار للشكل ، إلى إنتاج عمل مميز وجيد ولكنه لا يحتوي على أي شيء من تآلق وسحر النص الأصلي . ومن ناحية أخرى ، يمكن أن تؤدي التوضيحية بالمعنى في سبيل الحصول على أسلوب جيد إلى الحصول على صورة مطبوعة فقط تفشل في توصيل الرسالة . ووفقا لذلك ، يجب أن يكون للتطابق في المعنى أولوية تسبق التطابق في الأسلوب .

ولكن لا يجب أن يجري تعيين الأولويات بنمط ميكانيكي محض . إذ إن ما هو مطلوب في النهاية هو إعادة إنتاج النص الأصلي لاستخراج صورة منه .

إن أي استعراض للآراء المطروحة حول عملية الترجمة يصلح لتوكيد الحقيقة القائلة إن تعريفات أو أوصاف عملية الترجمة لا تتم بقواعد جبرية حتمية ، وإنما تعتمد على قواعد احتمالية . ولذلك لا يمكننا الحكم على ترجمة معينة بكونها جيدة أو رديئة دون أن نأخذ في الاعتبار عددا لا يحصى من العوامل التي يجب أن توزن بدورها من مختلف الطرق وبإجابات مختلفة إلى حد كبير . ومن هنا ستظهر على الدوام تشكيلة من الإجابات الفعالة والصحيحة للسؤال التالي : " هل هذه الترجمة ترجمة جيدة " ؟

استراتيجية الترجمة Transfer Strategy

ما هي الترجمة ؟ وكيف تتم ؟ وأي شيء يجب على المترجم التركيز عليه حينما يشرع في مهمته ؟ هل يجب التركيز على أسلوب صياغة النص ؛ أم على معناه ؟

لكي نستطيع الاجابة على هذه الأسئلة ، نحاول أن نتتبع الآن التعريفات المختلفة التي وضعها علماء اللغة والترجمة في هذا الصدد :
فيجادل Newmark بأن " الترجمة هي مهارة تتمثل في محاولة احلال رسالة و/ أو بيان مكتوب باحدى اللغات برسالة و / أو بيان مماثل مكتوب بلغة أخرى " .

ويقول Catford إن الترجمة هي " عملية احلال النص المكتوب باحدى اللغات (ويسمىها اللغة المصدر source language "SL") إلى نص يعادله مكتوب بلغة أخرى (ويسمىها اللغة المستهدف النقل اليها - أو باختصار اللغة المنقول اليها - "target language "TL") " . وبذلك التعريف فهو يركز على نقل الأثر الذي ينتج عن النص المكتوب وليس مجرد نقل المكونات اللغوية على مستوى المفردات أو القواعد .

أما Halliday فيعتقد أن " المعادل النصي فيما بين نصي اللغة المصدر SL واللغة المنقول اليها TL لا يتطلب بالضرورة ايجاد المقابل الشكلي بين هذين النصين على مستوى المفردات أو القواعد ، ولكن ايجاد معادل على مستوى النص بأكمله " .

ويقول Pinchuch إنه " إذا كانت الترجمة تتمثل في عملية احلال الكلمات وحدها ، فقد يكون الاجراء الملائم هو الرجوع لقاموس ثنائي اللغة " . على أن الترجمة ، كما ينظر اليها Kelly ، هي " تطبيق للغويات من منظور افتراض توافر السعي لاجراج نص يحمل المعنى المعادل للنص الأصلي " .

ويتم التركيز على معنى مصطلح " نص " text فيما يتعلق بالترجمة . ذلك أن " نص " يعنى أي شئ تتم ترجمته سواء تمت الترجمة كتابة أو شفاهة . ويمكن أن يكون ذلك الشئ مجرد عبارة أو جملة أو فقرة أو فصل من كتاب بل وحتى كتاب بأكمله .

وهكذا نجد أن الاهتمام ينصب في الترجمة تماما على بحث العلاقة بين اللغة والترجمة . ويكون الهدف الرئيسي وراء ذلك هو اعطاء الترجمة شكلا ثابتا يمكن اتباعه في الحالات المختلفة للترجمة ومحاولة صياغة قواعد تحكمها من أجل منع أو تجنب الوقوع في الأخطاء عند القيام بعملية الترجمة .

مما سبق نستطيع استخلاص تعريف للترجمة على أنها
ببساطة هي محاولة نقل رسالة في اللغة المصدر SL إلى
رسالة معادلة لها في اللغة المنقول اليها TL .

Translation is simply the attempt to replace a textual material in the Source Language (SL) by an equivalent textual material in the Target Language (TL).

وبحيث يكون التركيز هنا على نقل جوهر أو معنى الرسالة وليس نصها . وفي ذلك يقول Widdowson إنه " حينما نكون بصدد لغة ما ، فاننا لا نتعلم كيفية صياغة أو فهم بعض الجمل الصحيحة في هذه اللغة كوحدات لغوية منعزلة ذات تكرار عشوائي وحسب ، بل نتعلم أيضا كيفية استخدام هذه الجمل استخداما ملائما لتحقيق الغرض من توصيل الرسالة " . وهكذا نجد أن الترجمة هي محاولة ايجاد العلاقة بين نصين أو مجموعة من النصوص تلعب دورا متماثلا في حالات متماثلة .

من التعريفات السابقة نجد أننا من الآن فصاعدا سنكون
بصدد لغتين :

اللغة الأولى : وهي اللغة التي ستتم الترجمة منها - أو اللغة المصدر
. SL

اللغة الثانية : وهي اللغة التي ستم الترجمة اليها - أو اللغة المنقول إليها TL .

ولكي تتم الترجمة بطريقة سلسة ووفق منهج صحيح ، لابد من وجود قاعدة معينة نتبعها أثناء الترجمة . و تتمثل هذه القاعدة فيما يعرف بـ " استراتيجية النقل " Transfer Strategy والتي تتمثل في :

SL → SL → Rethink → TL

ومعنى ذلك أنه قبل أن نشرع في عملية الترجمة ، فلا بد لنا من فهم نص الرسالة المكتوبة باللغة المصدر من منظور أو على أساس القواعد الحاكمة لهذه اللغة نفسها . وتنطلق هذه القاعدة من بديهية مؤداها أن المترجم لا يستطيع ترجمة شئ لا يفهمه ، أو أنه سيقوم بالترجمة بطريقة خاطئة إذا لم يحاول فهم نص الرسالة التي يقوم بترجمتها . فإذا ما انتهى المترجم من فهم نص الرسالة المكتوبة هكذا ، كان له الحق في أن يشرع في عملية " اعادة التفكير " ، وهذا ما يعنى المقابلة بين القواعد الحاكمة للغة المصدر SL والقواعد الحاكمة للغة التي سيتم النقل اليها TL ، وايجاد الصورة الملائمة الموجودة في اللغة التي سيتم النقل اليها والتي تكاد تكون معادلة تماما للصورة التي كتبت بها الرسالة في اللغة المصدر . وحينئذ يقوم

بالترجمة التي ستكون أقرب صورة لنص الرسالة المكتوبة باللغة الأصلية . أي أنه يجب على أي مترجم أن يفهم أولاً الرسالة التي سينقلها على أساس قواعد اللغة المكتوب بها هذه الرسالة نفسها ، ثم بعد ذلك يعيد نقل الفكرة إلى اللغة المنقول إليها .

وهكذا فلا بد للمترجم من السير وفق هذه الاستراتيجية لكي يتجنب الوقوع في الأخطاء ، و لكي تكون ترجمته أقرب شئ إلى الصواب .

ولنحاول الآن فهم كيفية تطبيق هذه الاستراتيجية ، وليكن ذلك أولاً على مستوى المفردات (لتوضيح الفكرة فقط) :

فمثلاً كلمة رياضة قد تكون رياضة بدنية أو رياضة روحية أو رياضة بمعنى ترويض أو رياضة بمعنى مادة الرياضيات . فإذا ما حصرنا معناها في أنها رياضة بدنية ، وبدأنا في عملية تحليل معنى هذا المصطلح ومحاولة ايجاد ما يعادله في اللغة الانجليزية ، نجد أن المقابل هو Sport .

ويمكن تمثيل ذلك كما يلي :

رياضة ← بدنية ← Rethink ← Sport

وبنفس الطريقة ، فان كاتب قد تكون مفكر أو نساخ أو
موظف في مكتب الخ . فإذا ما حصرنا المعنى في مفكر ، يكون
المقابل هو Writer :

كاتب ← مفكر ← Rethink ← Writer

وبالطريقة العكسية ، فان كلمة Bank قد تكون ركام أو
منحدر أو شاطئ أو صف أو مصرف . فإذا ما حصرنا معناها في
أنها جزء من الأرض بامتداد جانب النهر، يكون المعنى المقابل باللغة
العربية هو : شاطئ .

ويمكن تمثيل ذلك كما يلي :

شاطئ → Rethink → Land along the side of a river → Bank

وبنفس الطريقة ، فان Book قد تكون كتاب أو دفتر تجاري
أو الكتاب المقدس أو القيام بعملية التسجيل أو بعملية الحجز مقدما .
فإذا ما حصرنا المعنى في عملية الحجز مقدما ، يكون المقابل هو :

يحجز → Rethink → To Reserve → Book

وعلى مستوى العبارة ، يمكن لنا إجراء نفس هذه النوعية من
التحليل على النحو التالي ، فعبارة مثل :

قامت اللجنة المكونة من سبع دول بمناقشة مشروع القرار

نجد أن عبارة " اللجنة الحكومية المكونة من سبع دول " معناها هو اللجنة الحكومية التي تخص الدول السبع كلها ، بمعنى عدم اقتصارها على حكومة دولة واحدة . ولذلك فإن أقرب مرادف لهذا المعنى هو *inter-governmental committee* . أما كلمة " مشروع القرار " هنا فتعنى مسودته ، أي *draft* . وبذلك تكون ترجمة الجملة السابقة هي :

The seven-state inter-governmental committee has discussed the draft resolution.

وبالطريقة العكسية ، ففي عبارة مثل :

I move the adoption of the following resolution.

نجد أن *move* هنا تعنى عملية الاقتراح أو التزكية ، بينما تكون كلمة *adoption* على معنيين : الأول هو عملية الإقرار أو الاعتماد (لقرار ما) ، والثاني هو عملية التبني (لطفل) . ونستبعد المعنى الثاني بالطبع ، ولذلك يكون معنى الجملة :

اقترح اعتماد القرار التالي

ولنتابع التحليل على مستوى فقرة بأكملها ، حيث نحاول

ترجمة الفقرة التالية كما يلي :

ويتأكد ذلك على وجه الخصوص بالنسبة للعنصر البشري ، الذي يعتبر سلوكه وشعوره بالانتماء - ومن ثم اتفاق صالحه الفردي مع الصالح الجماعي - محددًا رئيسيًا لفروق الإنتاجية بين المجتمعات المختلفة .

هنا يجب أولاً أن نقوم بتحليل كل كلمة لتحديد المقصود منها بالضبط كما يلي : يتأكد : يثبت / يصح - على وجه الخصوص : خصوصاً - بالنسبة لـ : فيما يتعلق بـ / بشأن - العنصر البشري : العامل الإنساني - يُعتبر : يُنظر إليه - سلوكه : تصرفه - شعوره : إحساسه - الانتماء : العضوية / الانتساب - من ثم : هكذا / بالتالي - اتفاق : انسجام / تناسق - صالحه : مصلحته - الفردي : الشخصي - الجماعي : المجتمع العام / المجموعة - محددًا : معياراً / مقياساً - رئيسياً : أساسياً - فروق : اختلافات - الإنتاجية : القدرة على الإنتاج الوفير - بين : فيما بين - المجتمعات : المجموعات - المختلفة : العديدة / على تنوعها .

و بذلك يمكننا ترجمة النص السابق على النحو التالي :

This is particularly true for the human element. Behavior and awareness of affiliation - thus his individual interest is suited with the common interest - are considered main determinate of

productivity differentials between various communities.

مما سبق نجد أن عملية الترجمة تنقسم إلى مرحلتين أساسيتين :

المرحلة الأولى : وتهتم بتحليل analysis نص الرسالة المكتوبة باللغة المصدر SL ، من أجل التوصل للمعنى الحقيقي الذي يتضمنه هذا النص . ثم نبدأ في عملية إعادة التفكير ، لندخل إلي :

المرحلة الثانية : وتهتم بصياغة synthesis معنى النص المترجم باللغة المنقول إليها TL ، من أجل التوصل إلى أسلوب صحيح تماما يماثل الأساليب التي تتم الكتابة بها عادة في هذه اللغة .

على أن نأخذ في الاعتبار دائما أن عدم فطنة القارئ إلى أن ما يقرأه مترجم من لغة أخرى يعتبر في حد ذاته أكبر دليل على نجاح المترجم في مهمته ، بمعنى أن القارئ لو شك ولو للحظة واحدة أن ما يقرأه قد يكون منقولا من لغة أخرى بسبب وجود ضعف أو ركاكة في الأسلوب ، يكون المترجم قد فشل في مهمته . فالمترجم الناجح هو الذي يستطيع صياغة الرسالة في اللغة المنقول إليها بأسلوب يجعل من يقرأ هذه الرسالة يشعر وكأنها لم تكتب إلا بهذه اللغة - أي وكأنها " طبيعية " .

دور المترجم Translator's Role

لا يمكن لأية مناقشة لمبادئ الترجمة ومناهجها أن تعطينا معالجة لعملية الترجمة بمعزل عن المترجم نفسه . وبما أن المترجم يعتبر العنصر البؤري في عملية الترجمة ، فإن دوره يعد محوريا بالنسبة للمبادئ والمناهج الأساسية في عملية الترجمة ، ذلك أن المترجم نفسه يعتبر جزءا من البيئة الثقافية التي يعيش فيها .

وإذا أردنا من المترجم انتاج رسالة مقبولة - رغم ما يجده من صعوبات ونكران للجميل - فلا بد أن يكون ملما الماما شاملا بخصائص اللغة المصدر ، ولا بد أن يسيطر في نفس الوقت على أدوات اللغة المنقول إليها . فهو لا يستطيع حتما أن يكافئ بين الكلمات مقتصرًا على القاموس ، بل لابد له أن يُحدث بالمعنى الحقيقي صيغة لغوية جديدة ، لكي ينقل المفهوم الذي تعبر عنه اللغة المصدر . أي يجب أن يكون ضليعا well-versed في كل من اللغتين اللتين يتعامل معهما .

وهناك بعض المتطلبات الأساسية التي يجب توافرها في المترجم . وأول هذه المتطلبات - كما سبق القول - هو وجوب معرفته التامة باللغة المصدر . فلا يكفي أن يكون المترجم قادرا على فهم " المغزى العام " للمعنى أو أن يكون ماهرا في استشارة القواميس (فهو سيفعل ذلك حتى في أحسن الأحوال) . وإنما عليه بالاضافة إلى ذلك فهم الجوانب الدقيقة والحساسة للمعنى ، والقيم الانفعالية السلوكية الهامة للكلمات ، والخصائص الأسلوبية التي تحدد " نكهة واحساس " الرسالة .

كما يجب عليه أن يكون ضليعا بالقواعد الحاكمة للغة المنقول إليها ، وليس للمترجم بديل عن ذلك . ولعل أغلب الأخطاء المتعددة والخطيرة التي يقع فيها المترجمون تنشأ أساسا من افتقارهم للمعرفة الشاملة باللغة المنقول إليها .

وبالاضافة إلى ذلك ، على المترجم أن يكون لديه معرفة خاصة بالموضوع الذي يترجمه . فيمكن مثلا أن يكون المترجم على علم جيد باللغة بوجه عام ، ولكنه يجهل الكثير عن موضوعات مثل الفيزياء النووية أو الكيمياء العضوية . ففي هذه الحالة ، لا تعتبر المعرفة العامة باللغة وافية كخلفية وكتجربة لترجمة المواد التقنية في مثل هذه الفروع . وبتعبير آخر ، يجب على المترجم - بالاضافة إلى كونه

ضليعا بقواعد وسلوك اللغتين المصدر والمنقول إليها - أن يكون على اطلاع شامل بمادة الموضوع الذي يترجمه .

وحتى مع توافر المعرفة التقنية الضرورية لدى المترجم ، فلن يعتبر كفؤا ما لم يتوافر لديه بالاضافة إلى ذلك الرغبة النفسية الحقيقية . إذ يجب أن تتوافر لدى المترجم موهبة المحاكاة والقدرة على أداء دور المؤلف وتقمص سلوكه وكلامه ووسائله بأقصى درجة من الاحتمال .

وفي ذلك ، يورد Justin O'Brien رأيه في هذه القضية فيقول " على المترجم ألا يترجم أبدا أي شيء لا يثير اعجابه . فيجب أن تتواجد ألفة بين المترجم وبين ما يترجمه بقدر الامكان " .

على أن المعرفة الشاملة باللغتين المصدر والمنقول إليها وبمادة الموضوع الذي يُترجم والرغبة النفسية الحقيقية لا تضمن الحصول على ترجمة فعالة في الواقع ما لم يتمتع المترجم بالاضافة إلى كل ما سبق بوجود حس أدبي literary taste لديه . فيقول Nabocov " لكي يكون للمترجم التأثير الكامل فيجب أن يتمتع في النهاية بقدر من الموهبة تتساوى مع قدر الموهبة التي يتمتع بها المؤلف الذي يختاره " .

وليس هناك مترجم يستطيع تجنب درجة معينة من التأثير الشخصي في عمله . فيتأثر المترجم باعتناق آراء المؤلف أو بالرسالة أو يتأثر بافتقاره لمثل هذا الاعتناق ، وذلك أثناء تفسيره للرسالة المكتوبة باللغة المصدر وفي انتقائه للكلمات والصيغ النحوية المطابقة وفي اختياره للمكافئات الأسلوبية . ومن المفهوم تماما أن المعاني السلوكية التي يستخدمها المؤلف تؤثر في قيم المترجم المماثلة وتتأثر بها ، ولا يمكن أن يكون الناتج بأية حالة هو نفس قيم المؤلف بالضبط .

ويتحتم على المترجم ألا يضم انطباعاته الخاصة إلى الرسالة ، أو يحرفها لتناسب تطلعاته الفكرية والانفعالية . ولا بد له أن يبذل كل جهد ممكن لتقليل أي تدخل من جانبه لا يتناغم مع قصد وفحوى المؤلف الأصلي والرسالة الأصلية وذلك إلى أدنى حد ممكن .

ولا تحدث معظم الحالات المتعلقة بالتبديل غير الملائم للنص الأصلي بناء على رغبة واعية لتحويل الرسالة أو تحريفها ، بل تنتج من سمات الشخصية اللاواعية التي تؤثر في عمل المترجم بطرق خفية . وتتضح هذه السمات بشكل كبير حينما يشعر المترجم بالميل إلى تحسين النص الأصلي أو تصحيح الأخطاء الجلية فيه أو الدفاع عن تحبيذ شخصي وذلك بتحريف ما يختاره من كلمات .

وتتناسب مخاطر الذاتية في عملية الترجمة مع مقدار التدخل الانفعالي الممكن من المترجم في الرسالة . ففي نصوص النثر العلمي ، يصل هذا التدخل الذاتي إلى أدنى مستوى له . على أن هذا التدخل يصل عادة إلى أعلى مستوياته في حالة النصوص الدينية .

وفي بعض الحالات يؤدي الاحساس الخاص للمترجم بعدم الثقة إلى أن يصبح من الصعب عليه أن يترك الرسالة تتحدث عن نفسها . وفي حالات أخرى ، يدفعه الغرور إلى القيام بالترجمة دون استشارة آراء الذين درسوا تلك النصوص دراسة وافية .

وهكذا فإن المترجم الكفاء هو الذي يستطيع صقل المهارات أحادية اللغة monolingual skills اللازمة للقيام بعمله على أكمل وجه ، والمتمثلة في مهارات الاستماع listening والتحدث speaking والقراءة reading والكتابة writing .

ويجب التركيز هنا على الفرق بين المتحدث ثنائي اللغة Bilingual Speaker والمترجم الكفاء Competent Translator ، ويتمثل هذا الفرق في أن الأول يستطيع التعبير عن نفسه بكفاءة بلغتين ، بينما الأخير يمكنه التعبير عما يريد أن يقوله الآخرين أو التعبير عن الآخرين بكفاءة . وهو بذلك لا يتدخل في تغيير معنى نص الرسالة المراد ترجمتها ، كما أنه يستطيع أن ينحى

انفعالاته الشخصية جانبا بقدر المستطاع وأن يبرز انفعالات المؤلف أو الكاتب الأصلي بطريقة أمينة . وعلى ذلك فمقدرة المترجم الكفاء على عملية الترجمة هي مقدرة تحتوى على أكثر من لغة .

وبدون استراتيجيات الترجمة التي سبق الحديث عنها، لا يمكن لفرد ما أن يكون مترجما كفوًا . فلا يجب على المترجم أن يكون ملما بالقواعد الحاكمة للغتين اللتين يتعامل فيهما فقط ، بل يكون عليه أيضا أن يستطيع النقل اليهما بكفاءة . وفي هذه الحالة ، فإذا ما أعطيناه رسالة مكتوبة باللغة المصدر SL ، يكون عليه أن يعطينا ما يعادل هذه الرسالة بالضبط في اللغة المنقول إليها TL .

وبذلك فيمكننا استنتاج افتراض Assumption في غاية الأهمية ، ألا وهو أنه لا يشترط أن يكون كل متحدث ثنائي اللغة مترجما كفوًا .

Not any bilingual speaker is a competent translator.

ومجمل القول ، تعد مهمة المترجم مهمة في غاية الصعوبة ولا يجني من ورائها الشكر في معظم الأحيان . فحين يرتكب المترجم خطأ بسيطا ينتقده الناس بشدة ، وحين ينجح في عمله لا يلقى إلا امتداحا لا يذكر ، إذ غالبا ما تسود قناعة لدى الجميع بأن أي شخص

يعرف لغتين يكون بإمكانه عمل ما قام به المترجم الذي عانى أشد المعاناة لإنتاج نص مكافئ .

على أنه حتى وإن كان امتداح الآخرين لعمل المترجم من الأمور النادرة ، فإن مهمة الترجمة بحد ذاتها تحقق للمترجم الرضاء النفسي الذي يتطلبه . ذلك أن الترجمة الناجحة تتضمن تحديا فكريا من أعقد التحديات الفكرية التي عرفتھا البشرية . وبالإضافة لذلك ، فإن الحاجة إلى التواصل الواسع والدقيق والفعال في عالمنا المعاصر بين من يتكلمون بلغات مختلفة يعطي للمترجم موقعا استراتيجيا جديدا في غاية الأهمية .

أنواع الترجمة Kinds of Translation

أورد Jakobson ثلاثة تقسيمات للترجمة ، نوردھا فیما

يلي :

النوع الأول ، ويسمى بالترجمة ضمن اللغة الواحدة intralingual translation . وتعني هذه الترجمة أساسا إعادة صياغة مفردات رسالة ما في إطار نفس اللغة . ووفقا لهذه العملية ، يمكن ترجمة الاشارات اللفظية بواسطة اشارات أخرى في نفس اللغة ، وهي تعتبر عملية أساسية نحو وضع نظرية وافية للمعنى .

النوع الثاني ، وهو الترجمة من لغة إلى أخرى interlingual translation . وتعني هذه الترجمة ترجمة الاشارات اللفظية لاحدى اللغات عن طريق الاشارات اللفظية للغة أخرى . وهذا هو النوع الذي نركز عليه نطاق بحثنا . وما يهم في هذا النوع من الترجمة ليس مجرد معادلة الرموز (بمعنى مقارنة الكلمات ببعضها) وحسب ، بل تكافؤ رموز كلتا اللغتين وترتيبها . أي يجب معرفة معنى التعبير بأكمله .

النوع الثالث ، ويمكن أن يطلق عليه الترجمة من علامة إلى أخرى *intersemiotic translation* . وتعني هذه الترجمة نقل رسالة من نوع معين من النظم الرمزية إلى نوع آخر دون أن تصاحبها اشارات لفظية ، وبحيث يفهمها الجميع . ففي البحرية الأمريكية على سبيل المثال ، يمكن تحويل رسالة لفظية إلى رسالة يتم ابلاغها بالأعلام ، عن طريق رفع الأعلام المناسبة .

وفي اطار الترجمة من لغة إلى أخرى *interlingual translation* ، يمكن التمييز بصفة عامة بين قسمين أساسيين :

١- الترجمة التحريرية *Written Transaltion* :

وهي التي تتم كتابة . وعلى الرغم مما يعتبره الكثيرون من أنها أسهل نوعي الترجمة ، إذ لا تتقيد بزمن معين يجب أن تتم خلاله ، إلا أنها تعد في نفس الوقت من أكثر أنواع الترجمة صعوبة ، حيث يجب على المترجم أن يلتزم التزاما دقيقا وتاما بنفس أسلوب النص الأصلي ، وإلا تعرض للانتقاد الشديد في حالة الوقوع في خطأ ما .

٢- الترجمة الشفهية Oral Interpreting :

وتتركز صعوبتها في أنها تتقيد بزمن معين ، وهو الزمن الذي تقال في الرسالة الأصلية . إذ يبدأ دور المترجم بعد الانتهاء من القاء هذه الرسالة أو أثناءه . ولكنها لا تلتزم بنفس الدقة ومحاولة الالتزام بنفس أسلوب النص الأصلي ، بل يكون على المترجم الاكتفاء بنقل فحوى أو محتوى هذه الرسالة فقط .

وتتقسم الترجمة الشفهية إلى عدة أنواع :

أولا : الترجمة المنظورة At-Sight Interpreting :

أو الترجمة بمجرد النظر . وتتم بأن يقرأ المترجم نص الرسالة المكتوبة باللغة المصدر SL بعينه ، ثم يترجمها في عقله ، ليبدأ بعد ذلك في ترجمتها إلى اللغة المنقول إليها TL بشفتيه .

ثانيا : الترجمة التتبعية Consecutive Interpreting :

وتحدث بأن يكون هناك اجتماعا بين مجموعتين تتحدث كل مجموعة بلغة مختلفة عن لغة المجموعة الأخرى . ويبدأ أحد أفراد المجموعة الأولى في القاء رسالة معينة ، ثم ينقلها المترجم إلى لغة

المجموعة الأخرى ، لكي ترد عليها المجموعة الأخيرة برسالة أخرى ، ثم ينقلها المترجم إلى المجموعة الأولى وهكذا .
ومن الصعوبات التي يجب التغلب عليها في الترجمة التتبعية ، مشكلة الاستماع ثم الفهم الجيد للنص من منظور اللغة المصدر نفسها . ولذلك فيجب العمل على تنشيط الذاكرة لاسترجاع أكبر قدر ممكن من الرسالة التي تم الاستماع إليها .

ثالثا : الترجمة الفورية **Simultaneous Interpreting** :

وتحدث في بعض المؤتمرات المحلية أو المؤتمرات الدولية ، حيث يكون هناك متحدث أو مجموعة من المتحدثين بلغة أخرى عن لغة الحضور . ويبدأ المتحدث في القاء رسالته بلغته المصدر SL ليقوم المترجم بترجمتها في نفس الوقت إلى لغة الحضور TL .
وقد تحدثنا فيما سبق عن دور المترجم الذي يلعبه أثناء ممارسته للترجمة التحريرية . ويمكن هنا أن نلقي بعض الضوء على المتطلبات الواجب توافرها في المترجمين الذين يقومون بالترجمة الفورية .

فيجب أن يتصف المترجم الفوري بصفات معينة ، من أهمها القدرة على سرعة الرد quick response والقدرة على التركيز

concentration والتمتع بقدر كبير من هدوء الأعصاب
relaxation والقدرة على الاستمرار في الترجمة لمدة طويلة
consistence بالاضافة إلى الامام بحصيلة كبيرة من المفردات
اللغوية vocabulary . ويلاحظ أن حوالي ثلث الترجمة الفورية
تعتمد على الثقة بالنفس self-confidence .

وهناك صعوبات كبيرة تواجه المترجم الفوري ، لعل من
أهمها في الترجمة من العربية إلى الانجليزية ما يتمثل في تأخر الصفة
عن الموصوف ، ذلك أنه في اللغة الانجليزية لا بد أن تتقدم الصفة على
الموصوف . ومثال ذلك ، فالعربية تقول مثلا الرجل الكبير .
والمترجم الفوري لن يستطيع الانتظار حتى يسمع بقية الجملة كلها ثم
يبدأ في الترجمة ، فهو يقوم بالترجمة أولا بأول .

ومن الصعوبات التي تواجهه أيضا في هذا الصدد ، تأخر
الفاعل في الجملة الفعلية . فيقال مثلا : لا يلبث أن ينكشف زيفه .
ومن المعلوم أن الجملة الانجليزية تبدأ بالفاعل وهكذا .

مستويات التحليل اللغوية Levels of Language Analysis

بتحديد الاستراتيجية التي يتبعها المترجم ، نكون قد نجحنا في تحديد منهج واضح يسير المترجم على هديه ، حتى يبدأ في الترجمة بالفعل . و لنفترض الآن أننا أعطينا المترجم رسالة ليقوم بترجمتها ، وواجهت هذا المترجم صعوبة في فهم معنى كلمة ما . فما هي الخطوات التي ينبغي عليه إتباعها للتوصل إلى أدق معنى لهذه الكلمة ؟ وعلى سبيل المثال ففي العبارة :

This table is out of place.

ما هو المعنى الدقيق لكلمة table ؟ هل تعنى منضدة أو جدول أو مائدة المفاوضات الخ ؟

هناك أربعة معاني يجب على المترجم أن يبحث عنها بالترتيب ، وهذه المعاني هي :

١ - المعنى المعجمي Lexical Meaning :

فيجب على المترجم أن يبدأ بالبحث عن الكلمة في القاموس اللغوي ، سواء كان أحادي اللغة أو ثنائي اللغة ، للمساعدة في فهم معناها . على أن نلاحظ أن الكلمة المفردة دائما تكون على معنيين : معنى لغوي linguistic meaning ومعنى اصطلاحي

technical meaning . وعلى سبيل المثال ، فان كلمة interpretation تعني التفسير لغويا أو التأويل دينيا ، وكلمة commentator تعني معلق لغويا أو مفسر دينيا وهكذا . وقد لا يكون القاموس هو المصدر الوحيد الجدير بالاعتماد عليه كحل أخير أو أفضل ، حيث يكون على المترجم تخمين عدة معاني محتملة ، ويشمل ذلك المعنى الذي يقصده المؤلف وتأويله الخاص للكلمة أو العبارة ، بالاضافة إلى تعريف القاموس للكلمة . وإذا لم يستطع المترجم تحديد المعنى الدقيق المراد من هذه الكلمة ، يبدأ بالبحث في المعنى التالي :

٢- المعنى النصي Textual Meaning :

وهذا يعنى أن على المترجم الاستعانة بالقواميس الثنائية اللغة المتخصصة في المجالات المختلفة ، كالقواميس الطبية أو الهندسية أو الاقتصادية الخ . ذلك أن معنى الكلمة بمفردها قد يختلف عنه إذا وضعت في سياق معين ، أي إذا سبقها أو تلتها كلمة معينة . وعلى سبيل المثال ، فان كلمة pure تعنى " نقى " أو " صاف " . و لكن هذه الكلمة قد يختلف معناها إذا تلتها كلمات أخرى - كما يلي :

pure language

لغة فصحي

pure man	رجل سليم الطوية - رجل نقي السريرة
pure mathematics	رياضيات بحتة
pure sciences	علوم تجريدية
pure water	ماء عذب
pure gold	ذهب خالص أو حر
pure Egyptian	مصري أبا عن جد
pure angels	ملائكة أبرار أو أطهار

وكذلك كلمة contain تعني " يحتوي " أو " يتضمن " . ولكن معناها يختلف إذا وردت في نصوص معينة - مثل :

to contain a crisis	يحتوي أزمة
to contain an enemy	يتفادى عدو
to contain feelings	يكتُم المشاعر
to contain involvement	يتجنب التورط
to contain acts	يتحاشى أفعال

وأیضا كلمة harsh تعني " خشن " أو " قاس " . ويختلف معناها في النصوص الأخرى كما يلي :

harsh language	لغة فظة
harsh words	كلمات نابية
harsh clothes	ملابس خشنة / رثة
harsh man	رجل غليظ القلب

وهكذا . وبالطريقة العكسية ، فان معنى كلمة واسع يختلف حسب السياق المذكور فيه الكلام كما يلي :

far-reaching	واسع النطاق
broad-minded	واسع الأفق
wide-spread	واسع الانتشار
knowledgeable	واسع المعرفة
patient - forbearance	واسع الصدر
merciful	واسع الرحمة
	وكذلك كلمة يخفض :
to lower pause / muffle	يخفض الصوت
to devalue currency	يخفض قيمة العملة
to moderate	يخفض سعر الفائدة

interest rate

to curtail

government

spending

to curb inflation

يخفض الانفاق الحكومي

يخفض التضخم

فإذا لم يستطع المترجم كذلك تحديد المعنى المراد من الكلمة ،

يبدأ بالبحث في :

٣- المعنى السياقي Contextual Meaning :

وهو المعنى الذي يمكن استخلاصه من سياق الكلام ، ذلك أنه

في بعض الأحيان قد تكون هناك كلمات لها معنى محدد ، و لكن هذا

المعنى يتغير كلية لوجود هذه الكلمات داخل سياق معين . وعلى سبيل

المثال فان :

تستضيف الولايات المتحدة بطولة كأس العالم لكرة القدم في يونيه

القادم

نجد أن كلمة " تستضيف " يختلف معناها في هذا السياق عن الضيافة

تماما ، وإنما تعنى هنا أن البطولة ستقام على أراضي الولايات

المتحدة . ولذلك فان الجملة السابقة تترجم إلى :

The football world cup will be held at USA in coming June.

ويمكن بحث هذه القضية بشكل أوسع من خلال تحليل النص العربي التالي ، الذي ترجمه Nahmad إلى الانجليزية في كتابه . *From Arabic Press*

النص العربي :

زراعة عصرية

وذكر وزير الزراعة بأنه يضع النهضة بمستوى الزراعة في البلاد نصب عينيه . وأنه لن يدخر جهداً أن يجعل على قدر الامكان في متناول المزارعين أحدث النتائج التي توصل إليها العلم الحديث باستخدام الوسائل الميكانيكية لغرض واحد هو تيسير وانشاء زراعة عصرية حديثة ومنظمة .

الترجمة :

Modern Farming

The Minister of Agriculture stated that he would keep before him the raising of the standard of agriculture in the country, and that he would spare no effort to place, as far as was possible, the most recent innovations achieved by modern science within reach of the farmers, through the employment of mechanical aids, with one aim in view and that was the facilitating and building up of an up-to-date well-organized agriculture.

وبالنظر نظرة فاحصة للنص العربي ، نجد أن المترجم في بعض الأحيان قام باعطاء أكثر من مرادف في ترجمته لاحدى الكلمات الموجودة بالنص العربي . كذلك فانه يحاول اضافة لمسة جمالية على ترجمته عن طريق حذف بعض الكلمات أو التعبيرات ، أو اضافة تعبيرات معينة بغرض التوضيح . ويمكن استخلاص النقاط التالية :

أولا : يعطي القاموس (عربي - انجليزي) أكثر من كلمة يمكن استخدامها كمقابل لكلمة زراعة (من زرع) ، مثل farming و agriculture . واستخدم المترجم كلتا الكلمتين في ترجمته للدلالة على نفس الشئ ، ففي العنوان استخدم الأولى بينما استخدم الثانية في سياق النص . ولكن حينما أراد ترجمة الكلمة المشتقة (مزارعين) ، فقد فضل اشتقاقها من الكلمة الأولى ، حيث استخدم كلمة farmers .

ثانيا : في النص العربي ، يمكن ترجمة كلمة ذكر بما يقابلها في الانجليزية ، مثل mentioned أو said . ولكن يفضل المترجم استخدام كلمة أخرى أقوى في الدلالة ، وهي كلمة stated . ويعطي هذا المقابل دلالة أقوى في النص الانجليزي باعتبار أن الحديث للوزير .

ثالثا : في النص العربي ، تعني كلمة " بلاد " (جمع كلمة بلد) جميع المدن الكبيرة والصغيرة والقرى الموجودة في بلد المتحدث . أما في الترجمة ، استخدم المترجم كلمة country بصيغة المفرد كمقابل لها ، وهي تعطي نفس المعنى لحد ما . وهدف المترجم وراء ذلك هو تحقيق نوع من البساطة في توصيل المعنى .

رابعا : في النص العربي ، تعني كلمة النتائج أي من results أو outcomes . ولكن المترجم استخدم كلمة مختلفة تماما في ترجمته ، وهي كلمة innovations ، التي تعد أفضل كلمة تتناسب مع المعنى السياقي الذي وردت فيه الكلمة العربية . ومن الواضح أن المترجم بمحاولته هذه يحاول الارتقاء بالنص العربي ، وذلك من خلال استخدام تأويله الخاص لمعنى الكلمات ومن ثم اختيار مقابل أفضل في النص المترجم .

خامسا : في الترجمة ، نجد أن كلمة in view ليس لها ما يقابلها في النص العربي . ولكن المترجم يضيف هذه العبارة إلى النص المترجم بهدف توضيح المعنى المقصود من العبارة المستخدمة في النص العربي (لغرض واحد) . ونجد أن من الواضح هنا أيضا أن المترجم يحاول الارتقاء بالنص العربي .

سادسا : في النص المترجم ، تقف كلمة up-to-date كترجمة لكلمتين مختلفتين ولكن لهما نفس المعنى ، وهما " عصرية حديثة " . ومن الواضح أن المترجم فضل جمع معنى هاتين الكلمتين في كلمة واحدة وذلك بهدف تقليل الاطناب redundancy . وإذا لم نستطع التوصل الى المعنى المراد بعد ذلك ، نلجأ إلى :

٤ - المعنى الايحائي Suggestive Meaning :

وهو المعنى الذي توحى به الكلمات فى الجملة . فمثلا جملة :
On seeing the ghost, they stood motionless.
توحى كلمة motionless بعدم الحركة . وتستخدم اللغة العربية عدة تعبيرات لهذا الموقف ، مثل وقفت على رؤوسهم الطير أو تسمروا في أماكنهم أو تجمدت أوصالهم . وبالطبع فان انتقاء أحد هذه التعبيرات يتوقف على الحس الأدبي . وهكذا تترجم الجملة السابقة إلى :

وقفوا بلا حراك لدى رؤيتهم للشبح

كذلك فان جملة مثل :

الفتاة كالقمر فى جمالها

توحى بأن الفتاة على قدر كبير من الجمال . ولكن عند الترجمة إلى اللغة الانجليزية ، لا نستطيع نقل هذا المفهوم كما هو ، ذلك أن القمر

في البيئة الانجليزية ليس له نفس الايحاء الذي يتميز به في لغة العرب . و لذلك يجب البحث عن مقابل الجمال في اللغة الانجليزية ، وليكن مثلا : Snow White . وبذلك يمكن ترجمة الجملة إلى :

The girl is as fair as Snow White.

وكذلك لو قلنا :

This girl is as white as snow

لا نستطيع أن نترجمها بالقول : هذه الفتاة بيضاء كالثلج ، فمفهوم الثلج في البيئة العربية غير مفهوم الثلج في البيئة الغربية . وقد يفهم من الجملة السابقة أن هذا التشبيه للذم وليس للمدح . ولذلك فمن الأفضل القول :

هذه الفتاة شديدة البياض

وهذا التحليل ينقلنا خطوة إلى الأمام ، حيث نخلص مما سبق إلى أن عملية الترجمة تعني في واقع الأمر بالبحث عن معادل أو مكافئ للنص الأصلي وليس ايجاد مقابل شكلي له .

أساليب الترجمة Translation Techniques

يتضح أن المشكلة في الترجمة تتمثل دائما في البحث عن المعادل في الترجمة Translation Equivalent وليس في ايجاد المقابل الشكلي Formal Correspondent . وقبل أن نسهب في هذا الحديث ، يجب علينا أولا توضيح الأساليب التي يمكن أن تتم بها ترجمة المفردات :

١- نقل الكلمة حسب طريقة نطقها في اللغة المصدر

: Transliteration

والأمثلة على ذلك من اللغة العربية إلى الانجليزية :

intifada

انتفاضة

jihad

الجهاد

ومن الانجليزية إلى العربية :

technology

تكنولوجيا

democracy

ديمقراطية

ويطلق على هذه العملية الأخيرة (من الانجليزية إلى العربية)
مصطلح التعريب Arabicization .

٢ - معادل الترجمة Traslation Equivalent :

والأمثلة على ذلك كثيرة ، منها :

candid camera	الكاميرا الخفية
contact lences	العدسات اللاصقة

ويندرج تحت هذا النوع أيضا الأمثال الشعبية ، مثل :

haste makes waste	فى التانى السلامة وفى العجلة الندامة
still water runs deep	ميه من تحت تبين

٣ - المقابل من حيث الشكل Formal Correspondent :

وأمثلة ذلك :

to float currency	تعويم العملة
the first lady	السيدة الأولى
to launder money	غسيل الأموال (اصفاء الشرعية على تحويلات النقود)
cold war	حرب باردة

the premier	الوزير الأول (رئيس الوزراء)
black market	السوق السوداء

ولذلك يجب التركيز على طريقة التفكير .

ويجب التأكيد هنا على حقيقة أن المقابل من حيث الشكل يتضمن بالضرورة وجود معادل الترجمة ، بينما لا يتضمن معادل الترجمة وجود المقابل من حيث الشكل . و على سبيل المثال ، فان العبارة :

The door of the class

يمكن أن تترجم إلى :

باب الفصل

وقد تمت هذه الترجمة بأسلوب المعادل في الترجمة ، ولا تتضمن وجود المقابل من حيث الشكل . وعلى الرغم من ذلك ، يمكن الحصول على المقابل من حيث الشكل في نفس الجملة ، إذ نقول :

الباب بتاع الفصل

وبالطبع فهذه الترجمة تعتبر عامية . ويمكن لنا أن نلاحظ بوضوح أن الجملة الأخيرة تتضمن معادل الترجمة أيضا . وهذا ما يؤدي بنا إلى

التأكيد على حقيقة أن عملية الترجمة هي بالأساس مسألة ايجاد معادل الترجمة .

وبذلك تترجم الجملة :

She got seriously ill last night.

إلى :

اشتد عليها المرض ليلة أمس

ويمكن أن ننتقل بالحديث الآن من مجال المفردات إلى التعميم على الرسالة التي تتم ترجمتها ككل . فوفقا لما سبق ، يمكن القول بوجود شكلين في الأساس يمكن أن تتم بهما ترجمة الرسالة ، وهما التكافؤ الشكلي والتكافؤ المعنوي .

ويركز التكافؤ الشكلي الانتباه على الرسالة نفسها في الشكل والمحتوى معا . ويهتم المترجم في هذه التراجم بحالات من التطابق مثل مطابقة الشعر بالشعر والجملة بالجملة والمفهوم بالمفهوم . وحينما ينظر المرء من هذا الاتجاه الشكلي ، فإنه يبدي اهتماما بوجوب موازنة الرسالة المنقولة إلى اللغة المنقول إليها بنفس العناصر المختلفة الموجودة في اللغة المصدر وبأدق درجة ممكنة . وهذا يعني مثلا أن تتم مقارنة الرسالة في ثقافة اللغة المنقول إليها بشكل متواصل بثقافة اللغة المصدر لتحديد مقاييس الدقة والصحة والوضوح .

وأقصى حالات هذا النوع من الترجمة تلك التي يحاول فيها المترجم استخراج ونقل شكل ومحتوى الرسالة الأصلية حرفيا ومعنويا قدر الامكان . وكمثال على هذا النوع من الترجمة ، نقل نص انجليزي قانوني يعود إلى القرون الوسطى إلى اللغة العربية ، واعطاء هذا النص للطلاب الذين يقومون بدراسة القانون . إن حاجتهم هنا تستدعي الاقتراب عن كثب نسبيا من التركيب اللغوي للنص الانجليزي المبكر ، أي الاقتراب من الشكل (كبناء الجمل والمصطلحات اللغوية) ، بالإضافة إلى الاقتراب من المحتوى (كفكرة الموضوع والمفهوم) . وقد تتطلب هذه الترجمة ادخال العديد من الحواشي اللغوية من أجل أن يكون النص مفهوما فهما جيدا .

وبالتباين مع هذا النوع من الترجمة ، تستند الترجمة التي تحاول الوصول إلى تكافؤ معنوي إلى الوصول إلى المستوى الكامل من " طبيعية " التعبير ، وتحاول ربط قارئ اللغة المنقول إليها بالصيغ السلوكية الملائمة الموجودة ضمن بيئة ثقافته . وهي بذلك لا تصر على وجوب فهمه للأساليب الثقافية الموجودة في بيئة اللغة المصدر من أجل أن يستوعب الرسالة .

ويمثل هذان الشكلان (التكافؤ الشكلي والتكافؤ المعنوي) قطبي عملية الترجمة . وفيما بين هذين القطبين يوجد عدد من

الدرجات تتخللهما . وتمثل هذه الدرجات شتى المقاييس المقبولة في الترجمة الأدبية .

وخلال الأعوام الماضية ، حدث تحول بارز في التأكيد على البعد المعنوي والابتعاد عن البعد الشكلي . ويتزايد هذا الاتجاه بين جميع المهتمين بشئون الثقافة والترجمة .

وقد يقتضي البحث عن معادل الترجمة في بعض الأحيان إلى القيام بما يسمى التغيير الوظيفي Functional Shift ، وهو عبارة عن " اجراء يتم اتباعه ويتضمن عملية تغيير في القواعد النحوية حينما نترجم من اللغة المصدر إلى اللغة المنقول إليها " .

“Functional Shift is a translation procedure involving a change in the grammar from SL to TL”.

ونلجأ لهذا الأسلوب حينما لا ينصاع معنى الكلمة بسهولة للترجمة كما هي - أي بنفس وظيفتها في اللغة المصدر SL - فنلجأ الى تغيير وظيفتها . والكلمات التي نلجأ لهذا الأسلوب معها هي الكلمات التي تحمل علاقات المعنى content words ، وهي عبارة عن الأسماء nouns أو الأفعال verbs أو الصفات adjectives أو الظروف adverbs . كما نلجأ إليه حينما نترجم تركيب من القواعد في اللغة المصدر ليس له نظير في اللغة المنقول إليها .

ونعرض فيما يلي أهم الأساليب التي نتبع فيها هذا الاجراء :

أولا : امكانية تحويل الظرف الى الصيغ التالية :

He admires her *greatly*.

- صيغة الحال : يعجب بها بشدة .
 - صيغة المفعول المطلق : يعجب بها اعجابا شديدا .
 - استخدام لفظ أيما : يعجب بها أيما اعجابا .
 - استخدام جملة اسمية (مقرونة أو غير مقرونة بلام التوكيد) : إن اعجابه بها لشديد ، أو ان اعجابه بها شديد .
 - صيغة ما يحل محل الاسم : لشد اعجابه بها .
- وبذلك ففي الجملة :

The situation has deteriorated very *sharply*.

يمكن أن تكون الترجمة :

- تدهور الموقف بشدة .
 - تدهور الموقف تدهورا حادا .
 - تدهور الموقف أيما تدهور .
 - ان تدهور الموقف لشديد .
 - لشد ما تدهور الموقف .
- ثانيا : تحويل الصفة الى اسم ، مثل :

The decision was made for the *good* management of the company.

اتخذ القرار لما فيه حسن ادارة الشركة .

The conference recommended the *early* implementation and *speedy* operation of the project.

أوصى المؤتمر بالتبكير (أو الاسراع) في تنفيذ المشروع و التعجيل بتشغيله .

ثالثا : تحويل الصيغة الفعلية الى صفة أو صيغة التصريف الثالث ،
مثل :

استعرض المؤتمر ما تحقق من تقدم فيما يجرى تنفيذه من برامج .

The conference reviewed the *achieved* progress (progress *achieved*) in the projects *being implemented*.

رابعا : تحويل الفعل الى اسم ، مثل :

The President recommended that a committee *should be* formed for handling that matter.

أوصى الرئيس بوجوب (أو بضرورة) تشكيل لجنة لبحث ذلك الأمر .

خامسا : تحويل الصفة أو الاسم إلى فعل ، مثل :

I should like to make a *slight reference* that the University has lavishly given out insignificant prizes to all graduates.

أريد أن أنوه أن الجامعة قد أفرطت في توزيع الجوائز على الخريجين كافة .

Brutal as he is, sometimes he betrays signs of unequaalled delicacy.

على الرغم مما يتسم به من وحشية ، إلا أنه يبدي في بعض الأحيان ما ينم عن رقة منقطعة النظير .

سادسا : تغيير أسلوب حرف الجر ، مثل :

the achievements *of* the past decades.

الانجازات التي تحققت في العهود الماضية .

the lady *in* black.

المرأة التي تتشح السواد .

Mubarak *of* Egypt

مبارك رئيس مصر .

وفي النهاية ، يجب توضيح أن التغيير الوظيفي يبرز حالات متعددة من الارتباك فيما بين القواعد وما ينبغي التشديد stress عليه في النص . ولنضرب مثالا على ذلك ، ففي الجملة العربية :

حاد بيانه عن جادة الصواب تماما

هل نترجمها إلى الانجليزية بالقول His statement is a completely false أو There is absolutely no truth in his statement ؟ والتعليق على هذه الحالة ، يقتضي القول إنه كثيرا ما يتم تغيير ترتيب الكلمات word order بصورة غير ضرورية . ولذلك ففي بعض الأحيان يكون الأكثر دقة أن نترجم باستخدام المرادف اللغوي والاحتفاظ بنفس ترتيب الكلمات والابتعاد عن التغيير الوظيفي مع الإبقاء على التشديد الموجود في النص الأصلي .

الخروج عن القياس في اللغة Linguistic Deviation

يقصد بالخروج عن القياس في اللغة " الانحراف عن القواعد المألوفة التي تحكم لغة ما " .

“A linguistic deviation is the deviation from the expected norms of the language”.

ويأخذ الخروج عن القياس في اللغة أحد شكلين :

الأول : أن يكون مقصودا ، وبالتالي يكون له معنى ، وهكذا يكون قابلا للترجمة .

الثاني : أن يكون غير مقصود ، وبالتالي لا يكون له معنى ، وهكذا فلا يمكن ترجمته ، بل يجب أن يتم تصحيحه ثم ترجمة ما تم تصحيحه .

ولكي يتضح هذا المفهوم ، نفترض أننا نطالع إحدى الصحف اليومية ، لنجد عنة أنا مكتوبا فيها : " نشاطركم الأفراح " . يجب هنا التوقف قليلا أمام هذا العنوان . فمن المعروف في اللغة ، أن هذا التعبير يقال : " نشاطركم الأحران " ، وهو يقال للتعزية في وفاة أحد

الأشخاص المقربين أو فقدان شيء نفيس . فإذا ما تمت كتابة هذا التعبير بالشكل " نشاطركم الأفراح " ، نجد أننا أمام أحد احتمالين :

الأول : إما أن يكون الكاتب قد تعلم اللغة العربية حديثاً فلم يتقن أصولها بعد ، أو أنه غير ملم باستخداماتها . وهنا يجب علينا تصحيح هذا التعبير باعادته إلى صورته الأصلية " نشاطركم الأحران " ونترجمه على هذا المعنى .

الثاني : وإما أن يكون الكاتب قد تعمد أن يقول هذا التعبير للسخرية من الأفراح التي يمر بها القوم الذين قال لهم ذلك ، أي ليصور لهم أن أفراحهم كالأحران وأنه يواسيهم على هذه الأفراح ! وفي تلك الحالة فيجب الترجمة بهذا المعنى ، والتفكير في أسلوب معين " ساخر " أيضاً تتم الترجمة به .

ومن الناحية العكسية ، فلو طالعنا إحدى المجالات الاقتصادية لنجد عنواناً مكتوباً فيها يقول :

How to steal a bank?

يكون علينا كذلك أن نتوقف برهة أمام هذا العنوان . ذلك أن من المعروف لنا أن to steal لا تستخدم في هذا السياق ، فهي تعني سرقة الشيء برمته أو بأكمله ، وفي حالتنا هنا تعني " سرقة البنك

بجدرانه وموظفيه الخ " . وهذا بالطبع ما لا يمكن أن يكون . وأن
الكلمة التي تستعمل في هذا السياق هي " to rob " .
وبذلك نجد أنفسنا أيضا أمام احتمالين :

الأول : أن يكون الكاتب قد أخطأ في هذا الاستعمال . ولذلك فيجب
علينا القيام بالتصحيح ، ليكون العنوان :

How to rob a bank?

الثاني : أن يكون الكاتب قد تعمد هذا القول ، وبذلك فيجب علينا
محاولة ترجمة هذا المعنى الذي يريده الكاتب ، وليكن مثلا :
كيف تسرق الجمل بما حمل ؟

أو :

كيف تغتال مصرفا ؟

الترجمة : فن أم علم !? Translation: An Art or a Science?!

تدلنا التطورات التاريخية للأعمال المختلفة التي تمت في مجال الترجمة ، منذ عهد الرومان وحتى وقتنا الحاضر ، على تزايد اهتمام المترجمين والباحثين لوضع قواعد ثابتة يهتدي بها من يريدون اقتحام هذا المجال للعمل فيه . وعبر معظم المترجمين - إن لم يكن كلهم - مؤخرا وبوضوح عن وجهة نظرهم في أفضل الاجراءات التي يجب اتباعها في مجال الترجمة . ومن ثم تبلورت آرائهم في طرحهم للترجمة على أساس أحد المفهومين المذكورين أعلاه ، أي كونها فن أم علم .

وقد حاول Cleary بلورة مشكلة الترجمة من خلال طرح عدة أسئلة هامة على أحد المترجمين ، الذي أعطى اجابات توضيحية لها . وفي اجابة هذا المترجم على سؤال يتعلق بعدد الترجمات السيئة التي ظهرت إلى الوجود ، عزا السبب في ذلك إلى حقيقة أن " الأفراد الذين يقومون بالترجمة عادة ما يكون لديهم قدرات لغوية وليس مقدرة أدبية " . ويمكن أن نأخذ هذه الاجابة على أنها تأييد للنظرية التي تصف الترجمة

كفن وليس كعملية علمية . ويتضح من هذا أن Cleary يعطي الأولوية للموهبة الأدبية على القدرات اللغوية أثناء القيام بعملية الترجمة . ويحدد Savory العلاقة الوثيقة التي تربط بين المترجم والفنان . فيقول إن " الفنان لا يؤدي دوره أبدا بدون وجود مستشارين ينصحونه ويحرصون على ابلاغه بما يجب عمله ، ولا بدون ناقدين يكونون على استعداد لآخباره بكيفية أدائه لهذا الدور " . ووفقا لما يقوله Savory ، فإن القواعد والتعليمات التي يتلقاها من يرغبون العمل في حقل الترجمة من مختلف المصادر المتعددة غالبا ما تتسبب في العديد من الارتباكات في العمل ، الأمر الذي يصيب المترجمون بالذهول . ويتجسد الملاذ الوحيد الآمن الذي ينبغي على المترجمين اللجوء إليه في هذه الحالة في كلمة " الأمانة " faithfulness . حيث يفترض في المترجم - لكي يكون آمينا في تعامله مع النص الأصلي - أن يختبر بديته ومشاعره بالاضافة إلى كفاءته ومهارته في كل من اللغة المصدر واللغة المنقول إليها .

أما Dil فيحاول الدفاع عن تأكيد Nida لوجود " علم للترجمة " ، ولكنه يأخذ موقفا معتدلا من هذه القضية . فمن أحد الجوانب ، فإنه يؤيد وجهة نظر Nida عن وجود علم للترجمة ، الذي يتوقع أن يوفر بعدا ديناميكيا لمعادل الترجمة . ومن ناحية أخرى ، فإنه يرى أن الترجمة

يمكن وصفها من منظور ثلاثة مستويات عملية ، أي كعلم وكمهارة وكفن . وقد يتفق المرء مع وجهة النظر الأخيرة التي يطرحها Dil والمتعلقة بالمستويات العملية الثلاثة وذلك من منظور اجراءات الترجمة التي يمكن وصفها . ولكن مع ذلك يظل السؤال مطروحا فيما يتعلق بمكونات المفاهيم الثلاثة التي يطرحها - أي العلم والمهارة والفن .

ويأخذ Nida موقفا واضحا تجاه هذه القضية ، حيث يقوم بتحليل عملية الترجمة من منظور الاجراءات العلمية التي تتم وفقا لها . ويحاول Nida التمييز بين العملية الفعلية actual process للترجمة والدراسة العلمية scientific study لها . ويمكن أن توصف العملية الفعلية للترجمة " بأنها استخدام معقد للغة " ، أما الدراسة العلمية لها " فينبغي النظر إليها كأحد فروع اللغويات المقارنة comparative linguistics ، مع الأخذ في الاعتبار بعدها الديناميكي والتركيز على علم دلالات الألفاظ semantics " . ولا يهم كيف يبدو مفهوم " الترجمة كعلم " واسعا أو غامضا لبعض المترجمين ، وهو الانتقاد الذي يواجهه نظرية Nida ، حيث من الواضح أن هذه النظرية قد فتحت المجال أمام أبعاد جديدة للترجمة وشجعت العديد من المترجمين والباحثين على اتباع اجراءات نظامية وواضحة وموضوعية أثناء قيامهم بالترجمة .

وتعارض McGuire بشدة وجهة النظر التي تنادي بوجود نظرية " قياسية " normative theory للترجمة ، وتعتبر أن أي " مناقشة بشأن وجود علم للترجمة هي مناقشة لا معنى لها " . وتعتبر McGuire أن مفهوم Nida عن وجود علم للترجمة هو " محاولة لتقييد عملية الترجمة وتحديدتها في نظرية تحاول وضع مجموعة من القواعد للتأثير سلبا على الترجمة الصحيحة " . وتؤكد أن العمليات التي يتم القيام بها أثناء الترجمة يمكن فهمها وتحليلها من خلال اطار واقعي يهدف لتوضيح واختبار مسألتي التكافؤ والمعنى مع التركيز على الجوانب العملية وليس الجوانب القياسية المتضمنة في هذه العمليات .

وقد تدعم جانب المعارضين لوجود نظرية ترى الترجمة كعلم بدرجة أكبر مع انضمام Newmark إليهم . وقد أخذ Newmark موقفين يبدوان وكأنهما متعارضين ولكنهما متكاملين من الناحية الفعلية . فمن ناحية ، كرر Newmark قناعته بعدم " وجود ما يمكن أن نسميه بـ ' قانون الترجمة ' Law of Translation ، ما دامت القوانين لا تسمح بوجود استثناءات . ولذلك فلا يمكن أن توجد للترجمة نظرية شاملة واحدة صحيحة " . ويخلص إلى توضيح أنه " بالرغم من ادعاءات مدرسة

الترجمة التي يتزعمها كل من Nida و Leipzig ، إلا أنه ليس هناك ما يمكن أن يسمى بعلم الترجمة ولن يوجد أبدا ذلك الشيء " .
ومن ناحية أخرى ، يسلم Newmark بأن " الترجمة - من الناحية الواقعية والعملية - تكون علما حينما لا يكون هناك غير تأويل واحد صحيح وموضوعي للكلمة أو العبارة أو الجملة ... الخ ، وتكون فنا حينما يكون هناك أكثر من بديل متساو لها " .

وقد حاول العديد من علماء اللغة والمترجمين القيام بعمل تحليل علمي للترجمة . وحتى أولئك الذين عارضوا وجود نظرية تتعامل مع الترجمة كعلم (McGuire) ، فانهم عادة ما يرددون أهمية وجود وصف واضح وموضوعي للعمليات المتضمنة في الترجمة . وقد يجادل المترجمون الآخرون - خاصة الذين يعملون في مجال الأعمال الأدبية - بأن العملية تتطلب تقييما للجوانب الابداعية للغة المصدر بالأساس ، ولذلك يكون على المترجم استخدام حسه الأدبي وذكائه ومهارته لكي يكون قادرا على نقل فحوى كل الرسالة إلى اللغة المنقول إليها .

وبالرغم من ذلك ، يعارض القليل من المترجمين وجود نظرية للترجمة يكون هدفها التوصل إلى فهم العمليات المتضمنة أثناء القيام

بالترجمة . وقد يكون الاعتماد على نظام الأولويات الذي وضعه Nida مفيدا للغاية في حالات معينة للترجمة . ويمكن توضيح نظام الأولويات كما يلي :

- ١-الاتساق السياقي له الأولوية على الاتساق المفرداتي .
 - ٢-المقابل المعنوي له الأولوية على المقابل الشكلي .
 - ٣-الترجمات التي يستخدمها جمهور كبير يكون في حاجة لها وتكون مقبولة لديه لها الأولوية على الترجمات الأدبية الرصينة .
- على أن فهم نظام الأولويات المعروضة أعلاه لا يعني بحد ذاته الالتزام بدقة به . ففي بعض الأحيان يكون على المترجم اعطاء المعاني العاطفية (الدلالية) الأولوية على أي عناصر أخرى موجودة في نص اللغة المصدر ، لأن السياق يتطلب منه عمل ذلك . وفي حالات أخرى ، كما هو الحال في ترجمة الشعر أو النصوص المسرحية ، يكون لعناصر أخرى مثل نبرة الحديث وإيقاع الكلام وطوله ووزن الألحان والسجع واللهجة أولوية كبرى على أي عناصر لغوية أو أسلوبية أخرى .

وصفوة القول ، يمكن القول بأن وجود نظرية تحلل العمليات التي تمر بها الترجمة وتفسرها باستخدام المعايير العلمية هو بلا شك أمر يساعد

في عملية الترجمة بشرط ألا نعتبر هذه المعايير قياسية أو مطلقة . وهكذا فان أحد الأهداف الهامة لوجود نظرية للترجمة يتمثل في توفير وسيلة يمكن من خلالها مقارنة الترجمات المختلفة وتقييمها . ويتضمن ذلك استخدام المعايير العلمية بالاضافة إلى مهارة الشخص وموهبته الأدبية . إن المترجم لا يقوم بالمحاكاة وحسب ، ولكنه يشارك المؤلف الأصلي في مسؤوليته في العمل الابداعي والكتابة الابداعية ، وعليه أن يلجأ للاستراتيجيات المختلفة باستخدام حدسه الشخصي ومهارته وذكائه وغير ذلك من القدرات الفنية ، وذلك من أجل الوصول إلى ترجمة جيدة .

قواعد الترجمة Rules of Translation

نحاول الآن وضع بعض القواعد الاسترشادية التي يمكن الاهتداء بها أثناء القيام بعملية الترجمة . على أن نأخذ في الاعتبار دائما أن هذه القواعد هي للاسترشاد فقط ، وأنه أثناء ترجمة نص معين فاننا نضرب بهذه القواعد عرض الحائط .

١- " من المستحيل أن نحصل على قواعد خاصة بالترجمة تطبق بدون استثناء (أي جامعة مانعة) " .

"It is impossible to obtain unexceptionably and exhaustively determined translational rules".

٢- " يجوز للمترجم أن يضيف إلى النص المترجم أو يحذف منه بحرص شديد " .

"The translator may add to or delete from the translated text with sound discretion".

ولكن يجب أن يتم هذا بصورة صحيحة وفي الحالات التي تحتم علينا اللجوء لذلك . وعلى سبيل المثال ، فان :

قام بدور بارز وجهد مشكور

تترجم إلى :

He *played* a prominent role and *exerted* a highly appreciated effort.

وهكذا فان الفعل " قام " تمت ترجمته بالفعالين : played و exerted . وفي الجملة :

كان أبو بكر أزهد الناس وأكثرهم تواضعا في أخلاقه ولباسه وطعامه تترجم إلى :

Among other people, Abu Bakr was the most ascetic and the most modest; *the noblest in manners, the plainest in apparel, and the most frugal in food.*

حيث تطلب الأمر شرح الكلمات : أخلاقه ولباسه وطعامه بشئ من التفصيل . وفي الجملة :

إن ما يميزكم من جميل سجايا وما تتحلون به من كريم مناقب وما لديكم من نبل خصال ينبئ بمستقبل باهر ينتظركم .

تكون الترجمة :

The good attribute, highly appreciated qualities and noble merits *you do possess* presage a bright future.

فقد استطعنا أن نضم : ما يميزكم وما تتحلون به وما لديكم في كلمة واحدة هي *you possess* مع تأكيد المعنى باستخدام الفعل *do* .
كذلك في التعبير :

أمطار غزيرة وسحب كثيفة

تتم الترجمة بالقول :

heavy rain and clouds

حيث يمكن أن تصف كلمة *heavy* كل من *rain* و *clouds* .

٣- " تعد الترجمة الحرفية أحيانا طريقة صحيحة ومقبولة ، وذلك إذا كانت العلاقات المكونة للتركيب تظهر علاقات واضحة للمعنى " .
"Literal Translation is sometimes a valid and legitimate method WHEN syntactic relations are also EXPLICIT thematic relations".

فمثلا الجملة :

It is threefold disgrace for a man to be in misery for want of food.

نجد أنها من الممكن أن تترجم إلى :

عار ثلاث مرات على الانسان أن يكون فى شقاء بسبب الحاجة الى الطعام .

وبالطبع فهذه ترجمة حرفية للنص أفقدته جماله فى اللغة العربية ،
ومن الممكن أن تترجم إلى :

عار ثم عار ثم عار شقاء المرء من أجل الطعام

حيث إن ذلك يكون توكيدا مقبولا فى اللغة العربية .

كذلك فان الجملة :

My friend was stung by a bee yesterday.

تترجم حرفيا إلى :

أمس أسع صديقى بواسطة نحلة .

وهو أيضا أسلوب غير مقبول . ولكن من الأفضل أن نقول :

لسعت صديقى نحلة بالأمس .

وفى الجملة :

Tom is in a dire need of that medicine whenever he gets nervous.

تترجم حرفيا بالقول :

توم يكون فى حاجة شديدة إلى ذلك الدواء إذا زاد انفعاله .

وهي ترجمة غير مقبولة . ولكن يمكن القول :

تشتد الحاجة بتوم إلى ذلك الدواء إذا زاد انفعاله .

مما سبق نجد أن الترجمة الحرفية في جميع الجمل السابقة لا تصلح . ولكنها تصلح في حالة وحيدة ، وهي الحالة التي تُظهر فيها العلاقات المكونة للتركيب علاقات واضحة للمعنى . ومثال ذلك ، إذا قلنا :

This is Ali.

فإنها تترجم إلى :

هذا على

وكذلك الجملة :

He was here.

تترجم إلى :

كان هنا

وهكذا فما نسعى إليه هو حرفية المعنى meaning-bound ، وليس الحرفية من حيث الشكل .

٤- " وحدة الترجمة : أسهل وحدة نتعامل معها في الترجمة هي الجملة ، لأنها تكشف شبكة مستقلة في حد ذاتها من التفاعل المعقد في الغالب من المفردات وتركيب الجملة . والجملة مجموعة من العلاقات ومحكومة من حيث الرسالة التي تبلغها وتعكس حساسية للسياق ، وكل

وحدة تتفصل من حيث الشكل في نفس النص بواسطة علامات الترقيم " .

“Translation Unit: The pedagogically easiest to handle translation is the sentence, because it reveals a self-contained network of the often complicated inter-play of lexis and syntax. The sentence is a syntactically structured, communicatively controlled, context-sensitive combination of linguistic signs that are formally marked off from other sentences of the same text by means of punctuation marks”.

فمن المعتاد أننا نقوم بالترجمة جملة جملة ، مع وجوب اعطاء العناية اللازمة لفهم الروابط بين الجمل . وإذا لم يكن هناك مشاكل تحيط بترجمة الجملة ، فهذا يعني أن " الترجمة تعتمد بشدة على النقل الحرفي بالاضافة إلى اجراء عمليات التغيير الوظيفي اللازمة والتغيير في ترتيب الكلمات " .

ويجب أن نلاحظ جيدا أن العلاقات التي تربط المفردات في الجملة هي علاقات واضحة للمعنى . على أن نضع في الذهن دائما

أنه ليس من الضروري أن تعمل القواعد النحوية المتماثلة في اللغات المختلفة بنفس الطريقة .

وتظهر أولى العلامات التي تشير إلى وجود مشاكل في الترجمة حينما لا تتوافر هذه الاجراءات السابقة للنقل من لغة إلى أخرى . وبعدها يأتي التنازع بين الكلمات في اللغة المصدر (سواء كانت كلمة مفردة أو مجموعة من الكلمات أو تركيب معين) ، كما قد تكون المشكلة ثقافية أو تتعلق بإحدى اللهجات . وعلى أي الأحوال ، يبدأ النزاع الفكري بين كلمات اللغة المصدر وأفكار اللغة المنقول إليها . فكيف نتمكن من فض هذا النزاع ؟

في الترجمة الفورية ، يحاول المترجم أن ينسى كلمات اللغة المصدر ويبدأ بتكوين أفكار مستقلة عن محتوى الرسالة ثم يحاول نقلها للغة الأخرى ربما بكلمات تختلف عن كلمات اللغة المصدر . أما في الترجمة التحريرية ، فمن الأفضل للمترجم ألا ينسى كلمات اللغة المصدر ، فهي دائما تكون بمثابة نقطة الانطلاق بالنسبة له ، فهو يبدع ويفسر على أساس هذه الكلمات .

ويتخلى المترجم عن التمسك بنفس نص اللغة المصدر في حالة وحيدة فقط ، حينما يؤدي استخدامها إلى أن تصبح الترجمة غير واضحة من الناحيتين الايصالية والعملية .

وحيث إن الجملة هي وحدة التفكير الأساسية التي تعرض لموضوع ما ، لذلك فيجب أن تكون هي وحدة الترجمة . وبالأساس يقوم المترجم بترجمة الجملة ، وفي كل جملة يكون شاغله الأساسي البحث أولاً عن الفاعل ومعرفة ما قام به . وإذا كان الفاعل مذكوراً من قبل ، أو كان هو الفكرة الأساسية في الجملة ، فيجب أن نضعه في أول جزء من الجملة ثم نتبعه بالمعلومات الجديدة عنه في نهاية الجملة .

وتكون المشكلة دائماً هي كيفية اعطاء معنى واضح لجملة صعبة وغامضة . وعادة ما تكون القواعد هي مصدر الازعاج في الجمل الطويلة المعقدة . ونعرض فيما يلي مثالا عن إحدى الجمل الطويلة :

The following measures have profoundly shaken French institutions in a way that has not been known in local government for a century: what has remained of government supervision has been abolished; control of procedural legality has been

reorganized and regional audit offices established; executive power has been transferred to the chairmen of deliberative assemblies; regions with full powers have been created; powers of economic intervention have been extended to regional and local authorities; powers previously exercised by the State have been transferred in complete stages to the various types of authorities; corresponding State resources have been transferred to these authorities; specific local characteristics have been introduced into legislation; a territorial civil service has been created and previous devaluation regulations have been adapted to the new relations between the State and the local authorities.

ومن الواضح أن ترجمة مثل هذه الجمل تتطلب الفهم الدقيق لها . " ومن الممكن تقسيم الجمل الكبيرة أثناء ترجمتها إلى اللغة الأخرى إلى أكثر من جملة صغيرة " .

٥- تنشأ عدم القابلية للترجمة حين يكون من المستحيل أن نربط السمات أو الملامح الوظيفية الخاصة بالحالة بالمعنى السياقي في نص

اللغة المنقول إليها . ويحدث هذا عامة في حالتين لا يمكن الفصل بينهما :

* حين تكون الصعوبة لغوية

* حين تكون الصعوبة ثقافية أو حضارية

Untranslatability occurs when it is impossible to build functionally relevant features of the situation into the contextual meaning of the TL text. Broadly speaking, this falls into two inter-related categories:

* Cases where the difficulty is linguistic.

* Cases where the difficulty is cultural.

يمكن ارجاع المشاكل اللغوية التي يمكن أن تمثل صعوبات أمام المترجم إلى الاضافة أو الحذف أو تغيير الأسلوب . وللتعرف على هذه المشاكل بشكل أدق ، نستعرض فيما يلي الأمثلة التالية . فمن قصة " عرس الزين " للطيب صالح ، التي ترجمها إلى الانجليزية Denys Davies ، نأخذ بعض الأمثلة :

ففي النص العربي :

وسقط حنك الناظر من الدهشة ونجا الطرفي

وكانت الترجمة :

The headmaster's lower jaw dropped in astonishment and Tureifi escaped punishment.

نجد أن المترجم أضاف كلمة lower قبل jaw ، وكذلك كلمة punishment بعد escape ، وذلك لازالة أي غموض قد ينشأ إذا خلا النص الانجليزي من هذه الكلمات وظل كما هو في النص العربي .

وفي سياق آخر يقول المؤلف :

الحنين رجل مبروك

وجاءت الترجمة :

Haneen is a man blessed of God

نجد أن المترجم أضاف كلمة God إلى التعبير ككل للدلالة على تدين الرجل وأنه من الرجال الصالحين على نحو ما يشير إليه النص .
كذلك جاء في النص العربي :

والحنين ولي صالح ، وهو لا يصادق أحدا إلا إذا أحس فيه قبس من نور

وترجمت إلى :

and that Haneen was a holy man who would not frequent the company of someone unless he had perceived in him a glimmering of spiritual light

نجد أن المترجم أسقط كلمة صالح good واستخدم بدلا منها holy لتتماشى مع سياق الكلام . كما أضاف كلمة spiritual إلى light لتوضيح المعنى المراد . وهنا من الهام ملاحظة أن العبارة " قيس من نور " هي تعبير قرآني ، والشئ أو الشخص الذي يشع منه قيس من نور يكون في واقع الأمر متنزه عن العالم الأرضي ، أي يكون روحاني .

أما المشاكل الثقافية التي تعترض المترجم ، فتتمثل في اختلاف المفاهيم بين ثقافتنا اللغوية المصدر واللغة المنقول إليها . ولتوضيح ذلك ، نستعرض المثال التالي من قصة " زقاق المدق " لنجيب محفوظ ، التي ترجمها إلى الإنجليزية Le Gassick .
فيقول النص العربي :

وكانت تقول في المرات الأخرى إن جنونا لاشك فيه ينتاب بنتها حين الغضب وسمتها الخماسين باسم الرياح المعروفة .
وجاءت الترجمة :

On other occasions she had said that a real madness overcame her daughter when she got very angry and she nicknamed her tempers the "Khamsin", after the vicious and unpredictable summer winds.

نجد أن الترجمة كانت دقيقة وملتزمة تماما بالنص الأصلي ، فيما عدا النصف الأخير منها ، الذي كان يجب أن يكون :
and she called her the "Khamsin", after the known winds

ومع ذلك ، فقد فضل المترجم مساعدة القارئ الانجليزي باضافة تعريف مختصر لكلمة " خماسين " ، وذلك لغياب هذا المفهوم عن الثقافة الغربية . ومن المعروف بالطبع أن رياح الخماسين هي رياح تجتاح مصر من الجنوب وتستمر لمدة خمسين يوما أثناء فصل الربيع .

وسوف نعود للحديث عن هاتين المشكلتين بشئ من التفصيل في الفصل القادم .

الفصل الثانی

صعوبات الترجمة ومشاكلها

صعوبات الترجمة ومشاكلها

تمهيد

نبحث في هذا الفصل بعض الصعوبات والمشاكل التي تواجه المترجم حينما يشرع في عملية الترجمة ، على أننا سنحدد اللغة المصدر SL واللغة المنقول إليها TL في كونهما إما اللغة العربية أو اللغة الانجليزية .

وتنشأ تلك الصعوبات والمشاكل من حقيقة أن المعادل من حيث المعنى semantic equivalent في اللغة المنقول إليها قد لا يقوم بنقل أو توصيل نفس الرسالة المكتوبة في اللغة المصدر ، أو أن يكون القالب اللغوي الذي تُعرض به الرسالة في اللغة المصدر مختلفا أو غير كاف عن ذلك الموجود في اللغة المنقول إليها ، خصوصا إذا كانت المعلومات والافتراضات المشتركة فيما بين القارئ والناقل مختلفة ، خصوصا أيضا إذا حدث ذلك بين لغتين تختلفان تماما من الناحية الثقافية مثل اللغة الانجليزية والعربية . ذلك أنه ليس من السهل الترجمة من اللغة العربية إلى اللغة الانجليزية أو العكس نظرا لاختلاف بنية وتركيب كل من اللغتين تماما عن بعضهما .

وتمتلى اللغة العربية بالاختلافات الدقيقة وتمتاز كل من الأسماء والأفعال فيها بالمرونة . وتظهر عدم القابلية للترجمة حينما يكون من المستحيل ايجاد خصائص معادلة من الناحية الوظيفية للحالة المعروضة في نص اللغة المصدر لكي يمكن نقلها إلى المعنى السياقي في نص اللغة المنقول إليها .

ولتوضيح ذلك بشكل دقيق ، ننظر إلى المثال التالي ، فاللغة الانجليزية تقول :

My father is a teacher

ويقابلها في اللغة العربية :

والدي معلم

وهكذا يتضح الفرق بجلاء بين سياق اللغتين ، فالجملة في اللغة العربية لا يوجد بها فعل أو أداة للتعريف والتكثير .

وتنشأ الصعوبة في الترجمة من اللغة العربية إلى اللغة الانجليزية وبالعكس في اختيار المعنى الملائم أو تحديد طبيعة استخدام الكلمة أو ايجاد التفرقة بين المذكر والمؤنث أو تمييز العدد سواء مفرد أم مثلى أم جمع أو ايجاد الصيغة المعادلة للفعل الخ ، وهي أمور تجعل من الصعب في بعض الأحيان اختيار المعادل الصحيح . ويساعد الامام الجيد بخصائص كل من اللغتين العربية والانجليزية في تسهيل عملية التوصل إلى الترجمة الصحيحة والجيدة . وهي أمور

نناقشها تفصيلا فيما يلي ، وعلى أن نضع في اعتبارنا دائما أن
الترجمة هي عملية سهلة ولكنها في غاية التعقيد في ذات الوقت .
وهكذا فيعتبر " كل شئ قابل للترجمة ولا شئ يقبل الترجمة " ، أو
! Everything is translatable and nothing is

١ - اختيار المعنى الملائم Selecting Proper Meaning

تعرضنا لهذه المشكلة من قبل أثناء مناقشة الصعوبات اللغوية والثقافية في قواعد الترجمة . وبالإضافة إلى ما سبق قوله في هذا الصدد ، نود إضافة بعض النقاط التالية .

يجب أن نضع في الاعتبار دائما أن ما نسعى إليه في الترجمة هو التوصل إلى حرفية المعنى وليس الحرفية من حيث الشكل . وعلى ذلك يجب علينا في الترجمة التوصل إلى المضمون .

هناك بعض الكلمات التي لا تقبل الترجمة من منظور ترجمة الكلمة . بمعنى أنه توجد بعض الكلمات في اللغة الانجليزية التي لا تقبل اللغة العربية ترجمتها بكلمة واحدة مقابلة . وعلى سبيل المثال ، نجد أن كلمة privatization قد وُضعت لها ترجمات عديدة في اللغة العربية ، مثل " الخصخصة " أو " التخصيص " أو " التخصيصية " . وهذه كلها ترجمات غير دقيقة للكلمة ، ذلك أن اللغة الانجليزية تميل دائما لإضافة الزوائد affixes - سواء كانت بوادئ prefixes أم لواحق suffixes - إلى الكلمة الأصلية، حتى تتم

مواجمة استخدامها في موقعها من الجملة . ولذلك فهي تعتبر أكثر من كلمة واحدة وإن بدت في ظاهرها غير ذلك . ومن هنا فلا يكون هناك داع للإصرار على ترجمتها بكلمة واحدة مرادفة في اللغة العربية . وبذلك تكون الترجمة الدقيقة للكلمة السابقة هي : " التحول للقطاع الخاص " . وكذلك islamization ، والتي يترجمها البعض بكلمة " أسلمة " ، وهو تعبير غير دقيق عن الكلمة ، ولذلك فيمكن ترجمتها بالقول " تطبيق الشريعة الإسلامية " . وغير ذلك كثير مما يمكن القياس عليه في بعض الكلمات الأخرى ، مثل :

مصطاف ← seaside holiday maker

اشكالية ← the complicated nature of

باع ⇒ long experience

عشق - وله - هيام ⇒ great love

ينوه ⇒ to brief mention

دهشة بالغة ⇒ astonishment

وهكذا نجد أن ترجمة كلمة بكلمة لا يعد في أحيان كثيرة أسلوباً صحيحاً ، إذ أنه لا يعكس المعنى المكافئ المباشر وفقاً لكل من خصائص اللغة وثقافتها .

كذلك فهناك بعض الكلمات يمكن أن تختلف معانيها باختلاف الحالات التي تُذكر فيها ، مثل :

باب - شعبة - جزء ⇒ section

ويثقة - ملف - محضر ⇒ record

هيئة ⇐ authority - agency - organization

وهنا يجب اختيار المعنى المناسب حسب السياق الذي وردت فيه الكلمة .

ننتقل بعد ذلك إلى صعوبة أخرى ، تتمثل في اختيار المعنى المراد من الكلمة من بين المعاني الموضوعه لها في القاموس . وعلى سبيل المثال ، في الجملة :

Dozens of people were killed.

نجد أن dozen تعني " اثنا عشر " أو " ستة " بالعامية . وفي هذا السياق لا يمكن الترجمة بالقول " تم قتل عشرات أو دسات من الناس " . وإنما يجب البحث عن أقرب عدد في اللغة العربية مقابل لهذا العدد ، وهو الرقم " عشرة " . وبذلك يمكن ترجمة الجملة السابقة بالقول :

تم قتل عشرات الأفراد .

كذلك الجملة :

Several plots are assigned to private investors in new cities.

نجد أن كلمة plot لها معان عديدة . ولكن المعنى الذي يصلح لسياق هذه الجملة هو " قطعة أرض " . وبذلك تكون الترجمة :
تم تخصيص عدة أراضٍ للمستثمرين من القطاع الخاص في المدن الجديدة .

وفي الجملة :

Sleeping policemen help reduce car accidents.

نجد أن المعنى يبدو متناقضا لأول وهلة . ولكن بقليل من التدقيق ، نجد أن كلمة sleeping policemen لا بد وأن يكون لها معنى خاص ، وهو المطبات الصناعية . وهكذا تكون الترجمة :
تساعد المطبات الصناعية في التقليل من حوادث السيارات .

وأخيرا فمن المشاكل التي يمكن أن تواجه المترجم كذلك عدم وجود سوى معنى واحد لعدة كلمات ، فمثلا snake و serpent لها معنى واحد في العربية هو ثعبان ، وكذلك home و house لها معنى واحد أيضا في العربية هو بيت . وتظهر المشكلة إذا واجه المترجم مثل هاتين الكلمتين المتشابهتين في نص واحد ، فكيف يمكنه التعبير عن معنى كل منهما على حدا ؟

وعلى الرغم من أن معنى الكلمة يمكن ايجاده من القاموس ،
إلا أننا لا يمكننا الاعتماد كلية عليه إلا فيما يتعلق بالمصطلحات
العلمية والمتخصصة أو التعبيرات الاصطلاحية . وأفضل وسيلة للتأكد
من صحة معنى إحدى المفردات هو أن نبحث عنها في قاموس أحادي
اللغة ثم قاموس ثنائي اللغة ، وذلك حتى نطرد ظلال المعنى التي
يمكن أن تنتج .

٢ - الاختلاف الثقافي أو البيئي

Cultural or Environmental Differences

بعد أن تحدثنا عن كيفية علاج الصعوبات المتمثلة في وضع معنى معين لكلمة جديدة أو التعرف على المعنى المراد من الكلمة من بين المعاني الكثيرة المحددة لها في القواميس ، تصادفنا الآن مشكلة أخرى ، وهي كيفية إيجاد معاني بعض الكلمات التي لا تتواجد في ثقافة أو بيئة معينة . ويرتبط هذا الموضوع بمشكلة عدم قابلية ترجمة untranslatability تلك الكلمات من اللغة المصدر SL إلى اللغة المنقول إليها TL .

وعلى سبيل المثال ، ففي الثقافة الأوربية ، هناك مفهوم boy friend و girl friend ، وهي مفاهيم غير موجودة بالمرّة في الثقافة العربية .

كذلك تتواجد في البيئة العربية بعض الأكلات ، مثل الملوخية والعرقسوس ، وبعض الملبوسات ، مثل عقالة وعمامة وجلابية، والتي لا تتواجد في البيئة الأجنبية .

وبالمثل ففي البيئة الأوربية أكلات مثل pork و porridge ،
وملبوسات مثل dinner-jacket و pullover و sari و kimono ،
وليس لها مقابل في العربية .

كذلك ففي الديانة الإسلامية هناك كلمات مثل " مفتى " و " زكاة " و " عدة " و " محلل " و " سلطان " ، والتي ليس لها ما يقابلها في اللغة الانجليزية .

وأحد الحلول المقترحة لعلاج مثل هذه المشكلة أن نلجأ إلى أسلوب transliteration¹ ، أي كتابة الكلمة في اللغة المنقول إليها حسب طريقة نطقها في اللغة المصدر . ومن الممكن اعطاء تفسير لهذه الكلمة بين قوسين أو في هامش الصفحة . فمثلا كلمة " عدة " يمكن ترجمتها بالكلمة iddat مع اعطاء تفسير لها وهو :

the period during which a divorced or widowed woman cannot be married (according to Islam)

وهكذا ، على أنه يجب الأخذ في الاعتبار أن هذا الحل لا يجدي في حالات كثيرة .

¹ راجع ص ٤٩ .

ولتوضيح هذه المشكلة بشكل أكبر ، دعنا ننظر إلى المثال التالي الذي نورده من ترجمة قصة " الطيب صالح " التي سبق الإشارة إليها . يقول المؤلف :

وقال الحاج عبد الصمد : " علي بالطلاق الزين عرس عرس صح مو كذب " .

وترجمها Denys Davies إلى :

And Hajj Abdul Samad said: I'll divorce my wife if Zein hasn't got himself married - and a real proper marriage it is too.

نجد هنا أن المترجم واجه مشكلة حقيقية للتكافؤ يبدو أنها غير قابلة للترجمة . ذلك أنه وفقا للشريعة الاسلامية ، حينما ينوي الرجل طلاق زوجته ، يجب أن يلفظ العبارة " علي الطلاق " بلسانه . وهكذا أصبح هذا التعبير جزءا من التقاليد الاجتماعية ، فحينما يهمل رجل ما بتأكيد أهمية فعل معين أو حدث معين ، فانه يقسم أو يقول ذلك التعبير ، لكي يؤثر في مستمعيه ويؤكد مدى جديته بشأن هذه المسألة . ولذلك فإذا كان قارئ الانجليزية على غير وعي بالخلفيات الثقافية والاجتماعية المتضمنة في موضوع الطلاق بالنسبة للرجل العربي ، فقد يتساءل القارئ حينئذ عن السبب وراء ذكر " نية الرجل في طلاق زوجته " أثناء الحديث عن زواج الزين ؟

وأثناء الحديث عن استعداد الزين للوقوع في حب كل فتاة جميلة يقابلها ، يقول الطيب صالح :

وكانت ليلاه هذه المرة فتاة من البدو

وواجه المترجم هنا أيضا مشكلة ايجاد المعادل الثقافي . فقال :

His "Lila" this time was a young girl from among the bedouin.

وتتمثل المشكلة في هذه الترجمة في ذكر المترجم لكلمة Lila التي لم يستطع ايجاد مقابل مناسب لها في اللغة الانجليزية ، ولذلك فضل استخدامها بنفس الشكل الذي ذكرت به في النص الأصلي . وفي اللغة العربية ، تشير الكلمة بصفة عامة إلى اسم امرأة ، ولكن حينما تظهر في السياق المذكور أعلاه ، فانها تشير إلى أن الرجل قد وقع في حالة هيام شديد بامرأة معينة ولكن اسمها ليس ليلي . وبالطبع فهي تشير أيضا إلى قصة الحب المشهورة التي وقعت بين قيس وليلى ، والمعروفة باسم " مجنون ليلي " ، والتي تعتبر واحدة من أروع قصص الحب في الأدب العربي . وغالبا ما تشكل هذه الحبيبة التي لا يستطيع محبوبها الارتباط بها معظم قصص الحب العربية ، وتوصف البطلة فيها بأنها " ليلي " . بل ظهرت بعض الأمثلة العربية بعد هذه القصة والتي تستعير اسم " ليلي " فيها ، كالمثل القائل " كل يغني على ليلاه " .

وهكذا نجد أن البعد الثقافي يلعب دورا رئيسيا في عملية الترجمة . فالكلمات التي لها أكثر من دلالة في احدى اللغات قد لا يكون لها نفس الانعكاسات المؤثرة في لغة أخرى . وعلى سبيل المثال ، يأخذ " القمر " بعدا رومانسيا في الثقافة العربية ويشار إليه للدلالة على الحب . ولكن في الثقافة الفرنسية يجسد القمر مفاهيم الطفولة وعدم البراءة وربما الغباء . وتتنظر إليه الثقافة الانجليزية بنفس البعد ولكن بصورة أقل حدة . ولذلك ففي ترجمة الجملة^٢ :

الفتاة كالقمر في جمالها

حاولنا ترجمة ما يوحي به هذا التشبيه وليس التشبيه ذاته . وفي سياقات معينة ، قد تعطي بعض الكلمات - مثل أسماء الحيوانات - دلالات معينة . ففي العربية والانجليزية تعطي كلمات مثل دب وحمار وبغل وثلعب وكلب وقرد وخنزير احياءات غير مناسبة يشعر بها من يسمعا . فمثلا يوحي الدب بقلّة الخبرة والحمار بعدم الاحساس والبغل بالعناد والثلعب بالمكر والكلب بالدونية والقرد بالاستهزاء والخنزير بالقذارة . وهكذا تصبح للتعبيرات مثل " إنه

^٢ راجع ص ٤٨ .

كالحمار " أو " إنهم مجموعة قرود " دلالات معينة لابد أن تعكسها الترجمة .

ويقترح Newmark أن على المترجم في بعض الأحيان " التركيز على العناصر العاطفية والمؤثرة الموجودة في النص الأصلي لأن السياق يتطلب ذلك " . ويجب ملاحظة أنه في الوقت الذي يظل فيه التركيز على أهمية نقل الرسالة المتضمنة في نص اللغة المصدر كاملة إلى اللغة المنقول إليها ، بما في ذلك الاختلافات الثقافية التي تحتوي عليها رسالة اللغة المصدر ، فإنه يجب التعامل مع عناصر المعنى الدلالي باحساس واع . ويجب على المترجم ألا يحاول تضمين المعاني غير الجوهرية الغارقة في ثقافة اللغة المصدر إلى ترجمته ، إذ قد تصبح الترجمة في هذه الحالة مشوهة جزئيا أو كليا .

٣ - استخدام الكلمة

Word Usage

يعتبر السياق في اللغة العربية هو المحدد الأساسي لطبيعة الأسلوب الذي نتحدث به ، بمعنى ما إذا كان عاميا أو فصحي . وعلى سبيل المثال ، فمن قصة " عرس الزين " ، يقول المؤلف :

سمعتي الخبر ؟ الزين مو داير يعرُس

ويمكن أن نقول هذا الكلام بأسلوب آخر - مثل :

هل سمعتي الخبر ؟ الزين سوف يعرُس (يتزوج)

ونلاحظ هنا أننا قد استخدمنا نفس الكلمات الموجودة في الجملة الأولى تقريبا ، ولكن بعد وضعها في أسلوب أكثر رسمية .

أما في اللغة الانجليزية ، فتتمثل إحدى الصعوبات التي تواجهنا في الترجمة إلى الانجليزية في كيفية تحديد نوع الكلمة من حيث طبيعة الاستخدام (رسمي / غير رسمي) . وتوفر لنا حصيلة الكلمات في اللغة الانجليزية عدة طرق للتعبير عن نفس الفكرة . وقد تكون إحدى هذه الطرق أكثر تحديدا من الأخرى ، إذ نجد أن scarlet أكثر تحديدا من red عند الحديث عن اللون . كما قد تكون إحدى هذه الطرق متخصصة بصورة أكبر من الأخرى ،

ويتضح ذلك حينما يشير الدكتور إلى broken collarbone
بالقول fractured clavide . وتختلف كلمات عديدة عن مترادفاتهما
اختلافا جوهريا في كونها رسمية أكثر ، مثلما purchase أكثر
رسمية من buy ، وكذلك gratuity من tip .

كما يمكن أن توجد لبعض الكلمات منطقة ثالثة محايدة
neutral مثلما هو الحال في كلمة أطفال ، حيث نجد التعبير الرسمي
لها إما offspring أو issue ، والتعبير غير الرسمي لها kids ،
أما المنطقة المحايدة فهي children .

وتختلف الكلمات في مستوى الاستخدام وفقا للتقسيم السابق ،

ويمكننا التعبير عن نفس المعنى بكلمة مختلفة في كل أسلوب ، هكذا :

INFORMAL FORMAL

home	abode	بيت
building	edifice	صرح
poor	impecunious	فقير
enough	sufficient	كاف
dead	deceased	متوفٍ

drink	beverage	مشروب
clothes	garments	ملابس
start/begin	commence	يبدأ
look into	investigate	يتحقق - يفحص
find out	ascertain	يتحقق
stop	desist	يتوقف
try	endeavour	يحاول
tell	notify	يخبر
use	employ	يستخدم
live	dwell	يسكن
live	reside	يسكن - يقطن
put up with	tolerate	يسمح بـ
read	peruse	يطالع - يقرأ
think	deem	يعتقد
open	inogerate	يفتح - يدشن
use	utilize	يفيد من
find out	discover	يكشف
give	furnish	يمد بـ

end

terminate

ينهي

ومن ناحية أخرى ، تتحدث شعوب كثيرة باللغة الانجليزية ، كما يتحدث عدد كبير من الناس بها كلغة ثانية . ومما لا شك فيه أن التحدث باللغة الانجليزية على نطاق واسع في جميع أنحاء العالم قد أدى لظهور اختلافات عديدة في مستويات الكتابة بها . ولعل أكثر هذه الاختلافات شيوعا تلك التي تظهر بين اللغة الانجليزية البريطانية والأمريكية .

وتواجهنا هنا صعوبة أخرى تتمثل في كيفية اختيار الكلمة من حيث كونها بريطانية British أم أمريكية American الأصل . وقد استقرت استخدامات عديدة كانت نشأتها أساسا من الولايات المتحدة في اللغة الانجليزية البريطانية ، ولم يعد ينظر إلى أصل هذه الاستخدامات الآن . وكمثال على ذلك : radio و immigrant و squatter و teenager و lengthy و to advocate و to locate و to cold war و third degree و hot air و live wire و belittle و mass meeting . على أن هناك بعض الاستخدامات الأمريكية الحديثة التي يعتقد أنها نشأت أساسا في الولايات المتحدة والتي

يرفضها الكُتاب والمتحدثون البريطانيون ، مثل : OK و I guess
و to check up on و to win out و to lose out .
على أن هناك اختلافات كثيرة بين الكلمات التي تستخدمها
اللغة الانجليزية البريطانية عن تلك المستخدمة في اللغة الانجليزية
الأمريكية . وعلى سبيل المثال :

BRITISH AMERICAN

bank holiday	legal holiday	أجازة البنوك
petrol	gas	بنزين
sweets	candy	حلويات
tap	faucet	حنفية - صنبور
pavement	side walk	رصيف
chemist	druggist	كيميائي - صيدلي
underground	subway	مترو الأنفاق
receptionist	desk clerk	موظف الاستقبال

كما تختلف أسماء الوزراء في كل من اللغة الانجليزية
البريطانية والأمريكية ، فيسمى وزير الخارجية في الانجليزية
البريطانية باسم Foreign Secretary وفي الانجليزية الأمريكية

باسم Secretary of State . كما يسمى وزير المالية أو الخزانة في
الانجليزية البريطانية باسم Chancellor of Exchequer وفي
الانجليزية الأمريكية باسم Seretary of the Treasury . أما
وزير الحربية فيسمى في الانجليزية البريطانية باسم Secretary
of State for War ، وفي الانجليزية الأمريكية باسم Secretary of
War وهكذا .

ويلاحظ أن هناك بعض الاختلافات في هجاء الكلمات في كل
من الانجليزية البريطانية والأمريكية ، بالرغم من ظهور كل من
الهجاءين معا . و فيما يلي نعرض قائمة بأهم استخدامات أو تفضيلات
الهجاء الشائعة في الانجليزية الأمريكية ، مع وضع الهجاء المفضل
المقابل لها في الانجليزية البريطانية . والكلمات التالية هي مجرد أمثلة
وليست حصرا بكل هذه الكلمات :

أولا : عدم مضاعفة الحرف الأخير اذا كان "l" :

BRITISH
signalled
traveller

AMERICAN
signaled
traveler

ثانيا : وضع الحروف "or" بدلا من "our" :

BRITISH

labour
colour

AMERICAN

labor
color

ثالثًا : وضع الحروف "-ize" بدلا من "-ise" :

BRITISH

civilise
naturalise

AMERICAN

civilize
naturize

ويتزايد الآن تفضيل استخدام اللاحقة "-ize" في الصيغ الانجليزية البريطانية ، كما أصبحت اللاحقة "-ization" معتادة الآن فيها أيضا .

رابعًا : وضع الحرف "-e-" بدلا من "-ae-" أو "-oe-" :

BRITISH

mediaeval
diarrhoea

AMERICAN

medieval
diarrhea

ويتزايد الآن قبول الهجاء الأمريكي الأبسط في الانجليزية البريطانية .

خامسًا : وضع الحروف "-ection" بدلا من "-exion" :

BRITISH**AMERICAN**

inflexion
reflexion

inflection
reflection

وقد أصبح الهجاء الأمريكي هو القاعدة في الانجليزية البريطانية .

سادسا : وضع الحروف "-er" بدلا من "-re" :

BRITISH

centre
metre

AMERICAN

center
meter

ونعرض فيما يلي الهجاء الأمريكي لأهم الكلمات الشائعة :

BRITISH

AMERICAN

tyre

tire

اطار السيارة

enquiry

inquiry

بحث - استعلام

programme

program

برنامج

pyjamas

pajamas

بيجاما (رداء النوم)

pretence

pretense

تظاهر - تصنع

practise

practice

تمرين - تدريب

draught

draft

تيار هوائي - جرعة

offence

offense

جرم - اعتداء

kerb	curb	حافة الرصيف
defence	defense	دفاع - حماية - وقاية
grey	gray	رمادي اللون
cigarette	cigaret	سيجارة - لفافة
cheque	check	شيك
storey	story	طابق - دور في مبنى
axe	ax	فأس
catalogue	catalog	كتالوج - قائمة مبوبة
nought	naught	لا شيء - صفر
entrust	intrust	يأتمن على - يعهد إلى
enclose	inclose	يرفق (وثيقة)
enrol	enroll	يسجل اسمه في
fulfil	fulfill	ينجز - يحقق

٤ - التذكير و التأنيث

Gender

من المعلوم أن التذكير masculine والتأنيث feminine يشكلان خاصية أساسية في اللغة العربية . فجميع الأسماء والأفعال في اللغة العربية يمكن تمييزها من حيث التذكير والتأنيث . وعلى سبيل المثال :

كتاب جديد ← a new book

مجلة جديدة ← a new magazine

أما اللغة الانجليزية فلا يوجد بها هذا التمييز ، بمعنى أنه لا يمكن تمييز الأسماء في اللغة الانجليزية من منظور اتفاقها مع الأدوات أو الصفات أو حتى الأفعال .

وبصفة عامة ، توجد في اللغة الانجليزية بعض الأسماء والضمائر التي تختلف صيغتها المستخدمة في حالة المذكر male عن تلك التي تستخدم في حالة المؤنث female . وكمثال على ذلك :

<u>مؤنث</u>	<u>مذكر</u>
woman	man
girl	boy

daughter	son
sister	brother
aunt	uncle
niece	nephew
queen	king
she	he

ولكن يظل ذلك مجرد ظاهرة لغوية - وليس قاعدة نحوية - تتعلق بالتمييز من حيث الجنس sex وليس من حيث التذكير والتأنيث .

كذلك توجد في اللغة الانجليزية اللاحقة "-ess" التي تضاف إلى بعض الكلمات للحصول على صيغة المؤنث منها ، مثل :

<u>مؤنث</u>	<u>مذكر</u>
hostess	host
authoress	author
princess	prince
actress	actor

ولكن يظل ذلك أيضا مجرد ظاهرة لغوية ، طالما لا توجد كلمات مثل teacheress أو doctress الخ .

وفي داخل حدود هذه المنطقة اللغوية نفسها ، نجد هناك تمييزا بين أسماء الحيوانات . فيمكن لنا عادة التمييز بين أربعة تقسيمات مختلفة لكل نوع من الحيوانات : اسم النوع أو الجنس Generic Name ، واسم الذكر Name of Male ، واسم الأنثى Name of Female ، واسم الصغير Name of Young . وبالرغم من ذلك ، يمكننا أن نجد اختلافات بسيطة في بعض الحالات ، فنجد أن dog هو اسم النوع واسم الذكر في نفس الوقت ، كذلك فإن cow غالبا تكون اسم النوع واسم الأنثى . كما أن foal تستخدم للإشارة إلى اسم الصغير من الحصان ، و لكن يوجد أيضا colt و filly .

ويمكننا تفصيل هذه التقسيمات في الجدول التالي :

اسم النوع	اسم الذكر	اسم الأنثى	اسم الصغير
bears	bear	bear	cub
cats	tom cat	queen/cat/ possy	kitten
cattle/calf	bull	cow	calf
deer	buck/stag	doe/hind	fawn
dogs	dog	bitch	pup(py)

calf	cow	bull	dolphine/ porpoise/ whale
--	jennet	jackass	donkey
duckling	duck	drake	ducks
cub	vixen	dog	fox
gosling	goose	gander	gease
kid	nanny	billy	goat
foal	mare	stallion	horses
cub	lioness	lion	lions
piglet	sow	boar	pig
chick	hen	rooster/ cock	poultry/ chicken
--	doe	buck	rabbit
pup	cow	bull	seal
lamb	ewe	ram	sheep

ومن ناحية أخرى ، فإن اختيار الضمائر في اللغة الانجليزية يعتمد كلية على مسألة الجنس sex ، فنجد أن he تشير إلى الذكر male ، و she تشير إلى الأنثى female ، و it تشير إلى الأشياء التي لا يمكن تحديد جنسها أو إلى الحيوانات رغم معرفة جنسها . و اذا

ما حاولنا تقسيم الكلمات في اللغة الانجليزية وفقا للضمائر التي تستخدم بدلا منها ، فاننا لا نجد أنها تقف عند حدود ثلاث فئات فقط ، بل يمكننا تمييز سبع فئات ، طالما أن بعض الكلمات يمكن الاشارة اليها بأكثر من ضمير ، كما يلي :

<u>الكلمات التي يحل محلها الضمير</u>	<u>الضمير</u>
son - boy - man	he
daughter - girl - woman	she
tree - chair - table	it
cousin - teacher - doctor	she, he
ram - buck - bull	it, he
ewe - sow - goose	it, she
dog - cat - bear	it, she, he

ويمكن المجادلة بأنه ما دامت توجد أشياء معينة في اللغة الانجليزية يمكن الاشارة إليها باستخدام الضمير she ، مثل car أو boat أو engine أو plane أو hovercraft ، فان هذا يعتبر دليلا على أن اللغة الانجليزية يوجد بها تمييز من حيث التذكير والتأنيث gender ، طالما أن المسألة ليست تقسيما من حيث الجنس sex وانما هو نوع معين من التقسيم التحكمي الموجود في اللغة ! ولكن يمكن الرد على ذلك بأن وجود مثل هذه الكلمات قليل

للغاية في اللغة الانجليزية ، الأمر الذي يستحيل معه أن نبني قاعدة نحوية على مجرد أمثلة قليلة . كما أن هذه الكلمات تنتمي بوضوح إلى فئة معروفة من الأشياء الميكانيكية . وهكذا فلا يعتبر ذلك تمييزا نحويا للأسماء من حيث التذكير والتأنيث على الاطلاق ، بل لا يعدو الأمر عن كون أن she تستخدم في اللغة الانجليزية للإشارة إلى الأسماء الأنثوية بالاضافة إلى الأشياء الميكانيكية .

كذلك فلا توجد أي قيود على استخدام الضمائر في اللغة الانجليزية داخل الجملة ، طالما أن الجملة قد تكون :

فقد الطبيب قبعته The doctor lost his hat.

فقدت الطبيبة قبعتها The doctor lost her hat.

ولكن يظل المعنى غامضا في الجملة :

The doctor went to the hospital

فهل هي : ذهب الطبيب إلى المستشفى أم ذهبت الطبيبة إلى المستشفى ؟

وهكذا نصل إلى استنتاج أن " تقسيم الكلام من حيث التذكير والتأنيث في اللغة الانجليزية يظل مجرد استثناء من القاعدة " .
"Gender in English is rather the exception than the rule".

٥ - العدد في اللغة

Number

يتضح وجود العدد في اللغة الانجليزية بوضوح في :

cats/cat و men/man ... الخ ، وفي قيود التوافق :

أ - مع الأفعال verbs :

The man *comes*

The men *come*

ب - مع أسماء الاشارة demonstratives :

these men / this man

وهناك خروج بسيط عن القياس يتمثل في أن صيغ الفعل

في present tense لا تنقسم من الناحية الصرفية إلى مفرد

singular وجمع plural . ولكن التفرقة التي تحدث هي بين المفرد

الغائب third person singular وبقية الضمائر ، أي :

He comes

مقابل :

I come / they come ... etc.

والصيغ الوحيدة التي تنقسم ببساطة إلى مجموعتين من الناحية

الصرفية هي تلك الخاصة بالزمن past tense لفعل to be :

I was

They were

ويصاحب العدد في اللغة الانجليزية وجود تقسيم لم تأخذه كتب القواعد التقليدية في الاعتبار على نطاق واسع ، ويتمثل ذلك في التقسيم بين الأسماء القابلة للعد countables والأسماء غير القابلة للعد uncountables ، حيث تتم التفرقة بين الكلمات مثل cat و book و road من ناحية ، و butter و petrol و bread من ناحية أخرى .

والاختلافات الأساسية من ناحية القواعد تتمثل في أن الأسماء غير القابلة للعد عادة لا يكون لها صيغ للجمع وأنها لا توجد بمصاحبة أدوات التنكير indefinite articles مثل a أو an . ويتضح هذا الفرق بصورة كبيرة بين (uncountable) bread و loaf (countable) .

ولا تقتصر التفرقة بين الأسماء القابلة للعد وغير القابلة للعد على أدوات التنكير وحسب ، إذ يوجد كذلك امكانية عدم استخدام أية أداة على الاطلاق وكذلك كلمة some . فلا تظهر الأسماء القابلة للعد (في المفرد) بدون استخدام أداة قبلها ، في حين يحدث ذلك مع الأسماء غير القابلة للعد . فلا يمكن القول مثلا :

Cat is

ولكن يمكن أن نقول :

Butter is

على أنه من الممكن القيام بالتحويل من أسماء قابلة للعد إلى أسماء غير قابلة للعد وبالعكس . فيمكننا القول :

Would you like some giraffe.

للأفراد الذين يأكلون لحوم الزراف . أي يجوز معاملة الأسماء القابلة للعد كما لو كانت غير قابلة للعد إذا اعتبرناها كقطع . أو أن نقول :

A petrol I like very much is Brand X.

أي يجوز معاملة الأسماء غير القابلة للعد كما لو كانت قابلة للعد إذا كان المعنى " نوع من " a kind of " أو " قطعة من " a piece of .
وكمثال على ذلك :

a love ⇒ نوع من الحب

an oil ⇒ نوع من الزيت

a mutton ⇒ قطعة من اللحم الضاني

disobediences ⇒ حالات من التمرد أو العصيان

ولكن يجب الأخذ في الاعتبار أنه لا يمكن التعويل على المعنى فقط ، كما اتضح ذلك في loaf / bread ، أو من حقيقة أننا لا يمكن أن نقول a soap ونحن نعني قطعة من الصابون a cake

of soap ، لأن ذلك يرجع لحقيقة لغوية تتمثل في أن soap من الأسماء غير القابلة للعد و loaf من الأسماء القابلة للعد . وهناك بعض الكلمات التي تنتمي للمجموعتين معا ، مثل cake :

Would you like a cake? ⇒ LOAF

Would you like some cake? ⇒ BREAD

كذلك فهناك بعض الأسماء المفردة التي يطلق عليها اسم collectives والتي تستخدم بصورة شائعة مع الأفعال في صيغة الجمع ، مثل :

The committee *have* decided

England *have* won the World Cup.

ولكن يجب ملاحظة اختلاف المعنى باختلاف الفعل المستخدم ، ففي الجملة :

The committee have decided

تكون الترجمة :

وافق أعضاء اللجنة على

بينما في الجملة :

The committee has decided

تكون الترجمة :

وافقت اللجنة / وافق رئيس اللجنة على

ومع ذلك فيجب ملاحظة أنه بالرغم من امكانية استخدام الفعل في صيغة الجمع ، فلا يمكن عمل ذلك مع أسماء الاشارة . demonstratives

كما أن هناك بعض الأسماء التي ليس لها صورة في المفرد ، والتي يمكن أن نطلق عليها " صيغ الجمع " ، مثل scissors و trousers و pliers ... الخ . وجميع هذه الأشياء تعني " زوجا " . ويؤدي هذا لظهور نقطة ممتعة في الأعداد : فقد يُعتقد أن الأعداد التي تزيد عن واحد يمكن أن تستخدم جميعا مع أسماء في صورة الجمع ، مثل three cats أو seventy dogs ... الخ . ولكن صيغ الجمع هذه لا يمكن استخدامها مع أي أعداد ، طالما ليس هناك one scissors أو ten scissors . ولكن مع ذلك يمكن أن تستخدم أسماء الاشارة مع صيغ الجمع ، مثل these scissors .

وهناك بعض الشذوذ في صيغ الجمع ، وبصفة خاصة مع كلمتي police و clergy . فمن غير المحتمل استخدامها مع الأعداد ، فقد نرفض thirty police مفضلين عليها thirty policemen ، وكذلك من غير المحتمل استخدام أسماء الاشارة معها . على أنه يمكن استخدام صيغ الفعل في الجمع معها (كما في مثال committee) . ومع ذلك فيجب ملاحظة أن people تعتبر

في كل الأحوال جمعا (thirty people أو these people ... الخ) . وينطبق ذلك تقريبا على cattle .

كما يوجد اختلافا بسيطا مع dozen التي تعني " اثنا عشر " . فيمكن القول :

a dozen eggs

(لاحظ أن a score أو a gross لا تستخدم في نفس الغرض) .
وبالمثل فإن كلمة a lot تستخدم مثل many :
a lot of men are

وكذلك kind of مثل :

these kind of people

وفي اللغة العربية ، يمكن للعدد أن يأخذ ثلاث صور : الأفراد والتثنية والجمع . فيمكن القول كلب واحد وكلبان اثنان ومائة كلب . وفي المثني ، هناك مثني مذكر ومثني مؤنث . وفي الجمع ، هناك جمع مذكر سالم وجمع مؤنث سالم وجمع تكسير . وهكذا فإن عبارة
مثل :

vice chairmen

يمكن أن تترجم إلى :

نائب الرئيس

نائبنا الرئيس
نواب الرئيس
نائبات الرئيس

وفي الجملة :

You are industrious students

يمكن أن تكون الترجمة :

أنتم طالبان مجتهدان
أنتم طالبتان مجتهدتان
أنتم طلاب مجتهدون
أنتم طالبات مجتهدات

ويتوقف اختيار الترجمة المناسبة على السياق المذكور فيه الكلام .

٦ - الزمن في اللغة

Tense

الزمن في اللغة الانجليزية هو " العلاقة ما بين شكل الفعل ومفهومنا عن الزمن ، سواء ماض أو مضارع أو مستقبل " .
"Tense is the correspondence (relationship) between the FORM of VERB and our own CONCEPT of TIME; past, present or future".

ولا يوجد في اللغة الانجليزية سوى شكلين اثنين للفعل ، وهما :

He likes / takes ⇒ present

He liked / took ⇒ past

ويمكن التوصل إلى تقسيمات أخرى للفعل ، وهي the perfect و the progressive الخ باستخدام فعلين من الأفعال المساعدة auxiliaries وهما to be و to have .

وهكذا يجادل علماء اللغة الانجليزية بعدم وجود ما يسمى بالزمن المستقبل في اللغة الانجليزية . ويقولون بوجود طرق للإشارة إلى الزمن في المستقبل ، ولكن لا يعد ذلك تبريرا لوجود الزمن المستقبل . ويستدلون على ذلك بأن shall و will هي أفعال مساعدة modal auxiliaries تقوم بوظيفة في اللغة تماثل تلك التي تقوم

بها الأفعال can و may على سبيل المثال . وإذا ما أسسنا قاعدة تفيد أن هذين الفعلين (shall و will) يشكلان زمنا خاصا في اللغة الانجليزية ، فيكون علينا في هذه الحالة الاعتراف بأزمة مماثلة لبقية الأفعال المساعدة الأخرى .

ويستخدم will في عدة وظائف أخرى بخلاف الإشارة للزمن في المستقبل ، وعلى سبيل المثال يشير إلى :
استعداد :

I will come if you ask me إذا دعوتني ألبى دعوتك
عادة :

She will sit for hours هكذا تجلس بالساعات
احتمال :

That will be John قد يكون ذلك جون
حقيقة عامة :

Oil will float on water يطفو الزيت فوق الماء
وبالمثل فان shall أيضا تستخدم في التهديد threat والوعد
: promise

You shall have it tomorrow أعدك بأن تتال ما تريد غدا
The teacher shall punish me توعد المدرس بمعاقبتي

وهكذا فان will و shall يستخدمان للإشارة إلى المستقبل تعبيراً عن معنى واحد فقط من بين عدة معاني كثيرة .

ومن ناحية أخرى ، يمكن الإشارة إلى المستقبل باستخدام عدة طرق أخرى ، مثل :

I am flying to Paris tomorrow سأسافر إلى باريس غدا
I am going to ask you a question

هل أن أسألك سؤالاً

Term starts on Monday

يبدأ / سوف يبدأ الفصل الدراسي يوم الاثنين

He is about to speak إنه بصدد أن يتكلم

وتعتبر كل الأمثلة السابقة حجة على النظرة التقليدية للفعليين will و shall كأفعال تؤسس قاعدة للزمن في المستقبل . وهكذا فإذا كان المعنى هو محك الاختيار ، فقد تعبر بعض الأسماء عن الزمن في اللغة الانجليزية ، فكلمة الزوجة السابقة ex-wife تشير إلى الزمن في الماضي ، والخطيبة fiancee تشير إلى الزمن في المستقبل ، والجد grandfather تشير إلى الزمن في الماضي البعيد ! pluperfect

ومن ناحية أخرى ، فمن الواضح أن الزمن الماضي في اللغة الانجليزية يستخدم للإشارة إلى وقت الماضي ، مثل :

Past Simple: He came yesterday.

Past Progressive: He was coming yesterday.

Past Perfect: He had come the day before.

Past Perfect Progressive: He had been coming the day before.

ولكنه بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، له استخدامان آخران ، فيستخدم الزمن الماضي في الحديث غير المباشر reported speech ، مع الأخذ في الاعتبار قاعدة تسلسل الأزمنة sequence of tenses ، وعلى سبيل المثال :

He said he went to London everyday.

وفي هذه الحالة ، فإن كلماته أصلا كانت :

I go to London everyday.

وقد تحدد استخدام went هنا نتيجة لاستخدام صيغة الزمن الماضي للفعل said ، ولكن went لا تشير في حد ذاتها إلى الزمن الماضي . ومع ذلك يجب ملاحظة أنه يمكننا استخدام صيغة present tense إذا كان المتحدث يرغب في الإشارة إلى أن الخبر المنقول ما زال صحيحا :

The ancient Greeks discovered that the world is round, but Romans maintained that it was flat.

ويمكننا في المثال السابق استخدام is محل was في الجزء الأول باعتباره يمثل حقيقة ثابتة . ولكننا لا نستطيع احلال is محل was في الجزء الثاني لأنه لا يمثل حقيقة ثابتة .

كذلك فان الزمن الماضي يستخدم للإشارة إلى عدة أشياء مستحيلة أو غير ممكنة الحدوث . ويمكننا التمييز بين ثلاثة استخدامات منفصلة في هذا الصدد :

الأول : يكون أكثر تأديبا استخدامه في سرد الوقائع أو طلب الأشياء :

I wanted to ask you something.

Could you pass me the salt?

الثاني : يستخدم في الأمنيات المستحيلة :

I wish I knew.

I wish I had one.

الثالث : يستخدم في الجمل الشرطية غير الحقيقية :

If John comes, I shall leave. ⇒ Real

If John came, I should leave. ⇒ Unreal

ويقع الفعلين في الجملة الثانية (came و should) في الزمن الماضي ، ويتمثل الاختلاف في المعنى في الجملة الثانية في أن هناك افتراضا بأنه لن يتم الوفاء بالشرط ، أو هو شرط غير واقعي . وهكذا

يستخدم الزمن في اللغة الانجليزية للتمييز بين الحالات الشرطية الحقيقية وغير الحقيقية .

وبالنسبة للغة العربية ، فالفعل فيها هو الكلمة التي تدل على حدث مقترن بزمن . مثل " أكل " فانها تدل على حدث وهو " الأكل " ، وزمن وهو الزمن الماضي . ومثل " يلعب " فانها تدل على حدث وهو " اللعب " ، وزمن وهو الزمن الحالي . أي أنه من حيث الشكل لا يوجد فيها إلا ماض ومضارع ، ولكن من حيث الواقع والاستخدام فهناك ماض ومضارع ومستقبل .

استخدام الأزمنة في اللغتين الانجليزية والعربية :

عند التعامل في العالم الواقعي ، يمكن للغة الانجليزية - مثل اللغة العربية - أن تتعامل مع أحد التصرفات أو الأفعال كحدث منته أو تتعامل مع الحالة الناتجة عن ذلك التصرف . وعلى سبيل المثال ، إذا كنت تناولت طعام الافطار في الساعة السابعة من هذا الصباح ، فيمكنك التعبير عن ذلك كحدث منته بالقول :

I had breakfast at seven this morning.

أو التعبير عن حالتك الحالية بالقول :

I have had my breakfast .

وإذا وصل أحد ضيوفك في قطار الساعة الرابعة ، فيمكنك
التعبير عن ذلك كحدث منته بالقول :

John arrived at four this afternoon.

أو التعبير عن الحالة الحالية الناتجة بالقول :

John is here now.

وإذا كنت قد صرحت بالأمس بأنك ستسافر إلى أوربا في
الأسبوع القادم ، فيمكننا التعبير عن ذلك كحدث منته بالقول :

We learned that yesterday / We found that out
yesterday.

أو التعبير عن نتيجة معلومية هذه الحقيقة بالقول :

We know that.

ولنأخذ مثالا آخر ، إذ يمكننا القول بأن شكسبير قام بتصوير
شخصية هاملت على أنها لا تستطيع حسم الأمور بالتعبير عن ذلك
كحقيقة تاريخية :

Shakespeare depicted Hamlet as indecisive.

أو كحقيقة حالية :

Shakespeare depicts Hamlet as indecisive.

وفي اللغة العربية توجد أيضا هذه الخيارات ، وهناك كذلك
التفرقة بين الأحداث المنتهية ، كما يحدث في السرد القصصي ،

والحالات التي لا تزال قائمة . ولكن النقطة الهامة في هذا الصدد هي
أن اللغتين الانجليزية والعربية لا تقومان دائما بعمل نفس الخيارات .

وتميل اللغة العربية عادة لتصوير الأشياء كأحداث منتهية ،
في حين تعرض اللغة الانجليزية هذه الأشياء من منظور الحالة الحالية
للأمور . وهكذا ، فإذا رأينا أحد ضيوفنا يوقف سيارته في الممر
الخاص بالسيارات ، فيعبر الشخص العربي عن ذلك بالقول :

لقد وصل He arrived

بينما يقول الشخص الانجليزي :

يوجد هنا الآن He is here now

وحينما يتم فهم المقصود من شرح المدرس ، فان المتحدث

العربي يعبر عن ذلك بالقول :

فهمت I understood / I caught on

بينما يقول المتحدث الانجليزي :

أفهم I understand

ولا يفهم من ذلك أن " وصل " تعني he is here أو أن "

فهمت " تعني I understand ، ولكن هذا يعني أن اللغة العربية

تميل لتفضيل التعامل مع الأحداث ، في حين أن اللغة الانجليزية -

بالمقارنة - تميل لتفضيل سرد الحالة الناتجة . وهذا ما يعني أنه لا
يجب عليك أن تعرف معنى زمن الفعل وحسب ، بل كيفية استخدام
هذه الأزمنة والأحوال التي تتفق فيها استخدامات الأزمنة في اللغتين
الانجليزية والعربية والأحوال التي تختلف فيها أيضا .

ونحاول فيما يلي التعرف على الزمن في اللغة الانجليزية وما
يقابله في الترجمة العربية :

He studies يذاكر

He studied ذاکر

He will study يذاكر

He is studying يذاكر

He was studying كان / ظل يذاكر

He will be studying سيكون منهما / مستغرقا في المذاكرة

He has studied ذاکر

He had studied ذاکر

He will have studied سيكون قد انتهى من المذاكرة

وهكذا فعند الترجمة من العربية إلى الانجليزية ، يجب فهم

العلاقة بين شكل الفعل والمعنى المراد منه . وعلى سبيل المثال :

وكان الله غفورا

نجد أن معناها :

Allah was, is and will be forgiving

لأن " كان " في الجملة العربية لا تعني الماضي بالطبع ، وإنما تعني الماضي والحاضر والمستقبل . ويمكن ترجمتها بالقول :

Allah is Oft-Forgiving

كذلك فان :

عهدتك أمينا

بمعنى أنك دائما تكون أمينا ، وتترجم إلى :

I know you to be honest

ولكن :

عهدته أمينا

أي توبيخ - فتترجم إلى :

I have known him to be honest

وهكذا نغض النظر في الترجمة عن شكل الفعل تماما . ومن

الأمثلة الأخرى :

لم يحضر علي

وتترجم إلى :

Ali did not come

واستخدمنا هنا الفعل في صيغة الماضي في الانجليزية رغم أن شكله
مضارع في العربية ، لأن المعنى هو المحك الأساسي . أما :
لن ينجح المهمل

فتترجم إلى :

The lazy will not succeed

وهنا أيضا استخدمنا الفعل في صيغة المستقبل في الانجليزية رغم أن
شكله مضارع في العربية ، لأن المعنى هو ما يهمنا .
أي أننا في الترجمة نضرب بقواعد الأزمنة عرض الحائط ،
والمسألة هي تقدير ما كان يريد كاتب النص . -

ملحق رقم (١)

The Verb الفعل

أشكال الفعل في اللغة الانجليزية :

هناك خمسة أشكال للفعل في اللغة الانجليزية ، وهي :

- * base form: walk / eat
- * “-s” form: walks / eats
- * past tense form: walked / ate
- * present participle (-ing) form: walking / eating
- * past participle form: walked / eaten

ويختلف شكل الفعل form عن الزمن tense في اللغة الانجليزية ، فالزمن يتكون عادة من أحد هذه الأشكال بالاضافة إلى أفعال مساعدة أخرى .

ويتميز شكلي الفعل present participle (-ing) form و past participle form باستخدامهما كصفات في بعض أنواع الجمل . مثل :

There's a broken window in the kitchen.

يوجد شباك مكسور في المطبخ .

وكذلك :

Most of people singing were women.

معظم المغنين يكونون من النساء .

ويطلق على هذين الشكلين (بالاضافة إلى infinitive form) اسم
. non-finite forms of the verb

الأفعال المتعدية بحرف :

في اللغة الانجليزية ، هناك بعض الأفعال التي تعني شيئاً ما
حينما تُتبع مباشرة بمفعول به وشيئاً آخر حينما يصاحبها حرف جر .
وعلى سبيل المثال :

He *deals* the cards يقوم بتوزيع ورق اللعب

He *deals with* the problem يعالج المشكلة

كذلك فان هناك بعض الأفعال التي تختلف معانيها حينما يتبعها حروف
جر مختلفة :

He *looks for* the book يبحث عن الكتاب

He *looks at* the book ينظر في الكتاب

كما أن هناك أفعالاً أخرى لا تظهر إلا بمصاحبة حروف الجر :

He *relies on* his friends يعتمد على أصدقائه

His poverty deprived him of schooling

حرمه فقره من التعليم

ويوجد في اللغة العربية أيضا أفعالا تماثل أشكال الأفعال السابقة تماما ، بالرغم من عدم ظهورها بالضرورة في نفس الحالات الخاصة التي تظهر بها هذه الأفعال في اللغة الانجليزية . وعلى سبيل المثال ، فان :

to discuss " يبحث " تعني

ولكن :

to look for " يبحث عن " تعني

كما أن :

to authorize / to sanction " يعتمد " تعني

ولكن :

to depend on " يعتمد على " تعني

كذلك فان :

to attend " يحضر " تعني

ولكن :

to come to " يحضر إلى " تعني

كما أن :

to acquire / to obtain / to get " يحصل على " تعني

وكذلك :

" يسمح بـ " تعني to permit

ومن منظور المعنى ، تشكل الأفعال المتعدية بحرف وحدة منفردة تختلف عن الفعل بمفرده أو عن بقية الأفعال المتعدية بحرف .
ومن منظور القواعد النحوية ، يكون لهذه الأفعال نفس الأشكال الموجودة بالنسبة لأي فعل آخر (فتختلف صيغتها باختلاف الأشخاص أو الزمن ... الخ) . وأمثلة ذلك :

بحثوا موضوعات كثيرة ومنها السلام في الشرق الأوسط .

They *discussed* many topics, among them peace in the Middle East.

بحثوا عن قلمك في كل صف .

They *looked for* your pencil in every classroom.

وهناك كذلك مجموعة أخرى من الأفعال العربية التي لا تنتمي لمجموعة الأفعال المتعدية بحرف ، ولكنها قد تتبع بحروف جر معينة بدون أي تغيير في معناها الأساسي . وعلى سبيل المثال ، الفعل " يساعد " يعني (to help someone) والفعل " يساعد على " يعني أيضا (to help someone) in (doing something) . ويتضح ذلك بصورة أكبر من الأمثلة :

هل ساعدك الكتاب ؟ Did the book help you?

نعم ، ساعدني على التدريس !

_ Yes, it helped me in teaching

وفي الوقت الذي يجب فيه أن تظل التفريقة واضحة ومستقرة
بين الأفعال المتعدية بحرف ، مثل " يعتمد على " ، والأفعال الأخرى ،
مثل " يساعد " ، يجب أن تتم دراسة جميع هذه الأفعال مع حروف
الجر التي تتبعها . وعلى سبيل المثال :

يستمع (لـ) to listen (to)

يخبر (بـ) to inform (of)

يشارك (في) to participate (in)

يساعد (على) to help (in)

يعمل (في) to work (for)

٧ - توافق الكلمات

Collocation

يتم تعريف توافق الكلمات Collocation من منظور اللغويات بأنها " تكرار معتاد لمجموعات من الكلمات المفردة ، والتي يأتي تكرارها معا من خلال شيوع الاستخدام بحيث تميل لتشكيل وحدة مميزة " .

Collocation is the "habitual co-occurrence of individual lexical items".

وتعتبر هذه الظاهرة في غاية الأهمية بالنسبة للمترجم ، الذي يعتبرها مجموعة من الكلمات المفردة تشترك بصورة عامة في تركيبات نحوية تتكرر كثيرا ، مثل :

١ - صفة واسم :

heavy labour	كثيف العمل
runaway inflation	تضخم جامح
economic situation	حالة اقتصادية
inflationary pressures	ضغوط تضخمية

٢ - اسم واسم :

nerve cell	خلية عصبية
government securities	سندات مالية حكومية
eyeball	مُقلة / شحمة العين
٣- فعل ومفعول :	
to pay a visit	يقوم بزيارة
to score a victory	يحرز نصرا
to read a paper	يقرأ بحثا
to attend a lecture	يحضر محاضرة
to tender (one's) resignation	يقدم استقالة
to deliver a speech	يلقي خطابا

وتعتبر هذه الأشكال هي أكثر الأشكال شيوعا لمفهوم توافق الكلمات collocation . وتتركز الأشكال الثلاثة حول الاسم noun ، الذي يعتبر العنصر الثاني في كل تركيب . وتعتبر الترجمة في بعض الأحيان بمثابة عملية من البحث المضني والمتواصل من أجل ايجاد مجموعة من الكلمات تستخدم معا بصورة صحيحة ، أو عملية لتجميع الأسماء مع الأفعال التي تناسبها ، وفي المقام الثاني تجميع الصفات مع الأسماء التي تناسبها وكذلك

الظروف مع الأفعال التي تناسبها ، وفي المقام الثالث ايجاد الروابط المناسبة . وإذا ما اعتبرنا أن القواعد النحوية بمثابة الهيكل العظمي في أي نص ، فإن توفيق الكلمات معا بصورة صحيحة collocation هي أعصابها .

ويقابل ذلك في اللغة العربية استخدام بعض التعبيرات المعينة ، مثل : بادئ ذي بدء ، ومن الآن فصاعدا ، ومنذ قديم الأزل الخ .

ويلاحظ أن التمسك بالتوصل إلى التوافق المناسب للكلمات في نص معين يعني تحقيق مستوى جيد من " الطبيعية " في النص . ويلاحظ هنا أن الفشل في ايجاد التوافق المناسب للكلمات لن يؤدي لعدم فهم الرسالة ، بل سيؤدي فقط لاحساس القارئ بأن المترجم غير متمكن من صياغته . وعلى سبيل المثال ، فان " مدخن شره " أو " شخص كثير التدخين " يتم التعبير عنها بالقول :

heavy smoker

وإذا أخطأ المترجم وقال :

big smoker

فسيفهم القارئ الانجليزي ما يقصده المترجم من وراء هذا التعبير ،
ولكن لن يجعله يشعر بأن الرسالة مكتوبة بشكل " طبيعي " . وكذلك
كلمة " مجانا " نترجمها بالقول :

free of charge

وليس :

free of cost / payment / etc.

وأیضا فان " قهوة ثقيلة " نترجمها بالقول :

strong coffee

وليس :

powerful coffee

وهذا ما يقابل اللغة العربية حينما نقول : " ولد طويل " وليس
" ولد مرتفع أو شاهق " ، وكذلك " رجل كبير " وليس " رجل قديم "
.... الخ .

وهناك حالة خاصة من التوافق collocation ، حينما لا
يكون هناك إلا احتمال واحد للكلمة لكي تستخدم مع كلمة أخرى ، مثل
الأصوات التي تصدر عن الحيوانات أو الأدوات الموسيقية وغيرها
من الأدوات ، مثل :

to crow (cocks) يصيح (الديك)

to miaow/mew (cats) يموء (القط)

to hoot (owls)	تتعق (البومة)
to bark (dogs)	ينبح (الكلب)
to roar (lions)	يزأر (الأسد)

كذلك هناك مجموعة من الكلمات التي تستخدم للإشارة إلى

قطعة من أو كمية من نوع معين من الأشياء ، كما يلي :

a loaf of bread	رغيف من الخبز
a knob of butter	قطعة زبد صغيرة
a slice/piece of cake	شريحة / قطعة كعك
a bar/piece/square of chocolate	قطعة (قالب) شيكولاته
a bolt/length/piece of cloth	" ثوب " / قطعة قماش
a lump of coal	كتلة فحم
an ear/sheaf of corn	مكيال ذرة
a speck/particle of dust	ذرة تراب
a wisp/bank/patch of fog	غمامة بسيطة من الضباب
a sliver/splinter of glass	شظية زجاج
a blob of glue	نقطة غراء
a blade of grass	ورقة عشب

a lock/strand/wisp/tuft/mop /shock of hair	خصلة / جديلة شعر
a bale of hay	بالة قش / تبن
a piece /area of land	قطعة أرض
a ray/beam/shaft of light	شعاع نور
a dose of medicine	جرعة دواء
a sum of money	مبلغ من النقود
a piece/scrap of paper	قصاصه ورق
a grain of rice	حبة أرز
a coil/length/piece of rope	لفة / قطعة حبل
a grain/pinch of salt	قبصة ملح
a grain of sand	حفنة رمل
a cloud/blanket/column/puff /wisp of smoke	سحابة دخان
a flake/blanket of snow	رقاقة منبسطة من الجليد
a bar/cake of soap	قالب صابون
a slab/block of stone	بلاطة حجرية
a grain/lump of sugar	قطعة / حفنة سكر
a bead/drop of sweat	قطرة عرق
a reel of tape	بكرة الشريط

a reel/strand of thread	بكرة خيط
a blob of wax	نقطة شمع
a grain/sheaf of wheat	حبة قمح
a strand/piece/length of wire	قطعة / جديلة من سلك

وكذلك الحال بالنسبة لأسماء المجموعات من أنواع معينة من

الحيوانات :

an army of ants	جيش من النمل
a swarm of bees	الخشرم : جماعة النحل
a flock/flight of birds	سرب من الطيور
a herd of cattle	قطيع الماشية
a litter of cubs	البطن : مجموع الجراء التي يلدها حيوان دفعة واحدة
a herd of deer	قطيع الأيل
a school of dolphins	قطيع الدلفين
a herd of elephants	قطيع الفيلة
a shoal of fish	فوج / قطيع من السمك
a gaggle of geese	قطيع الأوز

a herd/flock of goats	قطيع الماعز
a pack of hounds	فريق من الكلاب للصيد معا
a swarm/colony of insects	سرب / مستعمرة حشرات
a litter of kittens	البطن : مجموع الهيريرات التي تلدها القطة دفعة واحدة
a pride of lions	مجموعة من الأسود
a troop of monkeys	مجموعة من القروود
a litter of puppies	البطن : مجموع الجراء التي تلدها أنثى الكلب دفعة واحدة
a flock of sheep	قطيع من الخراف
a pack of wolves	مجموعة من الذئاب

وكذلك أسماء المجموعات التي تستخدم للإشارة إلى مجموعة معينة من الأفراد أو الأشياء :

a company/troupe of actors	جماعة / فرقة من الممثلين
a bunch of amateurs	مجموعة من الهواة
a wad/roll of banknotes	لفيفة / لفة أوراق مالية
a hail of bullets	وابل من الرصاص

a batch of cakes	عجنة من الكعك
a pack/deck of cards	مجموعة كاملة من ورق اللعب
a clutch of eggs	حضنة بيض
a team/panel of experts	فريق / جماعة من الخبراء
a sea of faces	عدد هائل (بحر) من الوجوه
a squadron of fighter planes	سرب من الطائرات المقاتلة
a bunch/bouquet of flowers	باقة من الزهور
a bunch/cluster of grapes	عنقود من العنب
a bunch of keys	حزمة (مجموعة) مفاتيح
a sheaf/bundle of papers	رزمة ورق
a spate of protests	فيضان من الاحتجاجات
a team/crowd/gaggle of reporters	فريق / حشد / مجموعة من المراسلين
a spate of rumours	فيضان من الاشاعات
a fleet of ships	أسطول سفن
a flight of steps	مجموعة متواصلة من درجات السلم
a gang of terrorists	عصابة من الارهابيين

a gang/band/pack of thieves

عصابة من اللصوص

a party of tourists

فريق / مجموعة من السائحين

a clump of trees

مجموعة أشجار

an army of volunteers

حشد من المتطوعين

٨ - التعبيرات الاصطلاحية

Idioms

التعبير الاصطلاحي هو " وحدة لغوية تتكون من كلمتين أو أكثر ، تدل على معنى جديد خاص يختلف عن معنى كل كلمة بمفردها " .

“An idiom is a fixed group of words with a special meaning which is different from the meanings of the individual words”.

وتمتاز كل لغة بوجود بعض التعبيرات التي أُصطلح على معناها بمعنى معين ، بحيث تذكر لهذا المعنى وفي مناسبة مشابهة لتلك التي قيل فيها . ويتضمن ذلك التشبيهات similes والاستعارات المجازية metaphors والأمثال الشعبية and proverbs sayings واللغة الاصطلاحية بين جماعة ما jargon والتعبيرات العامية slang and colloquialisms . وتكثر في اللغة الانجليزية وجود هذه التعبيرات .

وعلى الرغم من امكانية عمل بعض التغييرات في التعبيرات الاصطلاحية ، إلا أنه ليس من الممكن تغيير الكلمات أو ترتيبها أو

الصيغ النحوية بنفس الطريقة التي تحدث مع التعبيرات العادية غير الاصطلاحية . حيث يعتبر التعبير الاصطلاحي وحدة بنىوية مترابطة ، لا يصح تغيير كلماته بكلمات أخرى ، أو تقديمها أو تأخيرها عن مواضعها ، إلا في حدود ضيقة أحيانا . ولتوضيح ذلك نستعرض المثال التالي :

وضعت الحرب أوزارها

بمعنى انتهت وتوقفت . وهنا لا نستطيع تغيير كلمات هذا التعبير لنقول مثلا " حطت الحر أوزارها " ، أو " وضعت المعركة أوزارها " ، أو " وضعت الحرب أُنقالها " . كما لا يجوز تقديم كلمة من كلماته أو تأخيرها عن موضعها ، فلا يمكن أن نقول مثلا " الحرب وضعت أوزارها " .

ومن الشائع أن مثل هذه التعبيرات الاصطلاحية لا تقبل الترجمة ، بل ويكون من الخطأ الفادح ترجمة هذه التعبيرات حسب المعنى الحرفي لكل كلمة فيه ، إذ يجب ترجمة التعبير ككل حسب معناه .

وتنشأ الصعوبة أثناء ترجمة هذا النوع من التعبيرات عادة بسبب نقص الاطلاع على ثقافات الشعوب المختلفة التي تتحدث بلغات أخرى ، بل ونقص الالمام بخصائص هذه اللغات الأخرى نفسها . ولذا

يجب على المترجم أن يلم الماما واعيا بالثقافة وخصائص اللغة في كل من اللغة المصدر واللغة المنقول إليها .

وتتدرج الأمثال الشعبية - كما سبق - تحت التعبيرات الاصطلاحية . ويلاحظ أن العديد من الأمثال تمثل جملة كاملة . على أنه يجب تذكر أن الأمثال الشعبية لا تقال عادة كاملة . والأمثال في أية لغة هي خلاصة تجارب الشعوب ، وقد صُبت في قالب لفظي موجز . كما تعتبر الأمثال مرآة لثقافة الأمة واتجاهاتها الفكرية ونظرتها إلى الحياة . لذلك نجدها مشحونة بالأفكار والنظرة الصائبة بل والحكمة ، فما يكاد يسمعها أهل اللغة أو يقرأونها حتى تتداعى المعاني في عقولهم ، فتغني كل من المتحدث والكاتب عن كثير من الكلمات .

وأول شئ يجب عمله عند ترجمة أحد التعبيرات الاصطلاحية ، هو البحث عن التعبير الاصطلاحي المقابل في اللغة الأخرى . فإذا فشلنا في إيجاد المقابل ، فإننا نحاول ترجمة التعبير الاصطلاحي المذكور ترجمة عادية ، مع إيضاح كل المعاني المتضمنة فيه لتظهر في الترجمة . وعلى سبيل المثال ، فالتعبير الاصطلاحي :

إذا بليتيم فاستتروا

إذا لم أكن على علم بما يقابله في اللغة الانجليزية ، فيجب البدء
بمحاولة ترجمة معناه - أي القول :

When get a shame, away go from eyes

ولكن هذا لا يعفينا من محاولة ايجاد ما يقابله والبحث عنه لكي
نعرفه ، وبذلك فان ما يقابل التعبير السابق هو :

When the ass kicks, never tell

وبالمثل ، فان :

ضاق صدر من ضاقت يداه

يمكن ترجمة معناه بالقول :

Empty hands leads to / cause sadness

ثم البحث عما يقابله في اللغة الانجليزية ، وهو :

A light purse makes heavy heart

وهكذا . وإذا لم يكن ممكنا ترجمة مثل هذه التعبيرات بصورة مباشرة ،
فلنحاول احدى هاتين الطريقتين :

أولا : الاحتفاظ بالكلمة الأصلية بعد وضعها بين علامتي تنصيص ،
مثل " yuppie " .

ثانيا : الاحتفاظ بالتعبير الأصلي مع وضع ترجمته الحرفية بين
قوسين ، مثل : Indian summer (طقس جاف يمتلئ بالضباب
يسود في الخريف) .

و القاعدة الذهبية هي " إذا لم يمكن نقل التعبير الاصطلاحي إلى اللغة المنقول إليها TL فلا تحاول اقحامه في الترجمة " .

و الأمثلة على التعبيرات الاصطلاحية كثيرة ، منها :	
to take the gloves off	يشمر عن ساعديه
to rain cats and dogs	مطر كأفواه القرب
to pay through the nose	يدفع مبالغ طائلة
to bring (one's) heart into his mouth	يجعل الدماء تجمد في عروقه
to take the cake	تعلو كلمته (تكون له الغلبة)
to smell a rat	يستشعر مكروها
to have no stomach	ليست لديه الرغبة
to lose (one's) temper	يفقد أعصابه / لا يتمالك نفسه
to be in advance	يكون في المقدمة
to move heaven and earth behind one's back	يقيم الدنيا ويقعدها من وراء ظهره
to clear the air	يصفى الجو
strike while the iron is hot	أطرق الحديد وهو ساخن

a chip off the old block
to give one his head
diamonds cut diamonds
out of sight, out of mind
Always has been, always
will be
If you want a thing well
done, do it yourself
Divide and rule
east or west, home is best
charity begins at home

هذا الشبل من ذاك الأسد
يلقي له الحبل على الغارب
لا يفل الحديد إلا الحديد
البعيد عن العين بعيد عن القلب
من شب على شئ شاب عليه
ما حك جلدك مثل ظفرك
فرق تسد
من خرج من داره اتقل مقداره
الأقربون أولى بالمعروف

٩ - الاختصارات

Abbreviations

تتميز الكلمة في اللغة العربية بعدم قابليتها للانقسام أو التجزئة ، ولذلك فلا يوجد بها الاختصارات abbreviations أو الكلمات الأوائلية acronyms مثلما هو الحال في اللغة الانجليزية ، وإن وجدت فهي قليلة للغاية .

وقبل أن نستفيض في هذا الشرح ، يجدر بنا أولاً أن نوضح ما هي الاختصارات أو الكلمات الأوائلية في اللغة الانجليزية :
الاختصارات في اللغة الانجليزية هي " صورة مختصرة لكلمة word أو لاسم مركب compound noun أو لعبارة phrase ، تنشأ عن طريق ترك بعض حروف الكلمة أو استخدام الأحرف الأولى من كل كلمة " . وعلى سبيل المثال فان "g" هي اختصار لكلمة "gram" في أحد التعبيرات عن الوزن ، كأن يقال مثلاً "25 g" . كذلك فان "BBC" هي اختصار للعبارة "British Broadcasting Corporation" . وعادة ما يشيع في اللغة الانجليزية استخدام بعض الاختصارات بصورة أكثر من الصورة الكاملة لهذا المختصر .

ولكن يجب هنا التنبية على ضرورة اتباع الطريقة المألوفة
لكتابة المختصر عند استخدامه ، وخاصة مع بعض الكلمات المعينة
التي يمكن أن يكون لها أكثر من صيغة واحدة في الكتابة . وعلى
سبيل المثال ، فيمكننا كتابة إما "cont." أو "contd." كمختصر للكلمة
"continued" .

وتأخذ الاختصارات في اللغة الانجليزية بصفة عامة خمسة
أشكال أساسية :

الشكل الأول : ويتكون من أول حرف في الكلمة ، مثل :

m = metre	متر
p. = page	صفحة
F = Fahrenheit	فهرنهايت
N = North	شمال

الشكل الثاني : ويتكون من الأحرف الأولى من الكلمة ، مثل :

cont. = continued	مستمر
usu. = usually	عادة ، غالبا
vol. = volume	مجلد

Brit. =	British	بريطاني
Hon. =	Honourable	محترم (لقب يخاطب به كبار موظفي الدولة)
Thurs. =	Thursday	يوم الخميس

الشكل الثالث : ويتكون من عدة حروف من الكلمة موضوعة بدون ترتيب ، مثل :

asst. =	assistant	مساعد
dept. =	department	قسم ، شعبة ، فرع ، إدارة
jct =	junction	مكان التقاء
km =	kilometre	كيلو متر
tbsp. =	tablespoonful	ملء ملعقة مائدة
Sgt =	sergeant	رقيب ، شاويش

أما الشكلين الرابع والخامس من الاختصارات ، فيستخدمان عند اختصار الأسماء المركبة أو العبارات :

الشكل الرابع : ويتكون من الحرف الأول من كل كلمة موجودة في

العبارة ، مثل :

MP =	Member of Parliament	عضو البرلمان
CD =	compact disc	اسطوانة مضغوطة
HRH =	His/Her Royal Highness	صاحب السمو الملكي
USA =	United States of America	الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية
VIP =	very important person	شخص عظيم الشأن
rmp =	revolutions per minute	عدد الدورات في الدقيقة

ويتوقف اختيار الأداة "a" أو "an" قبل أي اختصار من هذا النوع على كيفية نطق أول حرف من هذا الاختصار . وهناك أنواع قليلة من الاختصارات التي تدرج تحت هذا النوع ، والتي تتضمن وجود الحرف الثاني من إحدى الكلمات في المختصر . و على سبيل المثال ، فان اختصار كلمة :

Bachelor of Science

هو :

BSc

الشكل الخامس : ويستخدم هذا الشكل من الاختصارات الحرف الأول من كل كلمة في العبارة لصياغة كلمة جديدة . ويطلق على هذا الشكل من الاختصارات اسم " الكلمات الأوائلية acronym " . وأمثلة ذلك :
BASIC Beginner's All-purpose Symbolic Instruction Code
لغة برمجة بيسيك : قواعد الأوامر الرمزية لجميع أغراض المبتدئين

OPEC Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries

منظمة الدول المصدرة للبتروول

TEFL teaching English as a foreign language

تدريس الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية

NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization

منظمة حلف شمال الأطلنطي

AIDS acquired immune deficiency syndrome

متلازمة فقدان المناعة المكتسبة

ويعتبر الشكل الأخير من أكثر المشاكل التي تواجه المترجم أثناء عملية الترجمة ، خاصة إذا تمت كتابة هذه الكلمات الأوائلية بمفردها ، أي بدون أن يصاحبها وجود الكلمة ككل قبلها .

من العرض السابق ، نجد أن ظاهرة الاختصارات أو الكلمات الأوائلية هي ظاهرة تتميز بها اللغة الانجليزية . أما اللغة العربية ، كما سبق القول ، فلا يوجد بها مثل هذه الظاهرة ، وإن وجدت فهي نادرة . ومن أمثلة الكلمات المختصرة في اللغة العربية :

ت ← تليفون

ص.ب. ← صندوق بريد

س ت ← سجل تجارى

ش م م ← شركة مساهمة مصرية

كم ← كيلو متر

سم ← سنتيمتر

وهكذا يظل وجود مثل هذه الاختصارات استثناء من القاعدة .

وكان الاتجاه السائد في الكتابة في اللغة الانجليزية من قبل هو عدم ذكر المختصر إلا بعد ذكر الكلمة التي يأتي ليحل محلها في أول مرة . أما الآن ، فيميل كتاب اللغة الانجليزية لعدم ذكر الكلمة التي يرمز لها المختصر على الاطلاق . وبذلك يأتي ذكر المختصر في

الكتابة مباشرة ، ويكون على القارئ فهم دلالة المختصر من سياق الكلام . ومن هنا تكتسب دراسة الاختصارات في اللغة الانجليزية أهميتها الخاصة في الوقت الراهن . وللتدليل على ذلك ، نستعرض المثال التالي :

The structural imbalances of world economy, the inequities of per capita income against GNP and GDP, the inadequacies of economic machinery and the deficiencies of economic laws are mainly attributed to narrow-minded policies in some countries.

وهكذا نجد أن المختصرين GNP و GDP جاء ذكرهما مباشرة دون توضيح ماهية أصلهما . وتكون الترجمة على النحو التالي :

إن الاختلالات الهيكلية في الاقتصاد العالمي ، وأوجه عدم عدالة توزيع متوسط دخل الفرد بالنسبة لكل من الناتج القومي الاجمالي والناتج المحلي الاجمالي ، ومظاهر قصور آلية النظام الاقتصادي ، وثغرات القوانين الاقتصادية ترجع أساسا إلى جمود السياسات المتبعة في بعض البلدان .

١٠ - الأسماء المركبة

Compound Nouns

تمثل الأسماء المركبة صعوبة حقيقية أمام المترجمين إلى اللغة العربية . ذلك أن اللغة الانجليزية تميل نحو التركيب ، ويظهر هذا الميل على مستوى كل من : nouns و verbs و adjectives و adverbs . وتشكل الأسماء المركبة compound nouns مع الزوائد affixes خاصيتين أساسيتين في اللغة الانجليزية ، لابد لمن يريد الكتابة باللغة الانجليزية أن يجيد استخدامهما حتى يرتقى بأسلوبه في التعبير .

ويعرف الاسم المركب بأنه عبارة عن " تركيب يتكون من اسم + اسم ، يكون فيه العنصر الثاني هو أساس التركيب ، بينما يأخذ العنصر الأول فيه أحد الأشكال الوصفية " .

“A compound noun is a noun plus noun (N+N) combination, in which the second element is the head (H) of construction and the first element is a kind of modifier (M)”.

وقبل الاستطراد في هذا الحديث ، يجدر بنا تحديد معنى modifier في اللغة الانجليزية ، حيث يعرف بأنه : " كلمة أو

مجموعة من الكلمات تعطي معلومات اضافية عن كلمة أخرى " .
ويمكن أن يأخذ ثلاثة أشكال في اللغة الانجليزية :
أولا : صفة Adjective ، مثل :

كلب مفترس fierce dog

أي أننا نعرف عدة أنواع من الكلاب ، ولكن الكلب الذي نقصده هنا
بالتحديد هو الكلب المفترس .

ثانيا : ظرف Adverb ، مثل :

نبح الكلب نباحا مرتفعا the dog barked loudly

أي أننا سمعنا الكلاب التي تنبح ، ولكن الكلب الذي نقصده هنا بالتحديد
هو الكلب الذي نبح بصوت مرتفع .

ثالثا : عبارة Phrase ، مثل :

الكلب ذو الذيل الطويل the dog with a long tail

أي أننا رأينا عدة كلاب ذات ذيول ، ولكن الكلب الذي نقصده هنا
بالتحديد هو الكلب الذي له ذيل طويل .

وتكمن أهمية الأسماء المركبة في حقيقة أنها تعتبر من
الخصائص الفعالة في اللغة الانجليزية ، ذلك أنه يجوز للمتحدث
الأصلي باللغة الانجليزية أو المترجم الكفو في أي وقت أن يصيغ اسما

مركبا جديدا ، بحيث لم يكن قد سمع به من قبل أو لم يكن قد وُضع في القاموس بعد .

ويأخذ الاسم المركب في اللغة الانجليزية ثلاثة أشكال في

الكتابة :

١- فقد يتكون من كلمتين two words :

post office صندوق بريد

Health Care رعاية صحية

٢- أو قد يتكون من كلمتين بينهما شرطة صغيرة hyphenated

: word

attention-getter جاذب الانتباه

٣- أو قد يتكون من كلمة واحدة one word :

mailman موزع البريد

postman ساعي البريد

على أن نأخذ في الاعتبار أن القواميس المختلفة أو الطبقات

المختلفة من نفس القاموس قد تختلف في هذه النقطة بالنسبة لأي اسم

مركب ، طالما أن الصيغة المكتوبة من الاسم المركب تتغير أحيانا

خلال مدة من الزمن إذا ما دخلت هذه الكلمة في نطاق الاستخدام

العام ، فقد يأخذ الاسم المركب في بداية ظهوره الشكل الأول ، ثم بعد ذلك يأخذ الشكل الثالث .

و يعتمد التعريف السابق للأسماء المركبة على علاقات المعنى meaning-relationship لكل من عنصريه ، على الرغم من تعدد هذه العلاقات و اختلافها . و كمثال على ذلك :

طلاء للأحذية shoe polish

حريق في الغابة forest fire

كرسى ذو مسندين armchair

الضوء الساطع من القمر moonlight

على أن نأخذ في الاعتبار أهمية التركيز على العنصر الثاني باعتباره أساس التركيب . وبحيث يكون هذا العنصر هو أول ما نبدأ به في الترجمة إلى العربية . وعلى سبيل المثال :

فان :

حصان السبق race horse

و لكن :

سباق الخيل horse race

كذلك فان :

ساعة جيب pocket watch

لكن :

جيب للساعة (أي جيب توضع به الساعة) watch pocket

إلى هذا الحد ، ليست هناك صعوبة في ترجمة الاسماء المركبة . ولكن الصعوبة تنشأ من وجود تركيبات أخرى في اللغة الانجليزية تبدو مماثلة للاسماء المركبة ولكنها ليست في الحقيقة كذلك . ومن هذه التركيبات ، التركيب المكون من " صفة وموصوف adjective plus noun " . وتتمثل الصعوبة في عدم القدرة على تحديد المعنى المراد بالضبط من التعبير إلا من خلال السياق المذكور فيه هذا التعبير . هذا ما يدعونا لاستخلاص قاعدة Rule بهذا الصدد ، ألا وهي أن " أي تركيب مكون من صفة وموصوف احتمال كبير أن يؤدي لحدوث التباس " .

"Any adjective plus noun construction is potentially ambiguous".

وتقل الصعوبة في اللغة الانجليزية في حالة خاصة من الأسماء المركبة هي "the-ing form copound noun" . وتنشأ هذه الصعوبة من حقيقة أن present participle (ing) في اللغة الانجليزية يقوم بوظيفة " صفة " ، أما gerund (ing) فيقوم بوظيفة

" اسم " ، وتتماثل كلتا الصيغتان تماما في الهجاء . وهكذا نكون أمام احتمالين لمعنى التعبير المذكور . ولكن يتم غالبا استبعاد أحد الاحتمالين (حينما تخدم الكلمة وظيفة " الصفة ") لعدم ملاءمته من حيث المعنى .
ومثال ذلك :

dancing teacher

نجد أن كلمة dancing قد تكون : إما اسم noun ، ليكون معنى التعبير " مدرس الرقص " (أي المدرس الذي يقوم بتعليم الرقص) .
وإما صفة adjective ، ليكون معنى التعبير " المدرس الراقص " (أي المدرس الذي يقوم بالرقص) ، وهو معنى غير واقعي .
وفي التعبير :

flying field

نجد أن flying قد تكون : إما اسم ، ليكون المعنى " ممر الطائرات " الذي تقوم الطائرات بالاقلاع منه والهبوط فيه . وإما صفة ، ليكون المعنى " الحقل الطائر " ، أي الحقل الذي يطير ، وهو معنى غير واقعي .
كذلك فان :

swimming suit

قد تكون swimming إما اسم ، ليكون المعنى " بذلة السباحة " أي المايوه . أو صفة ، ليكون المعنى " البذلة السابحة " أي البذلة التي تقوم بالسباحة ، وهو معنى غير واقعي .

على أن هذه الصعوبة تتزايد إلى حد ما في بعض سياقات بعينها ، مثل :

They are moving vans.

هنا يعتمد المعنى على تحليل الجملة . فقد نعتبر أن الفعل الأساسي main verb في هذه الجملة هو are فقط ، ليكون moving vans اسما مركبا . وبذلك يكون المعنى :

انها عربات نقل

وإما أن نعتبر الفعل في الجملة السابقة هو are moving ، ليكون المعنى في هذه الحالة :

انهم ينقلون العربات

كذلك في الجملة :

They are hunting dogs.

بنفس التحليل السابق ، قد تكون :

إنها كلاب صيد

على اعتبار أن الفعل الأساسى هو are ، وأن hunting dogs اسما مركبا . وإما أن تكون :

انهم يطاردون الكلاب

على اعتبار أن are hunting هي الفعل .

وتتزايد هذه الصعوبة أكثر في الأنواع الأخرى من الأسماء المركبة ، التي تقوم الكلمة الأولى فيها بوظيفة اسم noun أو صفة adjective . والأمثلة على ذلك كثيرة ، منها :

English Teacher

في المثال السابق نجد أن كلمة English تحتل أحد تحليلين : فهي إما أن تكون اسما ، وفي هذه الحالة يكون معنى التعبير هو :

" مدرس اللغة الانجليزية "

وإما أن تكون صفة ، وفي تلك الحالة يصبح معنى التعبير هو :

" مدرس انجليزى الجنسية "

كذلك فان :

dark room

قد تكون dark اسما ، ليكون المعنى :

" حجرة معتمة لاطهار الصور الفوتوغرافية وطباعتها "

وقد تكون صفة ، ليكون المعنى :

" الحجرة المظلمة "

وفي التعبير :

black board

قد تكون black اسما ، ليكون المعنى :

" سطح معتم يمكن الكتابة عليه باستخدام الطباشير الأبيض أو

الملون " ، أي السبورة .

أو صفة ، ليكون المعنى :

" لوح خشبي أسود اللون "

ومن الممكن أن يكون أحد عنصري الأسماء المركبة أو

كليهما اسما مركبا في حد ذاته . وأمثلة ذلك :

football game مباراة كرة قدم

basketball playground ملعب كرة السلة

life assurance policy بوليصة تأمين على الحياة

على أن الصعوبة في الترجمة تظل أيضا موجودة في هذا

النوع من الأسماء المركبة . وعلى سبيل المثال ، فهل :

French language conference

هي المؤتمر الفرنسي للغة (أي المؤتمر الذي ينعقد في فرنسا لمناقشة موضوع اللغات) ، أم هي مؤتمر اللغة الفرنسية (أي المؤتمر الذي يناقش اللغة الفرنسية) ؟

كذلك فان foreign car dealers هل هي تجار السيارات الأجنبية أم التجار الأجانب للسيارات ؟ والتعبير the new house furniture هل هو أثاث البيت الجديد أم الأثاث الجديد للبيت ؟ والتعبير the excellent director's secretary هل هو سكرتير المدير الممتاز أم السكرتير الممتاز للمدير ؟ ويصبح السياق الذي ترد فيه مثل هذه التعبيرات هو المحدد الرئيسي لاختيار المعنى المناسب .
و يظل من غير المفضل في معظم الحالات للمتحدث غير الأصلي باللغة الانجليزية / للمترجم محاولة ابتكار أسماء مركبة جديدة غير موجودة من قبل ، إلا بعد دراسة متأنية لعدد من الأمثلة التي توضح هذه الظاهرة بحيث يساعده ذلك في فهم طبيعتها . وهكذا فلو أتبع هذا التحذير بدقة ، يمكن ابتكار اسما مركبا يتماشى مع التعميمات التي سبق وأن أوضحناها تفصيلا أعلاه .

ولتسهيل عملية الترجمة باستخدام أسلوب الأسماء المركبة ، يجب علينا أولا تحديد ما هي الكلمة التي ستقوم بوظيفة أساس التركيب head of construction ، وبحيث يقوم بقية التعبير في

اللغة العربية بوظيفة modifier في اللغة الانجليزية . وكمثال على ذلك ، فان :

المحادثات التي امتدت لسبعة أعوام

نجد أن " محادثات " هي أساس هذا التركيب ، و" التي امتدت لسبعة أعوام " هي شرح لهذه المحادثات . وبذلك تكون الترجمة :

seven-year-long talks

كذلك ، فان :

التقرير الذي يتكون من ١٠ صفحات

تترجم إلى :

a ten-page report

وهكذا يمكن ترجمة التعبيرات التالية :

المرأة التي تلقت تعليمها في فرنسا

the French-educated woman

القوى المحبة للسلام

peace loving forces

الفجوة الآخذة في الاتساع

widening gap

الاجتماع السنوي للغرف التجارية

Chamber of Commerce Annual Convention

معرض القاهرة الدولي للكتاب

Cairo International Book Fair

بحث تليفزيونى عن الحرب في الخليج

T.V. Gulf war survey

الانتخابات البرلمانية التي ستجري في الشهر القادم

next month parliamentary elections

ولندرس المثال التالي للتعرف على كيفية ترجمة الأسماء

المركبة إذا وردت في سياق معين :

Purpose of Activity:

To provide urban governorate Management Information System (MIS) department heads with an opportunity to *examine and discuss* the administration of computer centers and the management use of computer-based information systems designed to assist local administration and local development programs *with* counterparts in other countries which have analogous development experience and needs.

وتكون الترجمة :

الغرض من النشاط:

اتاحة الفرصة لرؤساء أقسام نظم معلومات الادارة بالمحافظات الحضرية لدراسة ادارة مراكز الكمبيوتر والاستخدام الاداري لنظم المعلومات المعتمدة على الكمبيوتر والمصممة لمساعدة الادارة المحلية وبرامج التنمية المحلية ومناقشة ذلك مع نظرائهم في البلدان الأخرى التي لديها خبرة في مجال التنمية واحتياجات مماثلة .

١١ - الزوائد

Affixes

تتفرد اللغة الانجليزية بخاصية أخرى تميزها عن اللغة العربية ، وهي خاصية استخدام الزوائد affixes . و الزوائد في اللغة الانجليزية تنقسم إلى نوعين أساسيين ، فهي إما أن تكون بادئة prefix ، أي مقطع يوضع في بداية كلمة معينة لتغيير معناها أو لتكوين كلمة جديدة ، أو أن تكون لاحقة suffix ، أي مقطع يضاف إلى آخر الكلمة بغرض تغيير معناها أو تشكيل كلمة جديدة .

ومن المعروف أن المترجم الكفو هو المترجم الذي يكون على إلمام بحصيلة كبيرة من معاني الكلمات في كل من اللغتين اللتين يتعامل معهما . ودراسة ظاهرة الزوائد في اللغة الانجليزية توفر حصيلة غنية من معاني الكلمات يستطيع المترجم استخدامها عند الضرورة . ولذلك فإن المترجم الكفو هو من يجيد استخدام الزوائد في اللغة الانجليزية .

وتعتبر الزوائد من الخصائص الهامة التي تميز - مع الأسماء المركبة - اللغة الانجليزية ، وبحيث يستطيع من يجيد استخدام هاتين

الخاصيتين الكتابة بطلاقة في اللغة الانجليزية . ولتوضيح أهمية الزوائد في اللغة الانجليزية ، ننظر إلى الكلمة التالية التي تُضرب للدلالة على أهمية هذا الموضوع :

anti/dis/establish/ment/ari/an/ism

وتعني هذه الكلمة " الحركة المناهضة لقطع العلاقات بين الدولة والكنيسة " . وهكذا فيؤدي التمكن من فهم موضوع الزوائد إلى الاقتصاد في استخدام الكلمات عند الترجمة إلى الانجليزية ، والتعبير بشكل أفضل عن الفكرة التي نريد عرضها .

ولكي يتضح لنا مفهوم الزوائد في اللغة الانجليزية بشكل أكبر ، نأخذ مثالا آخر ولكن أكثر تبسيطا لتوضيح هذا المفهوم . فعلى سبيل المثال ، نجد أن كلمة happy تعني " سعيد " ، وتخدم وظيفة adjective في اللغة الانجليزية . ومن الممكن إضافة البادئة un إلى بداية الكلمة ، لتصبح الكلمة الجديدة هي unhappy ومعناها " غير سعيد " ، وما زالت الكلمة الجديدة تخدم وظيفة adjective أيضا . كما يمكن كذلك إضافة اللاحقة ness إلى نهاية الكلمة ، لتصبح الكلمة الجديدة هي happiness ، وتعني " سعادة " ، لتخدم هذه الكلمة وظيفة جديدة هي noun . مما سبق نجد أن الكلمة الواحدة قد يدخل عليها إما زائدة أو لاحقة ، لكي تتغير الكلمة من حيث المعنى والاستخدام .

ولنعرض الآن الموضوع بشئ من التفصيل :

أولا - البادئة Prefix :

كما سبق ، فالبادئة هي مقطع يضاف في أول الكلمة . على أن نلاحظ أن الغرض الأساسي من البادئة هو تغيير معنى الكلمة ، لنحصل على معنى جديد مشتق من أصل هذه الكلمة ، على أنها لا تغير من وظيفة الكلمة . ونعرض فيما يلي أهم أنواع البوادي :

١- "anti-" وتعني "مقاوم لـ / مضاد لـ" ، مثل :

antisocial	غير اجتماعي
antiseptic	مانع للعفونة / مطهر
antifreeze	مقاوم للتجمد

٢- "bi-" وتعني :

أ- " حادث أو صادر مرتين كل ... " ، مثل :

bi-monthly	حادث كل شهرين/نصف شهري
bi-annual	نصف سنوي

ب- "ثنائي / مزدوج" ، مثل :

bilingual

ثنائي اللغة

bicentric

ثنائي المركز - ذو مركزين

٣- "dis-" وتستخدم غالبا مع الأفعال ، وتعني "يعمل على النقيض

" ، مثل :

disbeleive

ينكر / يكفر ب

disagree

يختلف في الرأي / يعارض

disappear

يختفي

disappoint

يخيب الأمل

dislike

يكره

disorder

يوقع الاضطراب في

disable

يعجز عن

٤- "ex-" وتعني :

أ- "خارج كذا" ، مثل :

export

يصدر السلع إلى الخارج

extract

يستخلص / يستقطر

ب- " سابق " ، مثل :

ex-wife	زوجة سابقة
ex-president	رئيس سابق

ه- "in-" وتعني " النفي " ، مثل :

insane	مختل العقل
inconvenient	غير ملائم

ويلاحظ أن هذه البادئة يتغير شكلها أمام بعض الكلمات التي تبدأ بحروف معينة . فتتغير إلى "il-" أمام الكلمات التي تبدأ بحرف "l" :

illegal	غير قانوني
illogical	غير منطقي

وتتغير إلى "im-" أمام الكلمات التي تبدأ بالحرف "p" :

impossible	مستحيل
improper	غير مناسب

وتتغير إلى "ir-" أمام الكلمات التي تبدأ بالحرف "r" :

irreligious	زنديق - تجديفي
irresponsible	غير مسئول

٦- "mal-" وتعني " سيئ " / على نحو سيئ أو غير ملائم أو

واف " ، مثل :

malnutrition سوء التغذية

maladministration سوء الإدارة

malpractice سوء التصرف

maltreat يعامل بخشونة أو قسوة

٧- "mis-" وتعني " على نحو سيئ أو خاطئ " ، مثل :

misdirect يخطئ في التوجيه

misbehave يسيئ السلوك أو التصرف

misunderstand يسيئ الفهم

mismanagement سوء الإدارة

mistrust يرتاب أو يسيئ الظن في

miscalculate يخطئ التقدير أو الحساب

٨- " post- " وتعني " بعد " ، مثل :

postwar خاص بفترة ما بعد الحرب

postgraduate طالب يدرس بعد البكالوريوس

٩- "pre-" وتعني " قبل " ، مثل :

premature	منجز أو مولود قبل الأوان
pre-record	يسجل برنامجا مقدما
prearrange	يرتب سلفا أو مقدما

١٠- "re-" وتعني " ثانية / من جديد " ، مثل :

reassure	يجدد التأمين
rebroadcast	يعيد اذاعة البرنامج
rebuild	يجدد بناء شئ
recount	يعد من جديد
rejoin	ينضم ثانية إلى
rearrange	يعيد الترتيب
redial	يعاود الاتصال

١١- "un-" وتستخدم مع :

أ- الصفات أو الأسماء لتعني " النفي " ، مثل :

unable	عاجز - غير قادر
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unimportant	غير هام
unmarried	غير متزوج
uncommon	غير مألوف
unqualified	غير مؤهل
untruth	كاذب - غير صحيح
unfair	غير منصف - جائر
	ب- الأفعال لتعني " النفي / مقاوم لـ " ، مثل :
uncover	يكشف الغطاء عن - يعري
unpack	يفرغ محتويات
untie	يفك - يحل

ثانيا - اللاحقة Suffix :

واللاحقة هي مقطع يضاف في آخر الكلمة . على أن نلاحظ أن الغرض الأساسي من اللاحقة هو تغيير وظيفة الكلمة ، لنحصل على كلمة جديدة تخدم غرض جديد في موقعها من الجملة . والاستثناء الوحيد على ذلك ، هو اللاحقة "-less" التي تقوم بتغيير معنى الكلمة ، بالإضافة إلى ما تقوم به من تغيير في وظيفتها . ويساعد التعرف

على أنواع اللواحق في فهم القواعد grammar والمعنى . meaning

ويمكن التمييز بين نوعين من اللواحق :

١ - اشتقاقية Derivational :

وتبين وظيفة الكلمة (اسم أو صفة الخ) . وعلى سبيل المثال ، فإن اللاحقة "-or" في كلمة مثل actor تبين أننا نتعامل مع كلمة تخدم وظيفة اسم .

٢ - صرفية Inflectional :

وتبين سلوك الكلمة من حيث القواعد . وعلى سبيل المثال ، فإن اللاحقة "-s" تبين أن الاسم يكون في حالة جمع . وبذلك فيمكن الرجوع لهذا النوع في كتب القواعد الانجليزية .

وفي حالة دخول هذين النوعين من اللواحق على كلمة واحدة ، فإن اللاحقة الاشتقاقية تسبق اللاحقة الصرفية ، مثل :

"actor + s"

و يهمننا فيما يلي التعرف بصورة أكثر تفصيلا على النوع الأول للواحق (اللاحقة الاشتقاقية) ، لكي نتعرف على كيفية تكوين الكلمات الأساسية في اللغة الانجليزية (اسم - صفة - فعل - ظرف) باستخدام اللاحقة :

أولا : تكوين الأسماء :

١- إضافة اللاحقة " -ment " إلى الفعل ، مثل :

argument	مناقشة - خلاف
disappointment	خيبة أمل
payment	دفع

٢- إضافة اللاحقة " -tion/-sion " إلى الفعل ، مثل :

invention	اختراع
relation	علاقة
confusion	ارباك
discussion	مناقشة

٣- إضافة اللاحقة "-ation/-ition" إلى الفعل ، مثل :

limitation	تحديد - تقييد
declaration	اعلان - تصريح
composition	تركيب - تسوية
competition	منافسة

٤- إضافة اللاحقة "-ance/-ence" إلى الفعل، مثل :

issuance	صدور
insurance	تأمين
dependence	اعتماد - تبعية
reference	اشارة - مرجع

٥- إضافة اللاحقة "-or/-er" إلى الفعل ، مثل :

visitor	زائر
governor	حاكم
owner	مالك
manager	مدير

٦- إضافة اللاحقة "-ship" إلى الاسم ، مثل :

friendship	صداقة
leadership	قيادة
membership	عضوية

٧- إضافة اللاحقة "-hood" إلى الاسم ، مثل :

neighborhood	المجاورة
adulthood	حالة البلوغ
brotherhood	أخوة

٨- إضافة اللاحقة "-ness" إلى الصفة ، مثل :

kindness	حنان - شفقة
thickness	سماكة - ثخانة
foolishness	حماقة - سخافة

٩- إضافة اللاحقة "-ty/-ity" إلى الصفة ، مثل :

cruelty	حشية
loyalty	ولاء - إخلاص

oddity	شذوذ - غرابة
equality	مساواة - تساو

ثانيا : تكوين الصفات :

١- إضافة اللاحقة "-less" إلى الاسم ، مثل :

careless	مهمل
hopeless	يائس
childless	أبتر - بلا أطفال
thoughtless	طائش

٢- إضافة اللاحقة "-ful" إلى الاسم ، مثل :

doubtful	شاك - مشكوك فيه
peaceful	هادئ - مسالم
plentiful	مثمر - وافر

٣- إضافة اللاحقة "-al" إلى الاسم ، مثل :

formal	صوري - أساسي
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original	أصلي
accidental	عرضي

٤- إضافة اللاحقة "-y" إلى الاسم ، مثل :

healthy	متمتع بالصحة - سليم
hungry	جائع
guilty	مذنب - مجرم

٥- إضافة اللاحقة "-ous/-ious/-eous" إلى الاسم ، مثل :

dangerous	محفوف بالمخاطر
glorious	بهي - متألق
courageous	شجاع

٦ - إضافة اللاحقة "-ical/-ic" إلى الاسم ، مثل :

atomic	ذري - شديد الصغر
poetic	ذو موهبة شعرية
economical	اقتصادي
historical	تاريخي

٧- إضافة اللاحقة "-able/-ible" إلى الفعل ، مثل :

agreeable	مقبول
favorable	مؤيد - محاب
responsible	مسئول - موثوق به
convertible	قابل للتحويل

٨- إضافة اللاحقة "-ive" إلى الفعل ، مثل :

attractive	جذاب
progressive	تقدمي - متقدم
selective	انتقائي

ثالثا: تكوين الأفعال:

١- إضافة اللاحقة "-en" إلى الاسم / الصفة ، مثل :

hasten	يُعجل - يسرع
soften	يلين - يضعف
threaten	يهدد - يتوعد

٢- إضافة اللاحقة "-ise/-ize" إلى الاسم / الصفة ، مثل :

privatise	يحول إلى القطاع الخاص
computerise	ينفذ أو يزود بكمبيوتر
legalize	يجيز - يجعله قانونيا

٣- إضافة اللاحقة "-ify" إلى الاسم / الصفة ، مثل :

simplify	يبسط - يوضح
purify	يطهر
beautify	يجمل

رابعاً: تكوين الظروف:

إضافة اللاحقة "-ly" إلى الصفة ، مثل :

safely	بسلامة - بأمان
quickly	بسرعة
dangerously	على نحو خطر

١٢ - علامات الوقف

Punctuation

علامات الوقف هي " تلك الاشارات التي تُوضع بين الجمل ، لتوفر علينا كثيرا من العناء لاستخلاص المعنى الصحيح ، أو لترشدنا إلى تغيير نبرات الصوت عند القراءة ، بما يناسب المعنى " .

ويلاحظ أن اللغة العربية المعاصرة لا تلتزم كثيرا بعلامات الوقف ، مما يشكل صعوبة كبيرة أمام المترجم عند النقل من اللغة العربية إلى الانجليزية . ويكون على المترجم في هذه الحالة فهم الفقرات فهما جيدا واعادة ترتيب أفكارها لكي يتمكن من صياغتها صياغة جيدة في اللغة الانجليزية .

أما اللغة الانجليزية فتلتزم التزاما دقيقا بعلامات الوقف بها ، مما يجعل المهمة أسهل نسبيا عند الترجمة من هذه اللغة إلى العربية .

وفي أحيان كثيرة يكون لعلامات الوقف معان معينة لابد أن تظهر في الترجمة . ومن ذلك على سبيل المثال ، في الجملة التالية :

He entered the room expecting to find his guest, but found — an empty room.

وتوحى " الشرطة " الكبيرة هنا بالمفاجأة ، وترجم بكلمة مثل " فلهشته " . وتكون الترجمة :

دخل الحجر متوقعا أن يجد ضيفه فيها ، ولكن لهشته وجدها خالية

وفي الجملة التالية :

While feeling his way in the dark, thunderbolts fell unceasingly over his head.

نجد أن الفاصلة توحى بالتتابع ، ولذلك نترجمها هنا بـ " فإذا " :

بينما يتحسس طريقه في الظلام ، فإذا بالصواعق تنهال فوق رأسه .

وفي الجملتين :

It is indeed hard to overestimate the value of language in communication but it is even harder to overestimate its value in thinking. Language is tied to the very process of thought.

نجد هنا أن الفكرة متصلة فيهما . لذلك فيمكن ترجمة النقطة الواقعة بين الجملتين بـ " حيث " أو " إذ " :

إنه حقا من الصعب أن نتجاهل قيمة اللغة كوسيلة للاتصال ، بل الأمر الأصعب هو تجاهل قيمتها في التفكير ، حيث / إذ ترتبط اللغة بصميم عملية التفكير .

وفي الجملة :

The OAU conference recommended that domestic investment should be enhanced and that tourism and other hard currency resources should be promoted, particularly as capital inflows into the continent are diminishing; limiting its capacity to industrialise.

تعني الفاصلة المنقوطة بعد diminishing اعطاء معلومات توضيحية جديدة ، ويمكن ترجمتها بـ " الأمر الذي أدى / مما أدى " ، كما يلي :

أوصى مؤتمر الوحدة الأفريقية بوجوب تعزيز الاستثمار المحلي وتشجيع موارد النقد الأجنبي من السياحة والمجالات الأخرى ، خصوصا إذا ما أخذنا في الحسبان تضاعف تدفقات رأس المال الداخلة للقارة ، والتي حجت (الأمر الذي أدى تحجيم / مما أدى إلى الحد من) قدرتها على التصنيع .

وفي بعض الجمل الانجليزية ، يأتي جزء من الجملة ليعترض الفكرة الرئيسية لها . وإذا جاء هذا الجزء الاعتراضي قصيرا ، فيمكننا ترجمته في نفس موضعه إلى العربية . ولكن تظهر المشكلة إذا طال هذا الجزء الاعتراضي . ويكون أفضل حل للترجمة في هذه الحالة هو اظهاره في آخر الجملة ، كما يلي :

Several countries in the Sahel, after the stimulus of earlier years provided by a gradual recovery from the long drought and by parallel diversification efforts, suffered a significant setback in 1978 because of renewed drought conditions.

نجد هنا أن الجزء الاعتراضي (الذي يأتي بين الفاصلتين) طويل للغاية . وإذا ترجمناه في نفس موضعه كما بالجملة الانجليزية ، فقد يتشتت القارئ العربي ويفقد متابعته للجملة . ولذلك فمن الأفضل أن نضع هذا الجزء الاعتراضي في آخر الجملة المترجمة ، كما يلي :

عانت بلدان عديدة في اقليم الساحل من انتكاسة خطيرة في عام ١٩٧٨ بسبب تجدد حالات الجفاف ، وذلك بعد أن شهدت انتعاشا في

السنوات التي سبقت هذه الفترة إثر التماثل التدريجي من حالات
الجفاف الطويل وما واكب ذلك من جهود على دروب شتى .

وفي الجملة :

Nervously, they await the supreme accolade: a visit from the patron of the London Gardens Scheme.

نجد أن النقطتين تعني أيضا اعطاء توضيح أكبر للفكرة التي سبق ذكرها في الجزء الأول من الجملة . ولذلك يمكن ترجمتها بـ " ألا وهو " ، كما يلي :

واستبد بهم القلق وهم ينتظرون التكريم السامي ، ألا وهو زيارة راعية هيئة العناية بحدائق لندن .

وإذا حاولنا الترجمة من العربية إلى الانجليزية ، نلاحظ أن بعض الكلمات من الممكن أن تتم ترجمتها بعلامات وقف . وعلى سبيل المثال ، في الجملة :

أصيبت بعض الدول بمرض سوء الإدارة المزمن ، فالسياسات الحكومية الخاطئة من شأنها تدمير أية أمة كانت يوماً ما موفورة القوة .

نجد هنا أن الفاء في " فالسياسات " يمكن أن نترجمها بفاصلة منقوطة . وتكون الترجمة :

Some countries are chronically mismanaged; wrong government policies would destroy the-then vigorous nation.

١٣ - الأسلوب

Style

تطرقنا في موضع سابق إلى أهمية الأسلوب في الترجمة والصراع الذي ينشأ بين المعنى والأسلوب . ورغم أولوية المعنى بكل المقاييس على الأسلوب ، إلا أن الأسلوب الجيد يعتبر شيئاً أساسياً يجب على المترجم تحقيقه في الترجمة التي يقوم بها . ونستعرض فيما يلي بعض الارشادات العامة التي يمكن اتباعها عند الترجمة ، والتي تؤدي للارتقاء بالأسلوب :

أولاً : تميل اللغة العربية لتفرقة الأفكار المتشابهة ، بينما تميل اللغة الانجليزية لتجميع الأفكار المتشابهة . ومع ذلك فإن البعض يترجم عبارة مثل :

The Government and People of Kuwait

بالقول :

حكومة و شعب الكويت

وهم بذلك يقومون باضافة أكثر من مضاف إلى مضاف اليه واحد .
أما صواب ذلك فهو :

حكومة الكويت وشعبها

وهذا يعنى اضافة مضاف واحد إلى المضاف إليه ، واطافة المضاف الآخر إلى ضمير يعود على ذلك المضاف إليه . وكذلك في عبارة
مثل :

Heart is governed and directed by passion

فيقولها البعض :

تحكم و توجه العاطفة القلب

ولكن من الأفضل أن نترجمها بالقول :

تتحكم العاطفة في القلب و توجهه

ومعنى هذا أن يكون هناك فعل واحد فقط لجملة تتكون من فعل وفاعل ومفعول ، أما الفعل الآخر فيذكر بعد ذلك معطوفا مع اضافة ضمير إليه يعود على هذا المفعول .

ثانيا : تميل اللغة العربية لبداية الجملة بالتصريح ثم التلميح ، ولكن في اللغة الانجليزية تبدأ الجملة بالتلميح ثم التصريح . ومع ذلك يترجمون جملة مثل :

In his speech on the state of security in the Gulf, the American Secretary of Defence declared

بالقول :

في حديث له عن الأحوال الأمنية في الخليج ، صرح وزير الدفاع الأمريكي

وبذلك فهم يقومون بتأخير الفاعل وتقديم ضميره عليه . والصواب في مثل هذه الحالة أن يقال :

صرح وزير الدفاع الأمريكي في حديث له عن الأحوال الأمنية في الخليج بالقول

و بذلك تكون ترجمة الجملة :

Since it took its course, the Nile River flows into the Mediterranean Sea.

هي :

منذ أن اتخذ نهر النيل مجراه ، و هو يصب في البحر المتوسط .

و ليس :

منذ أن اتخذ مجراه ، يصب نهر النيل في البحر المتوسط .

وقياسا على ذلك ، تكون ترجمة الجملة :

Convinced that something was wrong, the director decided to investigate the matter further.

هي :

قرر المدير أن يولي المسألة مزيدا من البحث بعدما اقتنع بحدوث خطأ ما .

وليس :

مقتتعا بحدوث خطأ ما ، قرر المدير أن يولي المسألة مزيدا من البحث .

وهكذا تكون ترجمة الجمل التالية وفقا لهذه الطريقة هي :

In his speech delivered yesterday, the President stressed the need to

أكد الرئيس على وجوب الاهتمام بـ ، وذلك في خطابه الذي ألقاه أمس .

In his small-sized book, the author touched on the rules of translation.

عرض الكاتب في كتابه الصغير إلى أصول الترجمة .

ثالثا : تكرر اللغة العربية حرفي العطف " الواو " و " أو " قبل كل عنصر معطوف عليه يقع في الجملة ، في حين لا تستخدم اللغة الانجليزية "and" أو "or" إلا قبل آخر عنصر في الجملة . ولكن هناك من يترجم جملة مثل :

Ahmed bought books, pens, cards and notebooks.

قائلا :

اشترى أحمد كتباً ، أقلاماً ، كروتاً و دفاتر .

وهم بذلك يجمعون عددا من الأسماء المعطوفة في جملة واحدة ، دون أن يتبع كل منها بحرف العطف (الواو في هذه الحالة) . وهذا أسلوب لا يصح الأخذ به في العربية لما فيه من فجاجة وعجمة ، حتى ولو أخذت به لغة أخرى كاللغة الانجليزية . وبذلك تكون ترجمة المثال المعطى هي :

اشترى أحمد كتباً وأقلاماً وكروتاً ودفاتر .

رابعاً : التخفف من استعمال المفعول المطلق في ترجمة adverbs من اللغة الانجليزية ، ليحل محله كلمات أو عبارات أخرى مترجمة ، مثل : " بصورة - بشكل - لدرجة - على نحو " ، كالقول : " مشيت بصورة جيدة " ، أو " سار بشكل حسن " ، أو " إن قامته طويلة لدرجة أنها تسد الباب " ، أو " ظهر على نحو واضح " .

وهذه كلها استعمالات بعيدة عن اللغة العربية ، والأصح منها أن يقال : "مشيت مشياً جيداً" ، أو " سار سيراً حسناً " ، أو " إن قامته طويلة طويلاً يسد الباب " ، أو " ظهر ظهوراً واضحاً " . أي استعمال المفعول المطلق للدلالة على الحالات التي ذكرت .

ولذلك نجد البعض يترجم :

Oil has gushingly welled out.

على أنها :

تدفق البترول بدرجة غزيرة من البئر

ولكن الأصوب أن نقول :

تدفق البترول تدفقا غزيرا من البئر

ولا يخفي على القارئ ما في هاتين الجملتين من اختلاف كبير في الأسلوب البلاغي .

خامسا : يختلف وضع الظروف والصفات كثيرا في كل من اللغتين العربية والانجليزية ، وكذلك الحال بالنسبة للجمل التي بها حروف الجر . ومثال ذلك أنه في اللغة الانجليزية ، قد يأتي الظرف بين الفعل المساعد auxiliary والفعل الأساسي main verb ، ولكن في اللغة العربية لا تأتي الظروف قبل الأفعال أو بينها أبدا . ولذلك فان ترجمة الجملة :

The clouds have soon faded away.

يفضل أن تكون :

سرعان ما انقشعت السحب

سادسا : تميل اللغة العربية لاستخدام المبنى للمعلوم ، بينما تميل اللغة الانجليزية غالبا لاستخدام المبنى للمجهول . و تنقسم الجمل الانجليزية في استخدامها للمبنى للمجهول إلى ثلاثة أنواع :

النوع الأول :

تُبنى الجملة إلى المجهول ، ولكن تحتفظ بمن قام بأداء الفعل في الجملة لتذكره بعد كلمة by . و هذه الجمل لا بد أن تترجم إلى المعلوم في اللغة العربية . وبذلك فيكون من الخطأ ترجمة by بكلمة " من قِبَل " التي يدخلها البعض في الجمل دون استئذان ، على الرغم من عدم صحتها . فيقال في ترجمة :

The notes were written by the committee.

على أنها:

دُونت الملاحظات من قِبَل اللجنة

وهذا القول بتلك الصيغة المبنية للمجهول يخالف أصول اللغة العربية . فاللجنة هي التي قامت بالتدوين ، ولذلك فليس في استعمال " من قِبَل " أية ضرورة في هذا السياق ، ذلك أنه يحسن القول :

دونت اللجنة الملاحظات

فاللجنة فاعل والفعل (دَوْن) يُبنى للمعلوم .

النوع الثاني:

حينما لا يكون هناك فاعل معين مذكور في الجملة الانجليزية ، ولكنه يكون مفهوما بوضوح من خلال السياق ، فمن الأفضل أن نذكره . ولذلك يفضل أن نترجم الجملة :

English is spoken all over the world.

بالقول :

يتحدث الناس اللغة الانجليزية في كل أنحاء العالم

بدلا من بنائها للمجهول بالقول :

يُتحدث باللغة الانجليزية في كل أنحاء العالم

النوع الثالث:

حينما يأخذ الفعل صيغة المبني للمجهول في اللغة الانجليزية ، ولكن هذه الصيغة لا تتصاع في الترجمة ، ليظل المعنى مجهولا أيضا في اللغة العربية بدون وجود مفعول . وحينئذ يكون اللجوء للفعل المطاوع في اللغة العربية هو أفضل الحلول لهذه الترجمة . ولذلك تكون ترجمة الجملة :

The law was twice amended.

هي :

تعدل القانون مرتين

بدلاً من :

عُدل القانون مرتين

سابعاً : تصبح الترجمة في مقدمة الأسباب التي تعمل على اشاعة الأخطاء وتشويه الأسلوب إذا قام بها من يترجم ترجمة حرفية :

١- فمثلاً يستعمل البعض كلمة " ضد " لترجمة كلمة *against* من

اللغة الانجليزية ، وهي بذلك تكون ترجمة حرفية . فيقال في :

We will fight against the enemy.

سنحارب ضد العدو

وفي :

The parents should vaccinate their children against cholera.

ينبغي أن يقوم الآباء بتلقيح أبنائهم ضد الكوليرا

وفي :

The judgment was against him.

صدر الحكم ضده

وغير ذلك . و ينصب الاعتراض على أن الأسلوب الذي يلجأ إلى استعمال هذه الكلمة هو أسلوب يخالف طرق التعبير العربية . فالقول بأن " فلان يحارب ضد الاستعمار " يُفهم منه أن هذا المحارب مخالف للاستعمار ، أي أنه يحارب في جبهة أخرى غير الجبهة المعادية للاستعمار ، لأن من معاني الضد : " العدو " ، فإن حارب عدو العدو صار مسالماً له . والصواب في ذلك أن نقول :

سوف نشن حرباً على العدو

أما بقية الأمثلة ، فيمكن القول فيها :

يجب تلقيح الأطفال من الكوليرا

و

صدر الحكم بحق فلان أو عليه

٢- ومن الكلمات التي تتداولها أجهزة الاعلام الأجنبية كلمة *cover* الانجليزية ، فيضع لها المترجم الكلمة التي يحددها القاموس ، وهي " يغطي " . ولكن في اللغة العربية لا يفيد هذا الفعل معنى نقل الخبر . ففي القول :

KUNA correspondent covered the news of the Yemeni war.

يترجمه البعض :

قام مراسل وكالة الأنباء الكويتية بتغطية أنباء حرب اليمن وليس هناك بالطبع علاقة بين الغطاء أو التغطية والأخبار . وتضع معاجم اللغة أفعالاً غير هذا الفعل للدلالة على نقل الخبر ، فنقول : " نقل الخبر أو أبلغه أو سرده " . وبذلك تكون الترجمة الصحيحة :

نقل مراسل وكالة الأنباء الكويتية أنباء حرب اليمن

٣- ومن الكلمات التي يساء استخدام ترجمتها كلمة reach بمعنى يصل ، فعند وصف حدث وصول إحدى الشخصيات الرسمية ، يقال : *The Egyptian Minister of Information reached Kuwait yesterday evening.* وتترجم :

وصل الكويت مساء أمس وزير الاعلام المصرى وهذا الاستعمال خاطئ ، لأن الفعل "reach" بالانجليزية متعدٍ ، أى يحتاج إلى مفعول به ، ولكن الفعل " يصل " في اللغة العربية لازم لا يتعدى ، فهو بذلك ليس بحاجة إلى مفعول ، بل إلى حرف الجر " إلى " ، فنقول :

وصل إلى الكويت مساء أمس وزير الاعلام المصرى

٤- ومن تلك الكلمات كلمة via بمعنى عبرَ ، فيقال في ترجمة :

via means of commuication

عبر أجهزة الاتصال

والأكثر صوابا من ذلك أن نقول :

بأجهزة الاتصال أو بواسطة أجهزة الاتصال

وكذلك في ترجمة :

I sent a message to him via Ahmed.

الأفضل أن نقول :

أرسلت اليه رسالة عن طريق أحمد

بدلا من :

أرسلت اليه رسالة عبر أحمد

٥- ومنها أيضا كلمة " طبقا " المترجمة عن كلمة *according* ،

فهي ترد في أمثلة كثيرة ، ومن ذلك مثلا القول :

POW's will be transferred on Sunday, according to the news agencies.

فتترجم إلى :

سيتم نقل الأسرى يوم الأحد طبقا لوكالات الأنباء.

أما اللغة العربية فلا ترضى باستعمال " طبقا " في مثل هذا الموضع ، وإنما تتطلب استعمال الكلمة الصحيحة لهذا الوضع ، وهي " وفقا " أو " وفاقا " أو " على وفق " ، فنقول :

سيتم نقل الأسرى يوم الأحد القادم وفقا لما ذكرته وكالات الأنباء هذا إذا أردنا التمسك بحرفية الترجمة . ولكننا نستطيع ذكر عدة جمل تؤدي المعنى بصورة سهلة واضحة ، فنقول مثلا :

ذكرت وكالات الأنباء أن الأسرى سينقلون يوم الأحد القادم

كذلك فهناك الجملة التي تقول :

The meeting will be held tomorrow, according to the British officials.

وتترجم :

سينعقد الاجتماع طبقا لمسؤولين بريطانيين غدا

والأصح أن نقول :

ذكر مسئولون بريطانيون أن الاجتماع سينعقد غدا

وأیضا الجملة :

According to George, she's really good teacher.

فتترجم إلى :

يقول جورج إنها مدرسة جيدة فعلا

بدلاً من القول :

إنها مدرسة جيدة بالفعل طبقاً لما يقوله جورج

٦- ترجمة كلمة cancel بكلمة " لاغيا " ، كالتالي :

The agreement shall be cancelled as from Friday evening.

وتترجم :

يعد الاتفاق لاغياً منذ مساء الجمعة

وينصب الاعتراض على كلمة " لاغيا " ، فهي اسم فاعل من الفعل " لغا - يلغو " ، أي يكثر كلامه . ولكن السياق الذي تذكر فيه كلمة " لاغيا " لا شأن له بكثرة الكلام أو قلته ، بل بإبطال اتفاق مسبق . ولذلك فيجب استعمال كلمة " ملغى " ، وهي اسم المفعول من الفعل " ألغى - يلغى " . فالصحيح إذن أن يقال :

يعد الاتفاق ملغياً منذ مساء الجمعة

٧- والبعض يترجم still بكلمة " لا زال " ، فيقول :

Meetings are still convened in the Security Council.

لا زالت الاجتماعات منعقدة في مجلس الأمن

ويقول :

Efforts are still exerted to heal the breach in Lebanon.

لا زالت الجهود تبذل لرأب الصدع في لبنان

وهذه استعمالات خاطئة لكلمة " لزال " ، فهي تفيد الدعاء لا الاستمرار ، يصح أن يقال :

لا زالت الديار قوية عزيزة بأهلها

فهو دعاء للديار بدوام القوة والعز ، أما ما يفيد الاستمرار فهو " ما زال " إذ تستعمل " ما " مع الفعل الماضي ، و " لا يزال " إذ تستعمل " لا " مع الفعل المضارع . وبذلك نقول :

ما زالت الاجتماعات مستمرة

و

لا تزال الجهود مبذولة

وكثيرا ما يختلط الأمر على من يقومون بالكتابة العربية ، فيأخذون بالاستعمال الأول للدلالة على الثانى .

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**101 Perfect Answers for
The Most Difficult Job Interview Questions**

The Ultimate Guide to Job Interview Answers

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- ✓ **Feel More Confident and Prepared by Using This Easy 4 Step Formula**
- ✓ **Impress the Interview Panel by Focusing on 3 Definitive Topics**
- ✓ **Discover 3 Amazingly Simple Techniques to Shatter Nervousness**

**Bonnie Power
Certified Career Coach & Job Interview Trainer**



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Read this First

Dear Friend,

Re: How to Use the Job Interview Answers

Use these Answers to help you mould your own responses.

Read through the questions, and the model answers and get a feeling for the way the answers are structured. Pay attention to the language used to make the candidate appear like the ideal person for the job.

Think about your own experiences in your work. Think about how your employer has benefited from having you serve their customers, improve their processes, make them more profitable and achieve their organisational goals.

Please don't try to memorise any sentences for the job interview, as this will be obvious to the recruiter, and is their number 1 frustration when interviewing candidates.

The questions have been compiled in a random fashion as this is often how you receive them in an interview situation.

So sit back with a notepad and pen, and get ready to find the key distinctions that will help you get shortlisted for your dream job.

May I take this opportunity to congratulate you for taking the extra effort in preparing for a job interview.

You've already demonstrated initiative and self – motivation by going the extra mile in your efforts to secure your ideal job. For this, you deserve to win a job that is going to give you new challenges and open the doors for many more opportunities in the future.

Kind regards

Bonnie Power

PS, So close the door to your home office, grab a notepad and pen, turn your phone off for 40 minutes or so, and immerse yourself in this gold standard resource that will soon be responsible for giving you the edge over 99.9% of all other candidates.





Fact - Most interview questions are designed to help the employer figure out

- a. if you can do the job
- b. why you want the job
- c. if you will fit into the organization

Fact – Most candidates will simply declare that they have the requested skills, knowledge and experience, without thinking they have to prove it.

Fact – Most interviewers are suspicious of the claims that candidates give and ask piercing questions to gain a deeper insight into the extent and scope of skills, knowledge and experience.

Fact – The interview places a strong weighting on the candidate’s ‘people skills’ and the ability to build rapport in a very short period.

Firstly, Congratulations for Getting to the Interview Stage



When you get invited to interview, it means that your resume and job application have done their job.

Your application was considered to be in the top 10% of the thousands of applications sent through, so put your left hand behind your right shoulder and give yourself a pat on the back!



The purpose of this guide is to help you get into the top 1% of candidates.

Interviewing is not simply answering questions that you’ve memorised standard answers to. It is about answering questions that show you to be the ideal candidate for the job. The words you use will account for 7% - 27% of your total interview performance. The rest is assessed on other attributes that we’ll discuss later.

If you find yourself answering with a blunt ‘yes’ or ‘no’, or ever use one worded answer, then you need to realise that you are missing out on an opportunity to sell yourself.



The way you answer a question is one of the keys to a successful interview. An interview is about selling yourself, but the interview process can be flawed with problems that stop the right candidate from getting the job:

Problem # 1 – Some interview questions are vague and could be answered by highlighting a couple of different points.

Problem # 2 – As candidates, we are never really sure what the interviewer is really wanting to hear when they ask questions.

Problem # 3 – The interviewer needs to find someone to fit into their existing team, and we, as candidates, have no idea what the culture of this team is.

Problem # 4 – The interview is only a short period of time that gives you, the candidate, an opportunity to present yourself as the very best person for the job – meanwhile you are battling your own nerves about been put under such scrutiny.

Of course if you get asked a question and you just stare at them with a confused look, this will harm your application. So in addition to preparing model answers to 101 of the most typical and difficult interview questions, I have also given 3 other solutions you can use to blitz the job interview.





Bonus Solutions

Solution # 1 - Find out the Climate of the Current Industry

By discovering the current market situation that both the Company and the Industry is experiencing, you will have a strong foundation of knowledge to build rapport in the first few minutes. You'll be able to use your industry knowledge through the answers you provide.

You've heard it before and the fact is, knowledge is power. The more you know about what the company is facing (or is likely to face in the near future), the more you can link how your skills, knowledge and experience can help the company survive and prosper through the challenges that the current economic situation.



If the company is very large, you can use their PR department or website to find out the particular problems they are facing. The easiest thing to do is, of course, a google search:

Insert the "company name" and then words that will bring up the negative news items and problems such as?

"news"

"customer complaints"

"quality issues"

"poor service",

"disgruntled staff"

"bad reputation"

"financial trouble"

"consumer affairs"



Solution # 2 - Make a call to the Interviewer 3 days before the interview

You can start building rapport before the interview even starts, this is a great idea that no-one else will probably have the courage or inclination to do.



Ask for just a couple of moments of their time, as you have some brief questions you would like to know in order to prepare for the interview:



1. ***How would you describe the person who will be managing me, if I am successful in this role?***

2. ***What is the team culture like, could you describe the personality of some of the key members of the team?***

3. ***Is this a new position, or am I taking over someone else's role? If so, what does the current person do really well and that you would want the next person to do just as well?***

4. ***And on the flip side, what skills or attributes have been perhaps missing? What might you be specifically looking for as a priority, so the person who is successful in this role achieves a higher level of outcomes or success?***

Solution # 3 - Establish a Confident Mindset that you really are the best person for this job.

If you've ever felt in a subservient position in a job interview, you would not be the first, and certainly not the last. Going into the company's impressive offices, sitting in their chair, in their interview room – you could easily feel like you are almost begging for a job with them.

Here's a hidden truth that about the psychology of people involved in a job interview:

If the interviewer feels like the candidate is not confident about themselves, if they feel that the candidate thinks this opportunity is *'too good to be true'* or if the candidate ever suggests that this job opportunity *"will be a wonderful step UP in my career"* – then the interviewer will be turned off.

You can't be too enthusiastic, because the interviewer will think the job is out of your league – that it'd be too high a challenge for you. They will see you as too big a risk. And if the job *is* too difficult and you end up leaving, they will be fearful that everyone will blame them for hiring the wrong person. So to avoid all this pain and disappointment in their own lives, they would really prefer to offer the job to someone who has done most of the job functions all before. They will want proof that you have been successful in fulfilling the job requirements.



I hope you really understood what I meant in the 2 paragraphs above.

Yes, it's good to be keen and be interested, but you have to come across as confident that you have done every job function they ask for in their job advertisement / job description. The fact is, you probably have done only 70 – 80% of what they want, but you feel confident you can learn the new skills on the job, and you probably can, but this is something to keep to yourself unless otherwise identified in the interview.

Imagine you are the lucky owner of a highly prized asset that has the potential to earn 10 or even 100 times its actual value. In terms of the employer, this is what a good employee actually is, and good employees are disguised like everyday candidates, who look the same and act the same as employees that end up been a liability.

If you are like most good employees, you don't fully know how to market yourself or present yourself with the ultimate presentation that you deserve. Remember, you need to be marketed like a first class product, you're resume was like a brochure to the interviewer.

Your job application gave brief details on the 'latest model' that is available and offers great hope in helping them to make their organisation prosper. The interview is similar to giving a formal presentation, it has the purpose of exposing more about your skills, experience and personal attributes.

Confidently And Clearly Sell Yourself as a High Performing and Highly Profitable Asset.



now, forever.

Go and find a hammer and hold onto it. If you don't have one, you can just use your imagination for a minute.



Imagine picking up a heavy sledge hammer and smashing a glass window. This window represents the whole concept that the interviewer and the company have all the power. SMASH – there's broken glass everywhere! It's broken

The Status Quo is that the job interview is a completely equal playing field.

The purpose of the interview is first for the candidate to be questioned so the company can determine the potential value of the candidate, and then it is the candidate's turn to ask questions to find out more about the longer term opportunities available, and to evaluate whether this company will be a good fit to help achieve personal career goals.

Here are the new rules:

- 1. Each side shows respect for what the other one can offer.**
- 2. Each side understands that they need each other to achieve their own goals.**
- 3. Each side has something to offer in return for something perceived of equal value.**

So the very next interview you walk into, you will be coming in as an equal player. You need to be just as confident as they are, otherwise they could lose interest in you immediately.





ACTIVITY: Think Back About Well You've Performed in Your Past Interviews

Think back to your past interviews for a moment and think about how you have performed in the past.



What do you do in a job interview that seems to work really well for your confidence? What do you find works well in getting the best response from the interview panel?

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What type of behaviours do you think would be best left out of your next interview performance?

For example, I can remember when I was younger, I used to second guess my responses to the questions, and when I think about it now, I can imagine that this would have shown in my facial expressions, as I would have looked a little uncertain about myself.

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You own You.

You manage your own career. You are the captain of your own ship, so it is your responsibility – and no one else’s – to make sure that you put yourself in a position that is going to make the best use out of the key skills and key strengths you have to offer.

You have to guard yourself against the temptation of just accepting the first job offer. If you are actively applying for jobs, and your resume and job application documents are working well for you, then you will have a plethora of job opportunities that will be presented to you. So you’ve got to make sure that your own personal needs and desires are met.

ACTIVITY: Write Out Your Ideal Job Description



To do this, you’ve first got to make a list of the top 5 things you want most out of your next job. This can be anything from trivial details of what the company image is, to what their incentive scheme actually consists of when they mention it in the interview.

Here are 5 aspects are typically important to people when changing the jobs, completing the answers will give you a summary of your ideal job description.

ACTIVITY: Defining Your Next Job

- 1. My key strengths that I definitely want to use in my next job are:

- 1. My next job will use these other skills and abilities:



2. I would like to ideally work in these industries:

3. I would ideally like to work in a small/ medium / large company (please circle which one) and here are the reasons why:

4. I want to represent a company that offers products and services that help people or businesses to do these things

5. I am prepared to travel up to _____ kilometres , or travel for _____ minutes each way.

6. These are the duties and job functions that I never want to do again (please put them in a priority order, the first one is that you would never compromise on)



Personal Power Statement

In many of the questions asked in interviews, you will be able to answer your question by using a couple of statements that best describe your key strengths and attributes.

Go through the qualities listed line by line in the answers you have written above, and then add in the additional personal qualities that you can bring to the role.

It is always worth using a qualifying phrase such as 'colleagues have said of me...I am a great team builder or problem solver etc.' It sounds better if there is a third party endorsement. It doesn't sound like you are bragging but a colleague is speaking on your behalf.

In addition you will need to have relevant examples which you can offer to expand on. The personal qualities for the role will always be generic attributes that many jobs will appreciate, such as hard-working, motivating, good communication skills, desire to succeed.

When answering the interview questions, you should end your answer with a statement such as 'do you think these qualities are what you are looking for from a successful candidate?'. It plants a seed in the mind of the interviewer that they are.

If they reply that they were expecting other qualities then discuss them and offer examples of how you have these and examples of these in action. You need to leave the interviewer in no doubt you have the skills and can demonstrate this with examples.



How to Give High Quality Responses to Interview Questions

A skilled interviewer will continually ask 'open' questions which by their nature are probing but will allow you to sell your skills and abilities.

Imagine an interview where the replies were all one word answers or short sentences. It would not be very comfortable for either party to sit through and your chances of getting the job would be almost zero.

There are basically 5 key elements that the interviewer is looking for in a candidate. These are.....

1. **Can you do the job?**
2. **Will you do the job?**
3. **What is the problem I am here to solve?**
4. **Will you take direction and conform to the team ethic?**
5. **Will your behaviour represent the department or manager in a professional manner?**

How to Use the STAR Formula to Give Quality Responses

Many large organisations and government bodies will have a set of behavioural questions they ask each and every candidate, before scoring the candidate on their response. These questions will typically start off by "Tell me about a time".

The best way to answer these questions is in 4 parts, namely Situation, Task, Action & Result

Eg. Tell me about a time where you had to resolve a complex problem

Situation – in June last year, I was the manager of the Client Liaisons department when I was working at Acme company, and half of the office was away on a training day, when we received a high volume of customer orders and enquiries.

Task – The problem I had was that we needed to keep our high standard of service up,

Action - So I needed to devise an urgent plan which consisted of

Result – The senior manager complimented me for dealing with the crises in a calm and logical manner, we also kept our high standard of returning calls within a 2 hour period, and received no customer complaints about lack of response.

All your answers should be modelled with this view and this is what the interviewer is looking to hear.

Beware of 'Loaded' Questions

When you enter an interview the interviewer **expects** you to state how brilliant you are and how perfect for the job you will be. That's why they discount these types of statements from the start. They therefore pay much greater attention to those questions which raise negative points. Here are some examples

Q. '... Have you ever disagreed or argued with your current supervisor / manager?'

Q. '....Am I right to assume you want this position because you are fed up with your current job?'

Q. '...You seem to lack experience in area 'x', what are your thoughts on that?'

Pay particular attention to these types of questions. Interviews are won and lost depending on how you answer these types of questions.

They need to be answered with as much positive upside as you can possibly muster. The more you dwell on the negatives of your experience and career the poorer the overall impression of your abilities.

An interviewer will usually assume you are embellishing your real life examples when you illustrate the positive aspects of your skills and experiences, and look much more closely at the potential negatives in your career.

You should not be afraid to discuss the negative aspects of your career. However a series of positive focused answers will put you in a strong position. It clears a lot of uncertainty in the interviewer's mind and importantly reduces their risk in hiring you.

Never commence your answer to a question starting with the word 'No'. There are two reasons for this. Firstly you never want to disagree with the interviewer. Subliminally this will sound like you are disagreeing and to repeat you never want to disagree with the interviewer.

Secondly you want to keep any answers in positive territory. The more negativity that is expressed the less likely you are to secure the job. Conversely if the interview is upbeat and positive you will always perform better.



There are always going to be different ways of phrasing your answers, you would never consider learning answers by memorising a script, so you can simply deliver the same words in every job interview. You WILL look and sound like a Robot, and no one wants to work with robots.



3 Top Tactics to Massively Impress the Interviewer

1. Remember 5 examples that show your key strength

It's best to go in with a list in your mind about how you have added significant value to the organisations you have worked with, and be able to recall responses you would give to questions that are 'loaded' with negativity.

2. Consider what the interviewer is really wanting to hear

If you think about the reason for the interviewer asking each question, and think about what skills, knowledge or experience they are wanting to hear about, then you can concentrate on accentuating the positive and letting your skills and attributes come to the fore.

3. Promote the attributes that the ideal candidate would possess

Each job has an ideal set of skills, knowledge and experience that is required for the job, as well as a particular type of character trait in the employee. If you can picture what the ideal candidate looks like, and then write down every similarity you have to their 'ideal', then you will be setting yourself up for success.



ACTIVITY: List Your Key Strengths and then bullet point 5 examples you can use to demonstrate how you've used these attributes and talents.

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Think about how you can apply the STAR formula

Get your notepad and write a draft of 5 stories that give relevant examples of how you have demonstrated the requested skills and attributes in previous jobs (or whilst at Uni, if you don't have any experience)

By preparing examples which show real benefits of your actions, your interview success will skyrocket. If you learn one thing then its 'SELL the BENEFITS of HIRING YOU'.

Think about what you can bring to the table that the other candidates may not.

Focus on 3 Definitive Areas

You can read through the job description, and do your research on both the company and the industry to know what the type of key skills and knowledge that the interviewer is looking for, however it can be very difficult to know what character and personal attributes to promote.



Figure 1: Every Job Description has a nominated set of Skills, Knowledge and Character Traits that are ideal for the job.

Third Party Endorsements

You can make a greater impact by suggesting what your colleagues and management would have to say about your skills, knowledge, experience and personal attributes.

In many of your answers you can either state that you have the required skills, or you can choose a few likely words that your team or manager would use to describe how you add value to the organisation.

This is one of the easiest ways to help validate what you that you possess all the attributes.



Figure 2 – Create Better Credibility in Your Answers - Suggest what your team and manager would say about you

How to Be Relaxed in the Interview



The telephone call I suggested you place earlier on in this guide will shed some light on the culture of your prospective team and organisation, but ultimately, I would simply be yourself. When you relax in a job interview, you let your personality shine through and they start to get a feeling of who you are. This is the easiest way to deal with this ambiguous area

Stay True to Yourself & Who You Are

You have reached an age where you should be comfortable with who you are, and you are no longer interested in changing too dramatically into someone who you are not.

If you can relax in the interview, they will feel relaxed with you too. So smile, and enjoy the experience, stay consciously aware that you are being assessed, but be confident in who you are and what you have to offer.

If they choose someone else, then so be it, it obviously wasn't the job for you. Trust their decision. They are looking for someone to fit within their existing team – if they don't choose you, then they might be doing you a favour in the long term, as you might not have really enjoyed the environment anyway.



101 Most Difficult Job Interview Questions and their model answers

Q 1 (a). What has attracted you to this job?

This is where you show you have done your research; you may find that you only have a limited amount of information on the role. Your understanding of the role may be limited to what you have read in the job description., and the only things you know about the company have been found on the internet.

However you need to construct your reply using one or a combination of the following five replies:

- **Challenge** - You need a new career challenge
- **Career**: I had reached the likely top and there was no room for advancement until someone else above me left.
- **Travelling**: The commute to work was taking too long or I was constantly being asked to travel with work
- **Security**: The organisation was unstable and my role may have been at risk experience.
- **Money**: You feel you were not being paid what you were worth

Do not mention money if you can at all help it. Trust me it will do you no favours even if it is the real reason for wanting the job. Joining a company for more money will imply you will leave as soon as you find another job offering even more.

Definitely do not say anything negative about your previous employer/boss and wanting to leave. "I just cannot wait to leave my existing employer" will not go down well.

However the question will not just be role related but will include the wider organisation. Additionally describe what you perceive to be the forward thinking elements of the organisation and what advantages they appear to offer in the job description.

Q 1 (b). What do you know about our company and its product range?

This question will be easier to answer after you have done your research on the company. See if you can summarise the purpose of the company's products and services, look for it's mission statement and get a feeling for the types of customers they target.

Q 2. Tell me about yourself

They want a quick 2 minute summary of your job history, and any major issues that have shaped your life, that you believe they would be interested to know about.





I would give them a 30 second career snapshot, and highlight the your proudest moments or achievements in each role. You could tell them what you also really enjoyed by working at some companies, or what skills were developed. This is a good opportunity to briefly state your future career aspirations and link it to the job you are now in the interview applying for.

Q 3. Have you been to many interviews recently?

Answering this question with a 'Yes' will pitch you in a light that you are potentially in high demand, and the company will need to be quick in their decision making process, if they want to offer you another role.

It is important not to give the impression that you have been to a number of interviews and failed. If this is the case then gloss over this. The interviewer will clearly have no knowledge of your interview history unless it is with the same organisation.

Best thing is to avoid the question by replying in more general terms.

"I have been actively seeking new opportunities for three weeks, so have been to a few interviews. I am still waiting to hear back on a couple, but I saw this advertisement and became really interested to know more about the role. I certainly fit the criteria, and it seems as though it would present the right amount of challenge and growth I need to develop my career.."

Q 4. Why should I hire you? What personal qualities or attributes will you bring to the role or job?

This is where you confidently state that you have the requested skills, knowledge and experience to succeed in the role. Add in your key strengths and the personal attributes that you believe you possess that will be particularly useful for this position, and deliver your answer with unwavering confidence and certainty.

Choose to highlight more impressive attributes such as been an effective manager, a lateral thinker, a problem solver, possessing an innovative approach or someone who is driven by results.

This answer can be a little longer than most answers you'll give, because it is essentially a personal pitch of 3 -4 sentences.

In addition, it is always worth using a qualifying phrase such as 'colleagues have said I am a great motivator/team-builder/technician etc.'. It sounds better if there is a third party endorsement. It doesn't sound like you are bragging.

You will add significant impact if you have a relevant example which you can offer to expand on. You should end your answer with a statement such as 'do you think these qualities are what you are looking for from a successful candidate?'

It plants a seed in the mind of the interviewer that they are.



Figure 4 - Why should we hire you?



If they reply that they were expecting other qualities then discuss them and offer examples of how you have these and examples of them in action. You need to leave the interviewer in no doubt you have the skills and can demonstrate this with relevant examples.

A. 'First up, I believe that I can do the job , I feel comfortable ''

Q 5. Why do you want to change jobs and join our organisation?

The interviewer is fishing for anything negative you're likely to say about your past employer and curious about what attracted you to this job opportunity. You simply respond by explaining you want to move forward in your career and that this position is something you would feel very comfortable to do, but would also offer new challenges.

Be prepared to expand on the challenges you would see in front of you, this could be getting to know the clients, learning how to promote their new product, learning their unique systems etc etc.

Q 6. What have you learnt most from your past jobs?

They want to hear about how your experiences have helped to develop your skills, knowledge and expertise. Answering this question could perhaps show them that you learn from your mistakes, and you use each job or project as an opportunity to develop new skills and/or knowledge.

'I have learnt many things as you can imagine. But one point always rings true, every success I have ever had comes down to how my people are managed in the process. By having highly developed interpersonal skills, I've been able to communicate effectively with all stakeholders which has resulted in positive results. Every one needs to be treated with respect, their opinion should be valued and they should be encouraged to contribute to the good of the organisation.'

Q 7. Why should I give you the job over the other candidates?

'I don't know the other candidates or their skills.....my skills and attributes are.....I am sure you'll agree they more than equip me to do the job'

Note:

The interesting thing is that where you are talking about personality traits the interviewer just has to take your word for it. They can only judge you by what they see. This is why first impressions are so important as people make up their mind about people within 30 seconds of meeting them. Also remember people will only hire other people they LIKE. Smile at every opportunity to build quick rapport.

Q 8. Why are you looking to leave your current role? Why did you leave role 'x'?

The purpose of this question is to verify if you are being pushed out or are leaving at your own will.

You need to reply using one or a combination of the following five replies outlined in question 1.

Q 9. I see from your resume that you have never actually been in this role in any of your previous companies. How are you going to manage?

They are expressing doubt that you could do the role, even if it is to test your enthusiasm and/or personal drive). They might want to see how you react to a minor difficult situation, and how you stand up for your self....

You can state that you have considered the main functions of the job, and researched the company to develop an understanding of their culture, mission and organisational goals.

You would then confidently say that you feel like you can do the job, and offer a different set of skills and experience to someone who has only ever done this type of work before.

Importantly, then go on to list examples of similar experiences where you have demonstrated such skills. This should close the issue in the interviewers mind and paint a positive picture.

Q 10. What if I said to you your resume was very poor?

This is the type of question where the interviewer is looking for a quick thinking answer. They will see first hand how you handle criticism and difficult situations....and of course your resume isn't poor otherwise you wouldn't have an interview!

"I have had several colleagues review my resume and they all offered suggestions which I have accepted. I would therefore be surprised to find it was poor but I always welcome constructive feedback whether it is good or bad."

Q 11. '...You seem to lack experience in area 'x'

If this is true, then acknowledge you do lack some experience in area 'x', but then you have so many other skills and experience to offer. Demonstrate how some of your skills are very similar, and then say that you are a faster learner, and take the initiative to conduct research into any new topic or area to get up to speed.



Figure 5 - Why are you looking to leave your current role?

Note: Most interviewers will listen more intently to the negative questions. These are the ones where the interviewee can stumble and reply badly. Learn to turn them around, reply positively and keep them short. Don't waste your valuable interview time on negative questions!

Q 12. What particular skills are you looking to gain from this role?

This will depend on the type of job. If the job is a manual job or skilled profession then you will be looking for practical experience.

If the job is more office based or sales related then the emphasis will be different. Understand what the job description is telling you about the job because there is no point saying you want to learn 'x' if it is not possible in this role.

You could use this as an opportunity to dig deeper into the roles and responsibilities that you need to undertake. The interviewer will of course be delighted that you are interested and it gives you time to form an answer.

Q 13. Where do you see yourself in the next 5 or 10 years?

Answer needs to show ambition but also a commitment to the role on offer. This is a difficult juggling act where a very neutral answer is most appropriate.

This is one of several questions where the interviewer is just gauging how you react. They probably aren't really interested in the specifics of the answer but more the way you answer.

'My first goal is to secure this role and I have the personal drive to succeed in it. I am not really looking beyond this. I suppose if pressed I would be looking for career progression like anyone else but 5-10 years is a long time away and I am sure I have many challenges ahead in the current role.'



Figure 6 Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?

Q 14. Where do you see this industry in 5 years time?

This is the type of question that would be asked in mid-management to senior positions. The interviewer is not asking for a prediction but looking to see that you understand the current issues facing the industry and what the future trends may be and that you have taken an interest. By answering with a full and carefully considered reply will distinguish and elevate you above the competition.

Although possible answers are unlimited and will be tailored to each type of business you may find the following suggestions helpful:

- More industry consolidation into larger corporations
- Move away from retail outlets to e-commerce web selling
- More niche players in the market
- Globalisation of the supplier network
- Stronger sales growth in the Asian sector
- Wider diversity in product ranges
- Increased reliance on software to run the business

A more senior managerial position will require you to have an in depth knowledge of the future direction of the industry. This is because your decisions may have a direct impact on the long term direction the company is taking.

Q 15. You seem to be over qualified for this position. Are you going to find the role a bit demeaning?

A good trick is to smile, announce that you believe your additional degree or masters is a strength in your application, as your specialist knowledge will be of high value to the company. If the interviewer seems unsure, ask the interviewer to clarify if they have any concerns. This gives you some time to compose yourself and also to set the interviewers concerns in context.



If the interviewer will probably say you could get bored, you might not be challenged enough and look to move roles quickly if you get a better offer. This is now a concern for you to address.

The way to convince the interviewer is to express your desire to work for the company, and explain that although you have significant theory behind you, you don't yet have the equal balance in practical experience, so this is the perfect level of role for you.

The more you have taken the trouble to understand the company its product ranges and shown enthusiasm for joining them the more convincing you will be.

Figure 7 - Arn't you a little over qualified for this role?

You will want to focus on the challenges the company will offer you and how they will provide a rewarding career for you.

This can mark a changing point in the interview. The interviewer is saying that effectively you are an excellent candidate more than capable of doing the job. Your focus now is on convincing them that you see the company as your next major career step. Not just a stepping stone to better things.



Q 16. You have been working as a contractor/temp for so long, may I ask why this is?

The implication is that you do not fit in or get bored easily. Turn the answer round. Talk about this being a deliberate plan in your career development. Explain how the wide range of experiences you have gained working for different companies has given you a strong foundation of knowledge and experience. Explain that you wanted to trial different industries and different companies to get an overview of the cultures that exist within organisations, so you could make an educated decision on which type of company you would like to settle in with.

Q 17. What would your job references say about you?

Try to make sure that any job references have been sought and written before you go interviewing. This is not always possible but would allow you to repeat their positive comments. If asked and you are able to leave copies of references with the interviewer they are bound to look at them. Of course this will reinforce your candidacy.

Where you do have job references then you can say you have references and they are very complimentary around a number of aspects of your work. Specify the top strengths and skills they are likely to highlight in the telephone call.

Start the sentence in the third party with.....'My references would say....'

Any time you are able to reply in the third party it sounds like someone else is endorsing your candidacy which in effect references do. Everyone will say they will receive good references but if you say this using a third party then you add greater credibility to your statement.



Figure 8 - What would your references say about you?

Q 18. What could you have done better to achieve more results for your past company?

This question is testing your self-esteem and inner confidence. If asked this question, you may find the culture of the company is similar to the nature of this very question.

You need to stay clear of giving a direct answer. If you suggest there were improvements to be made this implies you weren't working at 100%.

"I was very pleased with the level of results I generated. The board and senior management were also delighted with the level of results I achieved especially in this tough economic environment. I exceeded my targets and made a solid contribution to the overall profitability of the company."

Go on to describe your successes and try to avoid answering the question directly.



Figure 9 - What could you have done better in your last job?

Q 19. Yes, but do you think you could you have achieved better results?

If the interviewer persists with further questioning, simply agree that there is always room for some improvement and that is what keeps you motivated to increase your performance year on year. But importantly refer to the need for improvement in everyone. It reduces the impact of any negativity.

'I am sure that everyone has room for improvement – we all continue to learn and develop'
You could also describe how you had plans to increase results through some new initiatives you were working on. These have not had time to be implemented yet. Describe the benefits they would bring.

Q 20. The new role may involve some travelling. Are you prepared to travel?

If this wasn't advertised in the job advertisement, or mentioned in the job description, then I would be suspicious of the company immediately. They may not be that organised, which is likely to have a negative impact on your ability to perform in the role.

If you really do not want to travel for example for family reasons then there may be room for negotiation. It is important to find out the extent of the travel and the exact requirements of the role. There is no point in accepting a job only to find out that it is unsuitable. Both parties would regret this.

Q 21. Do you prefer the regular framework with established processes and procedures of an organisation or do you prefer a less structured work environment?

Whether you know you have a preference to which style of management or not, stay neutral. You do not want to say one thing and find the organisation works in a completely different way.

“Every organisation needs a contextual framework of processes and procedures which everyone can recognise and understand. It allows for a consistent approach.

Although generally speaking these should not be over-ruled there are occasions where a flexible, dynamic and more liberal approach is required in order to achieve targets.

A mixture of the two is probably healthy for any organisation and is the way I have worked in my previous roles.”

Figure 10 - do you prefer a structured environment?





Q 22. How long have you been looking for a new job? Why is there such a gap since you last worked?

Anything longer than 2 – 3 months is considered a long gap and is a serious weakness in your application. The employer may fear that you have lost some of your drive to succeed, you might have become unmotivated in this time, and adapted to a new lifestyle of sleeping in until 10am etc. This questions needs to be handled carefully.

No-one wants to hire someone if they are unwanted by every other employer. If you have been looking for several months then you need to emphasise that you have been looking for the right role. You do not want to rush into the first job that is offered.

“Work is very important to me and I am not going to rush such a decision lightly. That is why I have waited for a role such as this one to become available.”

You could also mention that you have been offered jobs in this time and have turned them down. Effectively this is an endorsement from another employer that you are worth hiring.

If market conditions are tough and there are plenty of candidates in the market place then mention this too.

What you want to avoid is the interviewer thinking that you have been out of work for months have applied everywhere and been turned down far too often for this to be just a coincidence. Prepare your answer carefully.

Q 23. Have you any other job offers pending?

If you get this question then you can start to feel confident because it indicates the interviewer is serious about hiring you and they do not want to lose you. If a competitor has shown interest in hiring you then this is a ringing endorsement of your abilities. Therefore the best way to answer this questions is to say that you have had a series of interviews over the previous week, and you are waiting to hear back on one in particular.

You unfortunately do not want to be specific at this stage. When you have more than one definite job offer then you can start negotiating.

"I do have other options but I am attending this interview because I like the job spec, the company and I believe it is a dynamic organisation where I could truly enhance my career. This is a great opportunity for me."

By creating the feeling that you are desirable will pay dividends in your job hunting and salary negotiations.

Figure 11 - What type of people do you prefer not to work with?

Q 24. What are your short term goals?

Make sure you relate these to the organisation to which you are applying. Do not be unrealistic in your assessment of what you can achieve. It is unlikely anyone will remember what you said the minute you leave the interview room. Make sure that your goals are directly beneficial to the

employer. Something like 'I would like to become a valued member of staff who brings the benefits I have mentioned to the organisation and to make an important contribution quickly'.

Of course your short term goals are probably to secure the job and earn more money but stating that will not help your application!

If you have some interesting goals which are non-work related then mention these as it shows you are a rounded person but primarily concentrate on your work goals and what you can bring.

Q 25. What are your longer term goals?

These can extend beyond the boundaries of the current organisation so be careful. We are probably looking at a 5-10 year time span so pitch the goals in this area. It is OK to say you would like a higher level role such as the one interviewer is holding, especially if they will ultimately be your manager or supervisor, because these timescales do not threaten their job.

However it is probably safer to discuss your long term personal goals as this could avoid any reason for the interviewer finding your reply for work related goals unsuitable.



Figure 12 What are your longer term goals?

Q 26. How many hours do you usually work?

This will depend on the type of job you are going for. For a more managerial role you will answer you have no set finishing time it is whatever it takes to get the job done.

Q 27. (a) Could you please tell me your three greatest strengths?

An obvious open opportunity to sing your own praises. Choosing something unique about the skills, knowledge and experience you possess will set you apart from the competition. Think strategically about how your experience can offer greater value to this role. Perhaps you are able to share specific industry knowledge, and your depth of understanding in how other companies have handled similar problems to what this company might be going through right now, etc.

You need to have a pre-prepared answer but make it sound natural and unrehearsed. Split the answer between your work related skills and your behavioural skills. Eg. Have the skills and attributes to do the job, willing and enthusiastic, bring professional behaviours to the organisation, good communicator are a good start for any answer.

Q 27 (b) What would your manager say your greatest strengths were?

Split your answer between your work related skills and how well you fit in with a team, and how you collaborate with people on meeting organisational goals. Focus on how you are driven by results, whilst working well within the team. Start your reply with 'it has been commented on at appraisals that I am a good at...'



This is of course an obvious open opportunity to sing your own praises. Have a prepared answer but make it sound natural and unrehearsed.

Q 28. What do you consider to be your weaknesses?



You need to be objective and humble but without dwelling on the negative aspects of this question. Any negative question requires an answer that ends up with a positive upside and closure so that further negative probing by the interviewer is discouraged. This answer requires preparation.

Firstly do not say you have no weaknesses. Technology comes to your rescue in this question. With the fast changing IT world you can safely say it is difficult to keep up with the latest technological breakthroughs. You will need to adapt this to your particular industry.

Secondly a weakness could be viewed as a weakness of the company you work for. The company is poor on training and to cover this weakness you are studying at home to bridge the gap. See how this avoids admitting the weakness is your fault and demonstrates a pro-active attitude to fill the gap?

If the role is in an area that you are clearly unfamiliar with then state this. It will be obvious anyway but allows you the chance to tell the interviewer what you are going to do to fill this gap. You are addressing the 'big white elephant in the room', and this will make you more credible.

'Clearly I have limited experience in this role using 'x'. But I have applied because I am sure I can do the role and am keen and able to retrain and learn the role through sheer hard work and dedication. I have faced similar difficulties in previous roles and quickly got up to speed.

Q 29. (a) What salary are you looking for?

Rule number 1 in the art of salary negotiations is never be tempted to start negotiations until they offer you the job. Rule number 2 is not to be the first to talk about specific figures.

The reason for this is that you can be doing fairly much the same job in one company, as in another, but salaries can vary from a \$20K to \$70K difference, so never state any specific figure at this stage, as you don't know if you'd be offering a figure that is lower than what they had in mind for you.

Always let the employer offer a salary first then negotiate upwards.

A. "I'd be looking at somewhere in the range of the current market value. I have researched what the spectrum of salaries are within this industries, as well as the incentives, may I ask what you have budgeted for this role?"

Q 29. (b) From what you were doing in your previous role, I'd be assuming you are taking a pay cut for this role?

Many people will question you if you are taking an obvious step down from your previous position, but it's definitely not an uncommon thing to do for people who are keen on joining a new industry. Your best option is to say that you don't mind taking a pay cut in order to get into this industry or this company, as you know you'll have to prove yourself all over again. Confirm that you have budgeted



for the lower salary in your lifestyle and expenses, and it's definitely something you can do. Explain that you have a huge interest in this industry, and that you see yourself here for the long term.

Q 30. I see you have been involved in a lot of project work in the past, I'm worried there won't be enough variety of you in this role.



Of course the implication is you will become bored easily doing the same task day in and day out. You need to reduce to the risk to the employer of hiring you by ensuring you give a valid reason for wanting to cement a full time role.

'The reason I have had so many project based roles is that I wanted to build on my project management experience, and be exposed to many different working practices for different organisations. I believe that the next career move that I make is vitally important to my long term future and I want to make the correct decision. Your organisation fits my profile of that I am looking for in an organisation and the possibilities for career advancement.

I also need to add that I can provide good references from each of these companies even though I was there for a relatively short period of time''

Q 31. What was your typical day like in your last job?

Another open question with an easy chance to shine....It was always busy, lots of pressure and close deadlines and targets to meet. Often meant long hours and commitment to work endlessly until the job was done etc. Plenty of scope for signing your own praises.

It is worth adding that your line manger always recognised the contribution you made and you received bonuses / awards for your efforts.

Anything where you can paint a picture of an enthusiastic, hard-working, dedicated, talented, team player will do your application no harm.

Q 32. How does this role compare to your current role?

You don't necessarily know what the role involves, but you can explain your current role by listing the activities, responsibility and the targets that you achieved.

You would then ask the interviewer if this is similar to the role on offer. If the 2 roles are not completely similar then get the interviewer to explain the differences. This buys you some valuable thinking time!

If there are differences then you need to address how you have the skills and flexibility to take on the challenges. Do not move the conversation on until all the potential differences in the roles have been addressed in a satisfactory way. If you have not done something then show how you have in the past done a similar role.

Although no two roles will ever be identical the generic characteristics of a role should be closely matched. You need to leave no doubt that you can 'do the job effectively'.



Q 33. Presumably you want this job because you are disillusioned with your current employer?’



They are digging for you to say something negative about your current employer, which would then raise the red flag in your application.

‘Actually, I have really enjoyed working for my current employer. I have been fortunate to have been given a lot of opportunities to learn new skills as my manager has given me plenty of additional tasks in which I have acquired valuable experience. However I now feel it is time to further my career by moving on and learning new skills.’

Notice how you start the sentence with the word ‘actually’ or fortunately this is better than saying an outright ‘NO’. It is important not to start any sentence with ‘No, on the contrary.....’ or words to that effect. It is effectively disagreeing with the interviewer and this is bad diction.

Q 34. What is a typical day for you at your current job?

They are looking to see what your top 4-5 key responsibilities are, what challenges you have to overcome on a daily basis, and your attitude and approach to resolving the issues and generating a positive outcome.

You should also mention that the role is varied, and requires you to manage your time and priorities tasks on an hour to hour basis. Additionally, suggest that you have some of the following traits: hard-working, team player, responsibility, good communicator, efficient and professional attitude.

The interview is your opportunity to shine. If you don’t sell yourself with questions like these someone else will beat you to the job!

Q 35. Describe a recent day when things didn’t go well?

Prepare an example of how you were faced with difficulties which were not of your making. It may have started off as a bad day but you must also include a positive ending. Here is an example.....

“Recently we had a situation where there was an outbreak of flu in the office. 3 of the staff were off sick and we had client deadlines looming. My senior manager got very anxious as there were plenty of last minute requests. To add to our problems the software crashed for 2 hours. It was horrendous. However my team managed to pull together. We worked long hours and I came in at the weekend so that all the deadlines were met. I even got a small bonus as recognition for my efforts.”

Q 36. Why do you want to leave your current job?

The interviewer wants to check that you are not leaving for a reason that will be present in the prospective job opportunity, for example, no career progression or no training and development offered to employees. They are also making sure you will not say something negative about an ex-employer or ex-employee. Resist the temptation and keep the answer upbeat concentrating on the advantages of what the new job would offer. You could mention the increased salary but do not dwell on it, emphasise the other benefits first.

“I enjoy my previous job and as I have demonstrated I make a solid contribution which is appreciated. However I am looking for more experience, a greater challenge / increased responsibility / more dynamic organisation that this role offers.”

Q 37. What do you understand by the term customer service?

Whenever you are in a role where you are dealing with customers the way you handle this relationship is going to be an important selling point in the interview.

Customer service is two fold. Firstly respect the customer for who they are. Secondly make sure they go away satisfied that they have had any issues resolved.

This question will inevitably lead on to further questions around your involvement with the customers.

Q 38. In what way does your previous role prepare you for taking greater levels of responsibility?

Ideally you want to show a scenario where you have been in the position of assuming the greater responsibility. For example you may have been seconded to the role of 2IC for your boss while they were away. Comment on how things went well and how your boss commented on this. Third party endorsements are always good.

In this way you are assimilating your position with what might happen and you have already had a taste of the expected level of responsibility.

Complete your summing up by saying you enjoyed the responsibility even though it was challenging.

Q 39. Would you have liked to have your supervisor's job?

“Yes, I am fortunate that I have a great supervisor where we work well together. She has asked me to be second in charge for her a number of times and I enjoyed the challenge and increased responsibility that came with it.”



Figure 13 Would you have liked to have your supervisor's job?

Q 40. What are the aspects of this role that would motivate you?

Similar question to previous ones. Include career challenges, job satisfaction and the opportunity for advancement. Keep it positive and have some examples ready!

Don't mention the salary! Remember the interviewer is asking themselves 'what is in it for me!' He doesn't really want to know about your salary expectations. They want to hear you are applying for the job because you are keen on the role!



They will never employ someone who is there 'just for the money'.

Q 41. What motivates you in your current role?

Always beating your personal best is a good answer, as it means that you are self motivated. You can state what your long term career goal is, and then explain that you accept as many new tasks and projects as is feasible so you are continually growing your skills base to acquire your long term goals.

You need to tailor your answer so it applies to your particular situation but also applies to the job for which you are applying so the interviewer can visualise you doing the new role.

Doing the job well and efficiently to the best of my ability, Praise from colleagues or suppliers. Teaching and motivating staff and watch them progress. I enjoy the busy full day which keeps me challenged. I enjoy meeting and exceeding the stretched sales targets that have been set.



Figure 14 - What motivates you in your current role?

Q 42. What cost savings did you make in your last role?

Mention how you made some cost savings through improving inefficiencies that you noticed in some of the working practices/processes. Although it wasn't part of your job you took it upon yourself to drive these through, and that it was recognised by senior management because this saved x amount of time and \$\$\$\$ in operating costs (be specific).

You do of course need to back this up with examples.

If your role was to make cost savings then state them explicitly. If they exceeded the targeted savings then state this too. Explain how you made the costs savings and over what period of time these happened. The employer wants to know you have the potential to save them money, because you will be just as conscientious and able to take the initiative. By demonstrating these very tangible achievements you are in a much stronger position.



Figure 15 - How did you minimise expenses in your last role?

Again, you need to have rehearsed this answer and know exactly what to say. If you are not asked this question you need to weave the answer into some part of the interview as it is a great selling point.

Every one wants to hear you can drive down costs.

Q 43. Can you hit the ground running?

They are looking for confirmation that you have the ability to learn new concepts quickly and adapt to a new learning environment. Try to assimilate with other situations where there was change in your working practices.

“There will of course be a learning curve but I have always demonstrated a strong ability to pick up on new procedures within a short time frame. For example when I joined my current role there was a great deal of learning with new software and procedures but I was praised for the effective way I managed the change. Additionally our company merged with company x and the subsequent roles were completely different. So this is not a new situation for me. Being adaptable is one of my key strengths”.

Q 44. Why have you had so many different roles?



You obviously had genuine reasons for leaving each job. If these do not sound very professional or indicate poor traits of commitment then you need to be careful about what you say.

If your career path has had many roles, you will almost certainly be asked this question. Hopefully you can say that some of them were temp roles, while others were contract positions. On one role you could state that the job was not as it was defined when you accepted the job offer. On another, you could say that you moved from the area, but are now firmly settled here in x city. The important thing is to close your answer by convincing the interviewer that this role is not just another stepping stone to somewhere better.

‘Having been through so many roles, I have finally figured out exactly what I want in a job and a career. I have clear direction in where I want to be in 5 years time, and I know that I need to acquire a strong foundation of knowledge and skills in the areas of x y and z. That is why I applied for this position, it meets the criteria for my career development yet also will leverage upon my key strengths within the a b and c job functions. In addition, I want to settle down with a mortgage and start a family some day in the next 3 years. This is exactly the role I have been striving to achieve’

Q 45. What do you do when your manager criticises your work.

The presumption is that there are occasions where your work is criticised, which you can confirm or deny.



‘I have a very strong relationship with my manager, which has been built on trust and open communication over a 3 year period. I am not aware of any occasions where my work has been directly criticised. We constantly discuss departmental issues together and although he may occasionally reject my ideas, I don’t view this as criticism.’

Q 46. How would you describe yourself as a person?

Interviewers ask broad questions like this with curiosity on how you will choose to answer them. There are two parts to this answer, the work related person and the person outside of work. For the work related person this is part of your personal pitch and should closely reflect the ‘elevator pitch’ statement you have created to summarise your key strengths.

Here are some examples which you can use to impress the interviewer. Soft skills such as communication skills, team-work, enthusiasm, professionalism and perseverance will cover all the bases. Additionally add what you are like as a person outside of work. Start the statement with a third party endorsement, as it sounds better even if the question is how you would describe yourself.

I think work colleagues would say I am a hard working, enthusiastic team-player. Someone willing to overcome obstacles and persevere until a job is done well and professionally. They would say I have a solid knowledge base and I am results focused and an ambitious achiever. Outside of work I tend to be more laid back and interested anything that provides relaxation. I love spending quality time



with my 3 children on the tennis court. I rejuvenate my batteries by getting out in the great outdoors and going for long bike rides through the botanical gardens.'

Often it is not what you say but how you say it that counts. When you state the above make sure you smile and say it with enthusiasm and cheeriness. It will reinforce the impression the interviewer sees!

Q 47. How would friends describe you?

They want to see how you react to a curve-ball type question, and at the same time dig for information that shows what you do socially. Highlight the personal attributes that would also benefit the position you are applying for.

My friends would say that I am always up for a challenge, I love to win when playing sports such as golf or tennis. They would say I am very caring and compassionate, and take the time help them deal with the challenges in their life that have generated personal grief or stress.

Q 48. What do you expect your starting salary to be?

A good tactic is to ask back what the interviewer has in mind. Then if they say something , you would reply that that is close to what you were expecting for such a role.

You could use this as an opportunity to confirm all Key Performance Indicators for the role, so you are aware of what would be expected of you. You could also ask the interviewer what they perceive to be the main challenges behind attaining the goals and targets that have been set within the role's job description. Once this has been discussed, you could suggest that upon receiving a job offer, you will be happy to commence discussions on salary, but the figure that they originally mentioned is nearly on par with what you were seeking.

Q 49. Have you ever disagreed or argued with your current immediate supervisor?

Make sure you cease any form of negativity in the conversation and then accentuate the positive by detailing the fact that your supervisor is comfortable with giving you more powers of trust. Explain that you have established very open communication channels, and that arguing has never been an element to effectively make decisions and meet organisational goals.



A. '.....Fortunately, we have always had a good working relationship. Recently he has been giving me greater powers of authority and also I have been trusted to delegate for him and weekly performance meetings.'

Q 50. Have you ever lost your temper at work?



"Never, fortunately I don't recall ever having to lose my temper. I am lucky to have a quick thinking mind and I can effectively communicate in difficult situations without losing emotional control. '



Q 51. What would you do if a customer started swearing?

Depending on the industries you worked within, and the customers you've dealt with, this could be an every day event, but clearly this is not acceptable. You need to demonstrate an example where this occurred and how you handled it.

'We do get customers who come in swearing. We warn them twice and let them know in no uncertain terms that they will not be dealt with until they calm down. Further swearing results in security being called. This is company policy and we rigorously enforce this. I think this creates a good impression for other customers who are watching as we need to take a firm stance in such matters'.

Q 52. What aspects of working with clients / customers do you like?

The interviewer will be judging for your first initial reaction to see if you really do like working with customers. If you explain that you enjoy meeting different people, and get satisfaction from helping them, then this is a great start. You can then explain how you've made a difference to people's lives by sharing your knowledge on a particular subject, to demonstrate you really do love helping people. If you work with customers then you need to have a clearly thought out answer as it will be a key element of your work.

Q 53. This is a significant step up in your career, how will you cope?



This is an important question where the answer will carry a lot of weight. This additional responsibility is a key element of any job. Try to assimilate with other similar circumstances either inside or outside of work.

'This is exactly the type of job that I am looking for. If I were to take a role that was on similar ground to my previous position, I would definitely get bored. I feel I have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience for this next step, as I have done most of the job functions throughout the last 3 years whilst I was taking on additional duties for my manager. I am not one to set myself up for failure, I know I have all the competencies required for this position.'

Q 54. Are you competitive?

If you are applying for a sales based role, then being competitive is almost essential, but you've also got to refer to being connected to a team. If it's true, you can say that you are competitive with your own standards, and are constantly seeking to beat your own performance in many things, from the quality of your work, to the results you bring in your sports. If you feel that you are not competitive, then you could say that you prefer collaborating with a team of people, and don't need to be the winner for ego's sake....

A. 'I would more accurately describe myself as ambitious and enthusiastic to do well in this organisation. However I will not do this at the expense or detriment of other colleagues. I firmly believe that approaching issues and challenges in the correct appropriate manner with a sense of drive and team-work will always be preferable to raw competition. '



Figure 16 Are you competitive?

Q 55. Are you able to motivate yourself?

Being self motivated is an essential attribute that every employee needs to possess, unless you are applying for a factory level role, you need to show that you are enthusiastic and have the inner drive to get the job done. This is a key element that interviewers look for, so it may even be worth backing up your claims with prove by giving an example. It may be worth considering the third party endorsement approach.

'In my performance appraisals my manager has commented on my ability to take the initiative and solve problems before they arise into major dramas. Additionally, I start everyday by writing out a list of jobs and then putting them into priority order, it gives me direction on what needs to be achieved and motivates me to get through the list, so I can tick everything off. My manager would say that I need little supervision, as I work with a sense of urgency and enthusiasm.'

Q 56. We haven't mentioned the salary and benefits package and actually it is a lot less than your current job. Is this going to be an issue?

The best way to deal with this question is to say that you can't really consider it unless you have know the details, you could ask the interviewer if they would like to discuss the salary package now, so you can answer their question.



'I am very interested in the role and would be delighted to be offered it. However as you have pointed out I would need to understand the complete salary and benefits package before I made any decision.'

Q 57. I see you have a masters degree do you feel over qualified and do you think you will fit in?

The implication is that you will become bored and leave quickly when you see something better.

'I applied for this position because I believe it will be a great long-term opportunity for me to gain good experience and I see myself making a strong contribution to the organisation. The fact that I appear to be over qualified will mean I can bring a high level of knowledge and aptitude to apply to the job. I won't get bored and be looking for a better position. I see this role as a good fit for my skills and ambitions.'



Figure 17 - Will Your Masters degree make you overqualified?

Q 58. Why are you deciding to change careers?

There are many reasons why you would want to change career direction. You may have been exposed to an industry that you are immensely interested in, and want to join. The industry that you belong to may be a dying industry and you have identified that you need to get out before it's too late. It is also possible that another industry recognised more of your skills and natural talents than the industry you now belong to. Whatever reason, it boils down to one reason, career advancement.

Changing industries is not necessarily a bad thing but does put you at a disadvantage to other candidates. You need to demonstrate how your skills are going to be transferable. You will need to concentrate on your generic skills such as enthusiasm, managerial, team-building, motivator. Specific job related skills will of course be in short supply.

Q 59. Do you like working in a matrix management style organisation?

This is where a project team is formed with each individual reporting to the manager but having a distinct line manager. 'Yes there are benefits in using a matrix management style team. It would depend on the processes and procedures which the company implemented and how effective the lines of communication were.'

Q 60. Why do you appear to have had very few promotions in your existing role even though you have been there a considerable amount of time?

Another tough question where your strategy is to answer and make sure the matter is not discussed any further. There are no positives to take from this type of question. Keep it short and hope to move on. Do not be tempted to be negative about any ex-employer



I work for a good employer but there is very little room for promotion within our current department. I was hoping that this situation would be resolved with someone leaving but this hasn't happened, and I am now looking to take the next step with another organisation.

Q 61. What did you like and dislike most about your last or current job?

You have two questions here, so start by recalling what you like most, spend 95% of the time on this answer and the remaining 5% on the other one. This first question is a golden opportunity to recall what you liked because you did it well, so you can display your main attributes.

It allowed me to develop my leadership capabilities through my supervisor giving me more and more responsibility within the department. She provided mentoring on how to effectively manage a team and coached me on how to deal with escalated issues. These opportunities certainly stretched my skill level. In these times, I had to prioritise my regular work load with her demanding schedule and there were usually tight and conflicting deadlines to juggle. The role allowed me to develop my organisational and motivational skills within the team.

As you can see the above example allows you to demonstrate and talk about your soft and hard skills. Draw up a list and practice recounting them to make it sound natural.

On the negative side about what you liked least you need to keep it brief but also turn the answer round to make it sound positive. Here is one example....

The management team didn't believe in micromanaging people, but this allowed some team members to slacken off with aspects of the job function that were never measured or inspected. The unfortunate part of this was I ended up having to clean up a lot of work that had been done to a mediocre standard.



Figure 18 What did you like most and least about your last job?

As you can see the above example has a 'positive spin' within the answer. It is important how you say something not just what you say. When you are giving the above answers they must sound natural and they must sound humble in order to trigger the correct emotion in the interviewer. No one like someone who boasts and no one hires someone they do not like.

Q 62. Talk to me about a time when your team work resulted in a more successful conclusion.

You will need to describe a time when you worked in a team and the benefits it derived. Key components are you listen, solicit ideas, persuade, summarise and conclude the discussion. You then act together to produce a successful end result.

Remember there are often no right or wrong answers. Everyone's opinion in a team is valid and worth consideration. Equally if an idea is wrong it is not a criticism. There is open debate in a team environment which will produce the best end result and decision.

Once you have reached a decision you need to act on it as a team and then demonstrate to the interviewer why it was more successful because of the team. The greater success can easily be assimilated to the greater number of ideas generated and the active discussion which generated them.

It is not only the pooling of skills in the thought process but also in the action of those ideas. For example in a multi-job task everyone will have different levels of skills for each are it is easy to demonstrate how this can be successful. For example a new marketing campaign will require creative thinking, artistic thought, operational follow through and presentation skills.



Figure 19 When have you been involved in a team project that delivered great success?



Q 63. Why do you want to change employers and join our organisation and what as an organisation can we offer that is better than your current employer?

The interviewer is curious why you are seeking to move from your current organisation to this one. They are interested to know what you find more appealing about this job or this company. The big think here is that you want to appear like you have made a conscious decision in applying to this company in particular, and that you are not just randomly jumping from one company to another.

A typical answer which deals with such a comparison should read.....

‘My current organisation has been great for my career as I have learned many new skills eg. Project management and supervising geographically dispersed teams across Australia. There is a great team ethic and I feel I have made a strong contribution to their administration team. However I see your organisation and the role on offer as a new challenge which can leverage my skills and allow me to challenge myself set new goals and further my career in a way that the current organisation perhaps doesn’t offer.’

Of course this answer needs to be tailored to meet your particular circumstances. Start by listing what you like about your current organisation and the experience you have gained. Compare this with the list of skills and benefits you expect to find in the new organisation. Use this list to tailor your answer. Stay clear of talking about money. The sub text of this question and so many others like it is the interviewer is asking ‘What’s in it for me?’

In your reply, you can also outline how you have made a contribution to your current employer. By saying you want to leverage your skills in the new role and show how you can make a strong contribution is precisely what the interviewer wants to hear.

If you say or even imply the reason for the new job is that you are looking for more money or additional benefits, then this does not imply you are making a contribution to the new organisation. You are in fact saying this is “what is in it for me” and does not address the interviewers needs!

Q 64. If you could wave a magic wand, what tasks would you not want to ever do again?

A dangerous question. The interviewer is probing for things that you didn't previously like and then they can ask a follow on question about why you didn't like them. Beware of this trap. One negative question after another sets a negative mood and will seriously harm your interview chances.



Figure 5 What tasks would you wish never to do again?

Turn the question round and give a 'model answer', which portrays no negativity.'In an ideal world.....I

would like to avoid any bureaucracy or red tape which can delay decisions. Like anyone I am always keen for good progress to be made at all times and everything to run smoothly'.

'I would like to avoid the situation in the last role where we had tight deadlines and 3 of my staff went off on long term sick leave with the winter flu last year. Although we achieved our targets it was only through hard effort, team-work and long hours'.

See how these answers portray you in a good light and turn a negative into a positive. Make sure you have prepared an answer otherwise you could see yourself stumbling!

Another key point is that the length of the answer is sufficient to give the interviewer enough information. If the answer is too brief the interviewer will feel that you have avoided the answer. If the answer is too long then you are spending too long discussing something that is potentially negative. A second important point is that anyone who talks too much in an answer can be perceived as lying. Of course that would only apply to a question where you have something to hide.

Q 65. Why should I hire you? What personal qualities or attributes will you bring to the role?

Use your personal pitch of 2 -3 sentences that you have prepared from earlier activities in this guide. Your statement needs to relate to the job description. Go through the qualities listed line by line. Then add in the additional personal qualities that you bring to the role.

It is always worth using a qualifying phrase such as 'colleagues have said of me...I am a great motivator/team builder/technician etc.'. It sounds better if there is a third party endorsement. It doesn't sound like you are bragging but a colleague is speaking on your behalf. In addition you will need to have relevant examples which you can offer to expand on. The personal qualities for the role will be attributes such as hard-working, motivating, good communication skills, desire to succeed.

You should end your answer with a statement such as 'do you think these qualities are what you are looking for from a successful candidate?'. It plants a seed in the mind of the interviewer that they are.

If they reply that they were expecting other qualities then discuss them and offer examples of how you have these and examples of these in action. You need to leave the interviewer in no doubt you have the skills and can demonstrate this with examples.



Figure 20 What personal attributes will you bring to the role?



Q 66. I see from your resume that you have never actually been in this type of role in any of your previous companies. How are you going to manage?"

Employers want a low risk when they are hiring new people, and they are looking for re-assurance that you will adapt to the new environment, so if you've never held this type of role before, this will be seen as an obvious weakness. In saying this, you would not have an interview if the interviewer truly thought you could not do the job.

Relate your previous experience to similar situations where you moved departments and had a new role or were faced with new technology which you had to learn quickly.

Turn this into a positive about:

1. How you are able to adapt to changing circumstances and have a flexible approach.
2. How you pick up new skills quickly.
3. How you enjoy the challenge of the ever changing technology'.

Try to broaden the answer by saying 'we are all faced with a fast moving and changing environment which constantly presents new challenges. I have always been able to rise to these challenges and perform effectively despite limited product knowledge, tight deadlines, little support etc'.

Importantly, then go on to list examples of similar experiences where you have demonstrated such skills. This should close the issue in the interviewers mind and paint a positive picture.

Q 67. You seem over qualified for this position, aren't you going to find the role a bit too easy and get bored?

This could be seen as a compliment, but be wary because they may be fearing you have strong ambition to quickly accelerate into the next level of role, which could be the interviewer's job. They may feel threatened if you have too much experience and a strong skill set, so you need to focus on putting their mind at ease. Explain that you are attracted to this role because it offers significant areas of growth for you, and that although you do have strong skills to offer, you know the skills you also need to develop.

You will want to focus on the challenges the company will offer you and how they will provide a rewarding career for you. This can mark a changing point in the interview. The interviewer is saying that effectively you are an excellent candidate more than capable of doing the job. Your focus now is on convincing them that you see the company as your next major career step.

If you can additionally add that you do have other options for your career and this role is still your first choice then so much the better. It reinforces what you are saying.

Q 68. What aspects of your job do you dislike the most?

Try to find something in the new role that the old role doesn't offer and which makes you dislike it. For example the limited chance to travel. You love travelling and the new role will afford you that chance.



Or you like meeting customers and your present office based role doesn't allow this to happen. See how these answers completely eliminate any negative sentiment and give genuine reasons for wanting the new role.



Q 69. I have A Pen Here – Sell It Me!

This tends to be geared towards selling and marketing positions. The key points to remember are to sell the benefits of the product. The product exists because it has some beneficial value. Physically it is a pen with ink in it and has a hard outer casing.

The benefits are what bring it alive, for example:

1. It feels solid when you grip it and it glides across the paper.
2. It works instantly and requires no refills.
3. It is reliable and never leaks.
4. the ink never smudges on the paper and dries instantly.

Of course you could be asked this question about any number of objects sitting on the interviewer's desk.

The interviewer wants to hear about the benefits of the application. Sell the benefits you bring to the organisation and you are 80% there. Describing how you fulfil the role will only count for less than 20% of the interviewer's assessment of your application. Your resume indicates you can do the job and that is why you have an interview. Sell the additional benefits of your application to be successful.

Q 70. How come you have been with your employer for such a short time?

An obvious weakness question, you need to detract the fact that you simply might have changed your mind about working there, and give them a solid reason, for example:

- ❖ The company is in financial trouble
- ❖ The job was not as it was advertised
- ❖ There are some serious OHS issues that I and the staff were exposed to
- ❖ The culture within the team was extremely negative, no support for new people.
- ❖ The product / service of the company was not how it was advertised, and I don't want to be associated with them, it may impact on my career if I were to stay with them.



The next best thing is to have a genuine reason for wanting to leave. Be careful not to moan or be negative about your employer, just state it like it's a fact.



Figure 21 How would your boss describe you?

Also, be careful not to 'job hop' as a lack of stability in your career path can be a serious drawback.

Q 71. How would your current boss describe you?

Use 3 words that you could guess your boss would use in the reference they would give you in the near future.

My boss would describe me as Reliable, a team player, and an effective problem solver.. My manager gives me plenty of responsibility and delegates important pieces of work to me. he trusts me to perform and get the job done. He talks to me in confidence about a lot of company issues.

Q 72. You have stayed with the same employer for quite some time. Why is this?

Explain that your employer has provided great working conditions, a positive culture and a progressive career path for you. The employer has shown loyalty to you and you have returned this by staying with them. Explain that you have had many different responsibilities within the company and

worked in many projects to learn new skills. You have progressed through the company and had a successful progression within increased responsibility at each stage.

Q 73. What type of employees do you find it difficult to work alongside?

Do not start to mention individuals. Start by describing the type of person you are and so by definition the type of people you like to work with.

"I like to work methodically to get the job done in the most effective manner, I am a positive minded person and so I guess I am attracted to like-minded individuals. So people who try to dodge responsibility or avoid addressing issues are the type of people I find difficult to work with, especially if we are working as a close-knit team. . Fortunately I have been lucky with the great team members I have worked with, and my manager would quickly sort out any lazy behaviour."





Q 74. What qualities do you feel a successful manager should have?

You could think about the best manager you have ever had, and visualised this person as you answer this question. Your answer probably stems down to two aspects, their leadership style and ability to communicate their vision.

'I had a wonderful manager when I was worked at company x. They had a 'firm –but –fair approach' and lead by example which really motivated the team. Her name was Robyn, and she set a high standard in the quality of work we produced. She would always acknowledge when a job was well done, and was quick to pull someone aside if she thought they could have done better. Which was good, because you knew that this would eventually increase your skill level and ability. She would openly communicate her goals for the department and seek input on how we as a team could achieve the vision. She worked collaboratively, and wasn't afraid to get in and work with a hands on approach.'

Behavioural Questions

Use the STAR formula to construct a strong response to behavioural questions.

Q 75. Tell me about a recent success you were involved with at your previous company.

'We recently had a major order for an important client that needed to be complete and shipped by the end of the weekend. We had been let down by our main supplier and were short of materials. I worked long into the Thursday night contacting other suppliers across the state until we found what we required. With time running short I hired a van and went and collected the material myself. I then organised for an extra two shifts to work the weekend so the order would be completed. I supervised the weekend working as well which was two 16 hour days. We all pulled together as a team and shipped the order on time to the client. They were delighted with our commitment as they had been informed of the struggle we had to complete the order. It resulted in further orders and a great deal of goodwill with the client. They remarked that they felt we were a company that went the extra mile to make sure deliveries were completed as per schedule. '

Such an answer has many positive points that the interviewer can pick up on and assimilate with the role you are applying for. Teamwork, commitment, ingenuity, hard work and dedication are all characteristics that can be transferred between roles. Are you a team player and if so demonstrate how this could be beneficial to the organisation.

Here is another example you could use....

"I recently had a project for a client. I was the project manager tasked with delivering the end product. I organised the team and took the project from the requirements stage through the full project life cycle to completion. The project came in on time on budget and to the client

specifications. There were very few errors during the user acceptance testing and I received plenty of praise for a job well done as the client was thrilled. It was a fixed price contract so there was no room for error or cost over runs.

We had a lessons learned phase at the end of the project as we always do. The results were that there were so many positive lessons we could share with other departments.



Figure 22 Tell me about your successes

Q 76. Tell me about a problem you recently had at your job and what you did to resolve it?

This question allows you to demonstrate your creative problem solving skills, how you analysed the problem and how you reached a successful conclusion.

Firstly do not fall into the trap of suggesting the problem was of your own making, the problem would have to have been caused by someone else and you had been given the responsibility of resolving the issues.

The interviewer will also be looking to see how this situation could be assimilated with the current role you are applying for. The answers which will most impress the interviewer are those that carry real-life examples with them. They allow the interviewer to 'picture' the situation actually taking place.

The problem could be caused from IT system failures, a lack of staff, tight deadlines, a lazy member of staff, insufficient transport or changing client expectations.

Your task would revolve around certain action steps you needed to take in order to resolve the problem. You might have needed to recruit temporary staff, or increase productivity to compensate for lack of staff. The lack of transport may mean you need to procure new transport or find more innovative ways of transporting your goods.

Move on to describe the action you took to resolve the task. The explanation needs to be clear and detailed. Ideally it should demonstrate innovative thinking. If you had a lack of transport, saying so we paid to hire another lorry is fairly obvious and will not sound terribly innovative. If you said you set up a reciprocal arrangement with another firm to share transport at peak load times, saving both firms time and money, then this is innovative and could lead to further collaboration.

The result was reduced costs, savings of time and in the long run a closer collaboration between rival firms for a mutually beneficial arrangement.



Figure 23 - Tell me about problem you had and how you resolved it.

Q 77. How do you deal with difficult colleagues?

A common question especially for line managers which relies on you having some concrete answers pre-prepared for the interview. There isn't much point in saying that you didn't have any. Maybe you didn't but it then shows you have no experience in this area. So you need to recall a situation where there was conflict, however trivial. Firstly keep it upbeat.

'Fortunately I didn't have many difficulties we have a great team spirit. However on this one occasion I remember there were 2 employees who just didn't get along on the team. I interviewed them both separately to get to the bottom of the issues. Eventually the reason turned out to be personal. I offered one person the opportunity to be transferred to a different department. HR were kept informed all the way. In the end I mediated between them and they both agreed not to let it interfere with their working relationship.'



Figure 24 Dealing With Difficult Employees

Always finish with a successful resolution to the problem.

Q 78. When have you faced a difficult problem and how did you provide a successful resolution to it?

Any problem that results in the company from making less profit, or decreases the level of customer service is worth mentioning. You will show them that you have the personal drive to see the issue as a potential risk to the company, and demonstrate the actions you took to overcome the problem. To answer this you need to have a pre-prepared answer which fits the STAR model. Situation, Task, Action, Result. For example.

Situation: I had a difficult employee who appeared not to want to work on my team.

Task: confronted employer to find out what the problem was

Action: One to one meeting to find out problem, which was they did not like a work colleague (for whatever reason).

Result: Moved individual to a different team / different desk / pro-actively resolved their differences.

Q 79. If you had another opportunity, what would you have done differently?

Are you going to criticise the handling of the situation? No of course not. However the interviewer is verifying if you believe you handled the situation well. Be humble but do not admit to making any mistakes.

“With hindsight I firmly believe that all situations could be improved upon. In this particular situation there was a satisfactory outcome but there are always lessons to be learned and this is one of the motivations for doing the job.”

Q 80. Without naming names who has been the most difficult employee to work with and what have you learned from it?

Try to stay upbeat to a very negative question. Employ the third party viewpoint role where the conflict was happening elsewhere.

“I have been fortunate with the colleagues I have worked with and who I have supervised. I have never had any serious falling out with any of them I seem to be able to work well with most people.

I have seen situations where there has been conflict and serious disagreement with other colleagues. As a third party outsider it does appear that patience, respect and the understanding of other peoples opinions and values is important to good relations.”

Q 81. Tell me about a time where you were resourceful at work.

The interviewer is looking for people who use their common sense, and think outside the box.. Follow the S.T.A.R. process. S -Situation T – Task A -Action taken R -Results

Here is an example...



‘Recently we had an important sales presentation team coming in but an hour before the meeting was due to start we had a small flood in the meeting room making it unusable. We had no other meeting rooms in the building so I needed to act fast.

I was on good terms with the management of the office complex across the road. I managed to persuade them to lend us one of their meeting rooms for an hour. I transferred all the equipment across the road just in time. There was little inconvenience and the sales presentation went ahead as scheduled and was a success. As a direct result we got one of our biggest orders that year.”

Figure 25 When Where You Resourceful at work?

Q 82. Give me an example of a situation where you had to deal with a difficult customer.

If you've completed the exercises at the beginning of this guide, you would have some strong examples to use for this question.

The key thing is to give an example where you solved the problem of the customer to everybody's satisfaction and they went away happy.

For example "We had a customer who contacted us with, wanting to use our services, wanting a heavy discount, but to also receive the service before the standard time frames permitted. He was insistent and would not compromise. He was wanting a large order which would generate a significant amount of profit for the company, but if we were to drop the other customer orders and deal with his, then other customers would have to be placed aside. I needed to negotiate with him about the timeframes, and I explained that we already had customers who had paid and booked their order, based on the promise of a timely delivery. I explained that I wanted to keep my word to these customers, but I would commence work on his account immediately, and I gave him my word that I would try to complete it within the shortest



Figure 26 - When have you dealt with a very difficult customer?

possible time. He seemed to calm down after that, and we completed it within a 4 day period, which made the customer very happy, knowing we had so much work on. He then later came back to us for more work to be done, as he appreciated the quality service and product we delivered.'

Q 83. Give me an example of when a dissatisfied customer complained and you had been the one to serve them.

Everyone who deals with customers will come across a dissatisfied customer, whether it was through their own actions or mistakes made on behalf of your company, at some point you will need to apologise for the inconvenience caused, and rectify the situation. Try to keep the example in the third party context eg. someone else made the mistake but you had to sort it out. For example:

"Recently had a customer come in to complain that we had over charged him for an item. It turns out the bar code reader was issuing the wrong price. I apologised on behalf of the store and of course refunded him the money. In such circumstances I like to go that bit further and gave the customer a money-off voucher for the next time he visited. He went away happy and I have seen him in the store on numerous occasions since"always finish with a happy ending!

Q 84. What is the most innovative idea you have come up with at work?

You need follow the Situation, Task, Action, Results (STAR) method of describing what you did. Make sure there is a perceived benefit firmly stated at the end.

“On many occasions, I have taken the initial enquiries about our products and services. Throughout the 2 years I had been serving prospective customers, and fulfilling their order, I noticed that many were asking for additional ‘add – on’ services that we did not provide. I spoke to my manager about this, and suggested that what they customer was asking for would be a simply product to produce, and once it had been created, we could sell it over and over again. I explained that there was a significant demand, and that I knew it would be worth investing the time in to create the product. He approved of the idea, and asked me to project manage the production of the new product, according to the



Figure 27 - What has been the most innovative idea you have presented at work?

specifications of what had been requested. Now the product is sold as a package deal for customers, and the company is making significant increased revenue, without having to do too much more.

This is a question that is often asked and can set one candidate ahead of another. Initiative and innovation are key differentiating characteristics which can elevate a candidate’s application.

Q 85. ‘...Describe a situation where your work was criticised’

Firstly do not say that your work has never been criticised, it just sounds too unlikely. The interviewer cannot disagree but will form the opinion that you are arrogant or a liar.

Focus on an idea that was perhaps criticised, not necessarily your work. Ideas are often considered, criticised then dropped with little or no impact on the organisation. Bad work will result in pain for the organisation. A good answer is to refer to a team meeting where you were all asked to contribute ideas and not necessarily in an area with which you were familiar. Say you suggested something but upon discussion it was felt there were some flaws in the idea and a better idea was adopted.



“.....in our workplace all team members are often encouraged to contribute ideas and provide honest criticism on each other’s ideas. No one in the group takes criticism personally as the objective of the exercise is to explore all possibilities, eliminate the poor suggestions and find the best solution.”

Such an answer accepts that you are not perfect but implies the criticism of your idea ended in a positive outcome.

Figure 28 - When was your work criticised?

Q 86. Tell me about a stressful situation at work and what did you do?

Firstly do not deny you get stressed at work. Actually it allows you demonstrate that your current role is demanding and challenging which can lead to stressful situations. Note that you shouldn't admit to being 'stressed' but you do get involved in 'stressful situations'. There is a big difference.

Your answer will be in two parts. Firstly you have learnt to avoid as many stressful situations as possible due to premeditating ideas, being organised, results driven, and able to delegate tasks appropriately.



Figure 29 Tell me about a stressful situation

A good response in a stressful situation is to stay calm and think about your next steps. Do not rush into a decision in a blind panic but think about what you are going to do. Explain how you assimilate any stressful situation with previous occasions where similar incidents have occurred and show how you have learned from these and cope with them in a calm and professional manner.

Stressful situations often revolve around irate customers so use this as an example.....'I had an irate customer on the phone who was not pleased with the service or goods they had received. I listened to their complaint even though they were shouting loudly.

Once they had finished, I replied back in a calm and controlled voice to reduce the tension, and paraphrased back what they had told me. This demonstrated that they knew they had been heard. I then suggested a resolution which met their requirements. I double-checked that the customer was happy before the call was completed and apologised for causing unnecessary distress even though in truth it wasn't our fault. I believe the customer has returned to do further business with us.

Further answers could include.....

"Stress affects everyone in varying degrees from time to time. As a manager for our department, I lead by example in stressful situations, and when I see someone is anxious I coach them through the situation so they feel more in control and confident to handle these types of difficult challenges. You can't necessarily control the outcome but if you control your own response this is a good start. Here is an example you could use as a basis.

Q 87. Show examples of how you engaged with your team to resolve a problem.

“It is a great team culture where I currently work. We all get along well and regularly have team meetings to share ideas and improve the way we work. About a month ago, we held a workshop over Friday night drinks to problem solve issues, the relaxed atmosphere was conducive to creative problem solving and on Monday we had another 30 minute workshop to confirm which solution we would implement to resolve our issues.’

Covered for each other while colleagues absent. Avoided duplication of effort by re-arranging work patterns for the team so everyone as more efficient. Implemented cross training of skills and knowledge transfer within the team.

Q 88. What has been your greatest achievement to date?

Think about your 3 proudest moments in your career. What comes to mind? Now list how the company or the client benefited from your actions. Any activity where you:

- ❖ Saved money or operating costs,
- ❖ Increased sales or customer service satisfaction survey results.
- ❖ Reduced headcount (without affecting turnover),
- ❖ Introduced a more effective process.

Your answer to this question will be made by telling the story with the STAR formula, ie.

S -Situation T -Task A – Action R – Results

S – Costs were running way over budget

T – To reduce costs and still bring the project in on time

A – Re-planned whole project and re-allocated resources

R – Project came in on time and on budget.

S – New software introduced and no one was trained in it

T – To train everyone in short period of time

A – Worked longer hours to train myself. Became super-user and organised training program for all departmental staff with me doing the training

R – All staff trained and no down time in system processing while moving to utilising new software.



Figure 30 - What has been your greatest achievement?

Q 89. Tell me about a time when you have offered an idea or suggestion that has improved processes and saved your employer on operating costs etc.

This question could also include how you saved time by making a procedure more efficient.

Here you need to give quantified examples. Use the STAR method of Situation, Task, Action taken and Results. Here is an example.....

‘I noticed the vehicles used by the sales representatives were costing us a significant amount of money in maintenance costs and were off the road for longer than I thought was reasonable. I spent some time investigating and discovered that one small mechanic had the contract for the whole vehicle fleet. They clearly could not cope with the work and I believe were over charging.

I took the initiative to get several tenders for the work. The result is I have introduced a system where we do not use just one mechanic but several. This keeps the suppliers competitive and the vehicles are returned much quicker, in fact a 20% reduction in times taken to maintain a vehicle. There has also been a cost saving of 15% in the actual maintenance costs.’

Q 90. Tell me about a time when you worked well under pressure?

This is a commonly asked question. The interviewer is not looking for a straight ‘yes’. They are looking for an example to demonstrate it.

‘There have been a couple of occasions recently where we had a strict client deadline to meet which we had no way of planning for. What made it worse was that we had 3 staff off sick, the only way to overcome this was to briefly response to all new enquiries, so we could focus more on resolving the issues the current clients were needing assistance with. There was a little overtime that we all needed to do, and at the end of the week, all current and prospective clients had been responded to, we received no complaints!

“We have a new chief executive and he raised the sales targets by 50%. This is a very aggressive increase but we met the target despite being under pressure.”
You can see how telling the story and putting into a context will allow you to demonstrate this competence. ‘



Figure 31 Do you work well under pressure?

Questions about University

Q 91. What is your greatest memory of your university days?

The interviewer is looking for your personality to shine through, and is curious about your character, they will be observing your facial expressions, and how your eyes light up with enthusiasm when you talk about your university experiences. Of course your academic achievements are important but any other achievements outside of the academic world which you are proud of would be a good reply. 'Probably the strong relationships I developed would be my greatest memory, that, and working on a difficult project in subject x, where we had to achieve this fairly difficult task....'

Q 92. Why are your grades on the low side?

Turn the negative into a positive. If there is an obvious weakness make sure you have a good explanation which can demonstrate a positive trait.

"Yes, my grades are perhaps lower than other candidates, but I had to fund my own education by working 40 hours a week for 3 years while at university. So given the circumstances personally I am proud of the grades I achieved. You know that I will carry that dedication and enthusiasm through into any role."



Figure 32 - Why were your grades low?

Q 93. What is your strongest subject?

Ideally it will be the subjects that match with the job. You can suggest that you received excellent grades in this subject because it was one of the most interesting ones for you, and that is why you are pursuing a career that will use more of this knowledge and skill set.

Q 94. What is your weakest subject?

'I have spent different amounts of time studying for each subject and so there will be variations in grades as some subjects I found easier than others, for example, I am more of an analytically minded person, so the more creative subjects such as x and y, I did not do as well in. That's why I am not looking at getting into anything creative, I guess, I believe I am an ideal candidate for this role, as it is analytically based.'

Q 95. Did you make a contribution back to your university in a voluntary capacity?

Did you help a cause, were you a member of a group or organise something outside of your curricular activities? If you didn't volunteer for anything, explain how your schedule was full to capacity with part time work and study commitments.



Q 96. What did you enjoy most at university?

'I enjoyed my course very much, meeting like minded individuals who all had a desire to succeed. I also enjoyed the social activities I was a member of a few groups such as xy and z, and this gave me a very rounded education and set of experiences'.

Q 97 (a). You chose to study 'x', why did you choose this subject?

Articulate why you were initially interested, and after studying the degree and the subjects, why you are even more interested today.

' By choosing a commerce degree, I knew that I would be eligible for a broad range of roles within the business sector, which is where I knew I wanted to be. Now that I have studying commerce, I am even more intent on a career in accounting because I think these skills are fundamental to any business success.'

Q 97 (b). How do you think your degree will help you in this job?

Give details about the educational aspects of your degree and how you believe they assimilate. You are unlikely to know precisely what role you will be playing in the job so keep your answers broad.



If your degree is in an unrelated subject you need to base your answer on the broader advantages of a good education. Talk about how you maybe had to work to get through university, the sacrifices you made and the determination you demonstrated to achieve your degree. If it was a particularly outstanding grade then highlight this.

An interview is just as much about your personality as your skills and experience. Clearly the interviewer has accepted the degree is in a non-relevant area but is looking for your attributes as a person to shine.

Q 98 (a). Do you have a view of where your career will take you?

It is early days and so you can be a little vague unless you have a specific goal in mind. The interviewer is looking at a 10+ years time span. It is worth re-iterating your desire to be satisfied and challenged in your next job, and to be perhaps rewarded with a progressive career path.

Q98 (b). What career goals do you have?

This is a 5-10 year view of where you see yourself. Split the answer into two parts. What would you like to achieve for yourself and also for the company. Just be honest and give a clear answer of your personal ambitions. You need to be realistic in what you can achieve in terms of promotion, many graduates come out of university thinking they can be a manager within a couple of years, which is not likely, even when they have studied management related subjects.



Figure 33 - What are your career goals?

Q 99. Why have you chosen this particular field of work?

Be honest and show enthusiasm for the subject. Do not be tempted to mention the fact that your primary motivation is money. An interviewer wants to know what skills and attributes you are bringing to the organisation. Your pursuit of money will not impress them one bit, even though it is likely to be true.

Q 100. Why did you apply to this organisation's graduate program?



Use a third party endorsement..... 'I have spoken to a few friends and colleagues who all spoke highly of your organisation and the great career path which you can offer.'

You might want to add something about the cultural side of the organisation, its dynamic environment and commitment to excellence. Make sure you have a good answer prepared for this which again does not mention money.

Figure 34 - Why do you want this graduate program?

Q 101. You've just completed a masters degree, aren't you over qualified for this role?

The implication is that you will become bored and leave quickly when you see something better.

'I applied for this position because I believe it will be a great long-term opportunity for me to gain good experience and I see myself making a strong contribution to the organisation. The fact that I appear to be over qualified will mean I can bring a high level of knowledge and aptitude to apply to the job. I won't get bored and be looking for a better position. I see this role as a good fit for my skills and ambitions.'

Q 102. Have you ever had a conflict with a superior or University staff member?

You need to accept that confrontation happens. The interviewer will not believe you if you deny conflict takes place. Anyway they are looking to see how you deal with this so by saying you don't is unacceptable.

We have discussed this in previous questions but when the question is phrased like this one of the key points to bring out is the fact that you listen to the facts and ascertain the other person's point of view and remain calm.

You need to back up your claims with a suitable example, a successful conclusion and underline the fact that the disagreement was not personal and has not affected your working relationship.



Figure 35 - Aren't you overqualified for this role?



HIGHER LEVEL POSITIONS - Questions About Leadership, Strategy & People Management



Q 103. What are 3 words that would describe your leadership style? Can you please give me examples of when you have demonstrated those 3 attributes within the last 5 years.

Q 104. How would you describe your management style?

Q 105. Have you played a mentor role to a less experienced colleague? If so, please tell me how you helped this person develop.



Q 106. Tell me about a strategy you designed and implemented to improve operations and efficiency levels?

Q 107. Have you created or introduced a product or service that leveraged existing knowledge and systems? If so, please give some brief details, and how the company benefited.

Q 108. How was your performance evaluated in your last role? What challenges did you face in order to deliver upon the expectations?

Q 109. Can you please tell me about the most complex problem you have had to solve, that involved strategy design, planning and implementation.



Q 110. What type of formal presentations have you done over the last 2 years? Can you tell me about the type of audience you presented to, the purpose of the talk, and the outcome of your presentation?

Q 111. What are 3 things you are most proud of in your career to date?

Crazy Questions That Are Still Asked Today

There are some Vague, Dumb – No-Win Questions that are still getting asked by some interviewers today.

Scan through these questions, and if you get asked any of them, we have giving you some suggestions on how to deal with the awkwardness of the moment. Inevitably, these questions will raise the red flag in your mind, and the more of these types of questions that get fired at you, the less likely you are to be interested in the job – as you wouldn't want to be working alongside anyone like the interviewer sitting in front of you.

Sometimes you will experience an interviewer who is new to the job, and they will ask vague questions that could leave you feeling confused about what the relevance is. The best way to deal with these types of questions is to simply state that you are not sure what they are wanting to know.



Figure 36 - Some Questions will be very tricky

Ask them to rephrase the question, or if you think you know what information they are seeking, you could use your initiative and ask them to confirm they want to know about x, y and z.

Be careful how you deal with these difficult questions, as the interviewer might be ignorant in the fact that they have not asked a clear question. They are probably learning on the job.

The other very real possibility is that they are trying to see how you deal with

ambiguity. It could even be a test to see how you deal with difficult situations.

There are some other questions that you simply can't give an accurate answer on, because you can't see into the future, you have as much idea as they would.....

These questions may be testing your resolve, and your strength of character.

Some other interviewers will ask illegal and / or politically incorrect questions. Any interviewer who asked these types of questions is playing power games, and doesn't see the interview as a two way street. In this case, I would sit the interview out, just to get practice, and then write the job opportunity off your list of potential positions you are interested in pursuing..

Q 112. How long would it take for you to start making a real contribution to the organisation?

There is no point in blurting out an answer here because the contribution could be anywhere and you could go off in the wrong direction. Bat the question back to get a more precise idea and allow yourself some time to think.

“In what particular area of my responsibilities did you have in mind?”

“Of course there will be a short learning curve while I get up to speed but in the past I have prided myself on being a quick learner who can make an effective contribution in a short space of time. I see this opportunity as no different although I accept it will be a challenge.”

Prepare an example of how you had a similar situation where you had to learn a new skill quickly.

Q 113. If You Were Starting Out Again In Your Career Are There Any Decisions You Would Make Differently?

Rubbish question but play along. The interviewer is running out of things to talk about! Split the answer between work and non-work related items. Yes there are plenty of things I would do differently. Every day is a learning experience and I have made plenty of mistakes. Fortunately I have learnt from them and they have been character building and put me in the strong position I feel I have now achieved. I am fortunate that the career choices I have made have been the right ones for me so I have no regrets on that score.

This is also true of my personal life. For every disappointment there have been 10 fantastic experiences. I would not be the person I am today without the balance of having a few failures to compensate for the successes.

Q 114. If you got this job how long before you expect to be promoted?

Tricky question to answer honestly. Most of us want to be promoted as soon as possible. But you must not be specific on what timescales you are looking to achieve this in. The danger is that your expectations do not meet those of the employer. Either you are too ambitious or not ambitious

enough. Also your route to promotion may be at the expense of the interviewer who will often be your manager.

Keep the answer generic. I would look to prove my worth to the company in terms of the skills I bring to the role. Being promoted is something I would look to earn and I would get there through hard work and delivering on my role. I would only expect to be promoted if I have earned it.



Figure 37 - What do they want me to say to all these vague questions?



Figure 38 - What if another candidate had better skills than you?

Q 115. If I said for example another candidate had more experience than you how would you react?

A less ridiculous comparison question. However still don't be drawn on making comparisons. It is important to show your application in the best most positive light not discuss other real or fictitious candidates.

'There is little to be gained from me trying to compare myself with other candidates. All I know is that I have these qualities both job related and behavioural (then list them with examples). I am sure I would be able to apply these effectively to the direct benefit of the organization as I have done with my present employer'

Q 116. What do you think of the Union here?

This is again dangerous territory because it is unclear what the interviewer is thinking. Do they like unions?

"I cannot comment specifically on this union but unions in general do serve a useful purpose as long as they are run with accountability and clear rules and regulations"

Q 117. Have you ever refused to do something at work that you were asked to do?

Straight rebuttal. No interviewer wants to hear that you may be a trouble maker or cannot take direction? But remember there is a way of saying things. Do not say 'NO!'.....say 'I can't recall that happening. I have always had a great working relationship with my supervisor and always respected their authority and we treated each other with great respect.' See how it paints a more positive image. A 'No' sounds very harsh and is likely to be followed by a short stony silence.

Of course keep smiling even when the questions are a bit negative. It certainly helps in portraying the correct positive image.

Q 118. Candidate x and y have these skills how do you feel your skills match their performance?

A ridiculous comparison question. Don't be drawn on making comparisons.

However it does raise an important point in the preparation you need to do. Know your strengths but job related and personality related. These should be part of a 3-4 sentence personal summary statement which summarises why you should get the job.

'I cannot comment on the other candidates and their abilities. All I know is that I have these qualities both job related and behavioural (then list them with examples).'



Figure 39 - Candidate x and y have these skills, do you think you can match their performance?

Q 119. What would you most like not to do in this role?

Dangerous question. The interviewer is probing for things that you didn't previously like and then they can ask a follow on question about why you didn't like them. Beware of this trap.

Turn the question round and give a 'model answer'. 'In an ideal world.....I would like to avoid any bureaucracy or red-tape which can delay decisions. Like anyone I am always keen for good progress to be made at all times and everything to run smoothly'.or perhaps you have an example such as this.... 'I would like to avoid the situation in the last role where we had tight deadlines and 3 of my staff went off on long term sick with the winter flu last year. Although we achieved our targets it was only through hard effort, team-work and long hours'.

See how these answers portray you in a good light and turn a negative into a positive. Again they are also 'closed answers' discouraging further probing on the same subject'.

Q 121. Are you best years of work behind you?

Of course they aren't.....errrr but don't say it like that! 'I am very pleased with the past achievement in my career and in particular (list them). However I view every day as a new challenge and in particular this opportunity would allow me to achieve greater heights. I believe my experience stands me in good stead for future challenges''



Figure 40 - Are Your Best Years Behind You?

Q 120. If you were hiring a person for this job, what would you look for?

This is another opportunity to talk about YOUR positive attributes. You need to answer in a way that lets the interviewer know you have these traits. There is no point in listing ten items that a candidate should possess and then the interviewer has to ask whether you have these or not. They want you to tell them that you have these qualities! So tell them! Here are some examples of how to reply.

In my current role I have found that being organised, conscientious and an effective time manager has resulted in me exceeding my targets. Often I find that if you have an organised plan of activities and assign time limits to each I am more focused and an effective manager.

A detailed knowledge of the companies product ranges while not necessarily required has enable me to spot issues in the manufacturing process and also offer valuable suggestions which have resulted in increased productivity gains.



Figure 41 - Are you looking forward to retirement?

Q 122. Are you looking forward to the day you retire?

Similar question 120 except worded more aggressively. Refute any allegations of slacking off and describe the new challenges that you are looking forward to facing.

Q 123. Do you think job references are a waste of time?

Fairly stupid question if asked however keep smiling..... "I think they serve a purpose as they give an independent viewpoint of a persons character and skills."

Q124. Has anyone ever refused to give you a job reference and why?

"No, I cannot recall this ever happening."even if they have say No! If you say 'Yes' you can virtually kiss their job goodbye!

Q 125. Do you think you have exceeded your career aims?

"When I started in this career I set myself quite high goals which I achieved. I am pleased with my accomplishments to date but I am also keen to continue improving and I am always looking for new challenges."

Q 126. You seem to be a bit young for this job.

If the interviewer really thought you were too young then they wouldn't be interviewing you. However they may have concerns even though they think you have something to offer.

You will again need to fall back on your personal skills and experience going through them and matching them off against the job description. Explain what you bring to the role.

As for your age, politely disagree with the interviewer that although you are younger than other candidates it does not mean you do not have the necessary skills. After all it is up to them to decide.



Figure 42 - You seem a bit young for this position

Turn the question round and say youth is an advantage as you are open to fresh ideas, probably have more energy and ambition and are likely to be more satisfied in the role.

On most occasions it is the personality traits such as enthusiasm drive, team work and professionalism that will override experience. Of course a good combination of both is ideal! Play on these traits if your experience is lacking.

Q 127. What do you think the organisation will expect from you in terms of responsibilities?

The interviewer is looking for personal skills. Hard work, enthusiasm, professionalism, passion, honesty. Additionally you can express your

enthusiasm for the companies products and services and comment on how you see your responsibilities as adding value or increasing sales/profits/turnover. Of course your answer will need to be tailored to the situation.

Figure 43 - Best to just answer these questions as best I can and then get out of this interview room as quickly as I can



Close your answer by asking the interviewer if that was what they were expecting or asking what they feel the main responsibilities are apart from those listed on the job description.

Q 128. Do you have any reservations about joining this company?

Of course you are not going to say you have any reservations. Then its simply a rerun of the answers above detailing the positive aspects of the role and the new company.

A good additional light-hearted retort is to say you will miss your old colleagues, this implies you have a great team atmosphere where you currently work. Its positive and suggests you are a team player.

Q 129. The new role means you will need to relocate, are you okay with this, will it have an impact on your family commitments?

Yes. You have read the job description and are aware of this. Leave no doubts in the interviewers mind. This is a big commitment and upheaval. Presumably you already knew of the consequences of this.

Q 130. Does money motivate you?



Firstly, You need to answer yes, because otherwise they will offer you a lower salary than they first allocated for. Even if you are not motivated by money you need to say yes because this is what the interviewer is expecting to hear.

Secondly you need to add that money is not the primary motivating factor for this job but in general money is of course a motivating factor. List the factors in the questions above.

Q 131. What as an organisation can we offer that is better than your current employer?

It is asking for a direct comparison between your current employer and your future employer.

An interviewer wants to hear that you are a valued member in your current / previous role. You have worked for an organisation that has trained you to a high level and you have been providing a strong contribution to their skilled workforce. They hope to leverage these skills in their organisation.

A typical answer which deals with such a comparison should

read.....

‘My current organisation has been a great career move for me I have learned many new skills eg. x. There is a great team ethic and I feel I have made a strong contribution to their sales team / office / project team etc.

However I see your organisation and the role on offer as a new challenge which can leverage my skills and allow me to challenge myself set new goals and further my career in a way that the current organisation perhaps doesn’t offer.”

Of course this answer needs to be tailored to meet your particular circumstances. Start by listing what you like about your current organisation and the experience you have gained. Compare this with the list of skills and benefits you expect to find in the new organisation. Use this list to tailor your answer.

Again, stay clear of talking about money. The sub text of this question and so many others like it is the interviewer is asking ‘What’s in it for me?’

You should be replying “I am making a contribution and this is how.....” include examples of how you can make the contribution, which backs up your claims.

By saying you want to leverage your skills in the new role and show how you can make a strong contribution is precisely what the interviewer wants to hear.



Figure 44 - What can we offer you?

If you say or even imply the reason for the new job is that you are looking for more money or additional benefits, then this does not imply you are making a contribution to the new organisation.

You are in fact saying this is “what is in it for me” and does not address the interviewers needs!

Note it is probably fine to ignore the comparison with your old employer in your answer. By just listing the positives of the new employer you will highlight the benefits of the role and appear to be a better candidate. Whenever you make a comparison avoid saying anything negative. Even if it is for a good reason it makes you sound like a whiner.

Q 132. What was your salary in your last job?

Don't be tempted to lie they will find out if need be. Ideally the salary will be 10-20% lower than the role you are going for.

If it is lower than this range then you need to add in the benefits of overtime, car, health insurance etc. and refer to the salary as the package.

If the salary is too low then the interviewer will feel this indicates you are over playing your experience and position.

The positive thing about being asked this question is that it shows the interviewer is serious about considering you for the job.

Q 133. Have you seen our website? What did you think of it?

I hope you have at least looked at the website. Just comment on what you saw. It is difficult to know where this type of question is leading. It is a strange way of finding out if you have shown an interest by asking if you have looked at the website.

Maybe you can enquire whether it was written in house or by an external company just to see where the question leads and to avoid any uncomfortable pauses in the interview.



Figure 45 - Have you seen our new website? What do you think of it?



Q 134. Do you feel your career stagnated in your last job?

This is a tricky, negative question which needs to be avoided. Do not start our answer with the word 'No'. You need to be consistent with all the questions as to why you are thinking of moving jobs. This is just another way of phrasing the same question.

"The position was a very rewarding one which allowed me the freedom, responsibility and challenges which were suitable at the time. However if I stay at the same employer I may find the opportunities for advancement in terms of challenges, salary and career may be limited. Also it may be restrictive in the amount of new experience I may gain from staying in the same role."

Q 135. What do you dislike about your current supervisor?

The interviewer is probing for signs of antipathy. Don't fall for the bait. Remember do not criticise other people. Keep it upbeat with some positive example of trust and responsibility.

"I am fortunate, my supervisor and me have a great working relationship. He trusts me fully to deputise when they are away. We have a great one to one relationship which allows me to air my views freely. One of the things I will miss in a new role is the level of trust that currently exists between us.

Q 136. What did you not like about your last employer?

OK, so the interviewer has asked you to say something negative about your employer. You need to turn this round so that it makes it sound like the negative is in fact a positive!

"I used to get a bit annoyed when I noticed inefficiencies in the processing workflows and controls. A number of times I made suggestions as to improvements that could be made which would have saved money but the ideas were effectively ignored."

"I always tried my utmost to make sure that all customers were treated fairly and honestly but I noticed a malaise creeping in which meant that some staff didn't always try their best to meet the exacting standards required. I feel this reflected badly on everyone."

Q 137. What did you think of your last employer?

Different question to the previous one. No need to say anything bad. Keep it upbeat listing the good point about the organisation and the career path that you took, citing examples of progression and salary increases and how they reward success with merit and look after their staff and the great team environment.

Q 138. What did you think of your last supervisor?

More of a personal question but again take the chance to emphasise the positive aspects of your relationship.

Discuss what you like. For example how your supervisor delegated responsibility to you and recognised your achievements and encouraged you.

Add in examples of how your supervisor noticed these successes to reinforce the image of someone who achieved success.

If you were good friends then say so it all paints a picture of harmony.

Q 139. If you didn't get this job how would you react?

The interviewer is running out of meaningful questions here. Suggests they are thinking of offering you the role but are still unsure. Still keep talking positively.

"I would of course be disappointed. This really is a role I am confident I would enjoy for a number of reasons and I would definitely be able to make a strong contribution to the organisation.

However everyone faces disappointments so I would learn from any failure move on and try harder next time. I believe I am someone who is always positive and looks to the future for further opportunities."



Figure 46 - How would you feel if you got offered this job?

Q140. Are you planning on having children?

Illegal question. Treat it as such and don't answer it except with a bland rebuttal.

"My career is important to me and I will be committed to this role if I am offered it. Having children is not something I am currently contemplating."

Q141. What age / religion / sexual orientation are you?

Illegal question again!.....does this interviewer want to face a lawsuit?

You do not have to answer this, however most people would be comfortable answering these questions. If you choose to answer them be honest and be proud of who you are.

Q142. Have you ever come close to losing your temper?

Need to tread a bit more carefully. You would not be human if you didn't get angry inside. Play down the



Figure 47 - Are you planning on having children?

answer. It is bordering on negative territory so try to close the question off.

“There are times when like everyone I have been frustrated and annoyed. But I like to maintain a professional approach to all such situations. Fortunately I have never lost my temper.

Q143. Have you ever lost your temper outside of work?

“Fortunately not recently, but I can get irate like anyone when I see injustice or unfairness.”
Important to keep this line of questioning brief. Also it would be unnatural to deny you have ever lost your temper outside of work. Referring to any recent events side steps having to discuss this further.

Q 144. What would you do differently if you were given your manager’s job?

Looking for green field thinking here which shows you can make the step up if required. Keep the answer as always in positive territory.



Figure 48 - What would you do differently if you had your manager's job?

You specifically need to look at what benefits you could bring to the role. Some suggestions would be improve communication, reduce inefficiencies in processes, offer more delegation, go after greater sales opportunities, improve the customer satisfaction experience or reduce costs.

You do need to of course tailor the answer to your specific situation. However the key component of the answer is the benefits you would bring to the organisation. As mentioned before if you can 'sell the benefits' you bring you will have a much better chance of impressing.

Q 145. Is the customer always right?

“Our business is built on ensuring our customers are satisfied and come back time and again with repeat business. So my focus is always to ensure that the customer is happy and feels they have received a good product and service. That to me is the essence of good business. The customer is not always right but that doesn’t necessarily mean we ignore their wishes.

I have dealt with many situations where the customer has considered themselves to be right when they clearly were not. But I pride myself on the fact that we reached a satisfactory solution which meant they remained a good customer.”

Q 146. What types of things do you dislike?

This could be inside or outside of work. Outside of work makes this a virtually irrelevant question. If you are discussing dislikes inside of work then you need to be careful. Don’t want to list an endless



series of negative statements. List some dislikes that everyone hates and so build empathy with the interviewer.

“There isn’t much I dislike. Although I do get frustrated by waste, inefficiencies and needless bureaucracy.”

You then need to add examples of where you have overcome such things and improved this for the better for everyone.”

“There was once a frustrating series of forms that needed to be filled in to get a process completed. I saw how this could be streamlined, suggested this to my line manager and the end result was time and cost savings for the whole department.”

Q 147. Give me an example of something you are not very proud of?

Another tricky little question which smells of negativity. Learn to turn these types of questions round to your advantage and ideally reference an experience which was a long time ago.

“I worked for company and a few years ago and 2 of the employees in my team were caught stealing credit card details. As we were a small organisation the whole organisation got labelled badly not just my team and it was in the press. We recovered the money and no one lost out financially but it was an uncomfortable time. I had been proposing a tightening of the procedures around cash handling for some time and as soon as this happened they were put into immediate effect. No such instances have come to light since.’

Q 148. Are you a leader or a follower?

Adapt your answer to reflect the role. However it would almost certainly need to be biased towards being a leader. Don’t sound arrogant. Phrases like ‘born leader’ will not fit very well in your answer. Use the third party reference techniques to describe yourself.

“I believe people would describe me as a leader. But also as someone who will listen to the group opinion. For example in a meeting I will make a decisive decision based on all the responses from the team members, that way I have the full benefit of everyone’s knowledge to make an informed decision.”

Maybe add an example outside of work.

“Outside of work in social situations I tend to be the one people look to for a group decision. I am usually comfortable with this role.”

Q 149. How many days sickness did you have last year?

It might be impossible for the interviewer to find out how many days you actually took, because of Australian privacy laws, but if it was a substantial number of sick days you took, you could turn the question round slightly and look at your whole career, if the numbers are better and say that last year was the exception.

Additionally you should add you like your job, your motivated to work and would ideally love nothing better than to have no days sickness if this was possible.

Give examples of when you felt really unwell (not because of a late night drinking session) and you struggled into work because there was an important deadline to meet and the team depended on you.

Q 150. Do you lose your temper?

A categorical denial is the only option. No one wants a hot-head in the workplace.

“Fortunately I have never had occasion to. I firmly believe that working through any issues calmly is much more preferable for everybody. I do n’t see any reason to get so angry as to lose ones temper.”

Q 151. Are you demanding in your style of management?

“I expect high standards of myself and my team. I try to lead by example and expect this level of professionalism from my staff. I have found that this is an effective way of setting a solid benchmark for the high standards I expect.”



Figure 49 – Apart from when you get questions like these, Do you ever lose your temper?

Q 152. Do you require close supervision or micro-managing??

“I pride myself on being very self-motivated and an enthusiastic worker. My ability to work un-supervised are traits that are often mentioned at the reviews I have with my manager.”

Q 153. Would you ever cancel your annual holiday if it was really necessary to complete an important task?

No one would and equally would not be expected to cancel their holiday. You are not a door mat so don’t act like one. “I like to maintain a healthy work and family life balance. I do not envisage such a situation arising. If it did I would still take the holiday but ensure measures were in place to cover my absence so the company was not affected. Part of my job is to ensure there is sufficient cover in place in case of planned or unplanned absences”

Q 154. What do you think you will like least about this job?

Just bat this question back with a simple answer. “There are aspects of every job that people prefer. I suppose there will be administration tasks which can be dull but are a necessary part of the job.”

Q 155. Do you prefer small organisations to larger ones?

There is no right or wrong answer, the interviewer is looking for your reasoning behind the answer. Stay neutral and list the benefits of both. If you have worked in both then say so. Discuss what you liked about both. The lack of politics in a small organisation, the team spirit was better. Large organisation will tend to have better training, a better structured career path and more opportunities for advancement.

Q 156. What Is Your Current Manager's Biggest Weakness?

The old adage about avoiding criticising other people still rings true. Don't get into discussing anything negative as it sounds like whining. Keep the answer neutral and upbeat.

"My boss and I get along great and they have many fine attributes. As for weaknesses I presume they do have some but they are not obvious and I suppose they are no different from anyone else. We all have some limitations."

Q 157. What difficulties do you think you will face in the new job?

If you list a number of difficulties then these are obvious signs of weakness. The follow up question will certainly be how you are going to cope with this. Keep our reply generic in nature as you do not want to discuss areas of weakness.

"I presume my greatest challenge will be the new software/processes/procedure/sales environment/product....But in my career there have been occasions where similar situations have happened and I have adapted easily. For example when I joined my current role there was a completely new product and sales territory. So this is not a new situation for me. Being adaptable is one of my strengths".

Q 158. Have you ever had a period in your career where your performance fell year on year?

Obviously you want to say no here. If the person asking the question does not know whether you met your targets then you can sidestep any failings. Keep the answer general if you have had a rocky period when your performance wasn't as good. Always end your answer on a positive note giving yourself another chance to shine.

"Fortunately throughout my career I have had a continued upward progression in my performance to the point today where I am the top performing employee person in the region with a proud record of x....."



Figure 50 - Have you ever had a period where your performance fell year on year?

Q 159. The advertised salary is x but would you accept less money in order to secure this role?

Need to push back on this.

“I am very interested in the role and would be delighted to be offered it. However any salary negotiations would need to be carefully considered especially if it was less than the amount advertised. Are you saying you are going to offer me a job?”

Q 160. What is your typical working week in hours?

Whatever it takes to get the job done. However be careful not to suggest you work long hours purely because you are inefficient.

“I like to think I am an effective and efficient worker who gets through a full workload each week. However there are times when I need to work late and weekends and this is fine. This is often due to uneven demands on my time. I will put whatever effort it takes to complete my role.”

It is probably worth replying by asking what hours are expected. When the interviewer replies it allows you a second opportunity to agree that this is fine and to reinforce your commitment. They are only asking the question because they have a concern and you need to remove it.

Q 161. What do you think the organisation will expect from you in terms of responsibilities?



Figure 51 - What do you believe the company will expect from you?

The interviewer is looking for personal skills. Hard work, enthusiasm, professionalism, passion, honesty. Additionally you can express your enthusiasm for the companies products and services and comment on how you see your responsibilities as adding value or increasing sales/profits/turnover. Of course your answer will need to be tailored to the situation.

Close your answer by asking the interviewer if that was what they were expecting or asking what they feel the main responsibilities are apart from those listed on the job description.

Q 162. Are you going to be ambitious to succeed in the role?

Over ambition suggests that you will not stay in the role too long before looking to move onwards and upwards. Under ambition suggests you are lacking enthusiasm or drive. A poor reply will cause you to look out of place so reply in a neutral way.

'This is a fantastic opportunity for me. If offered the role I will be ambitious to succeed and look forward to performing to the best of my ability with drive and enthusiasm.'

Q 163. Has your career been a success to date?

Another question that is a bit non-descript. Still the interviewer wants to probe you on how you think and so do not provide a lame answer.

Success can only really be measured by the individual. You may regard success as being content and happy in the workplace. After all the working day is a large part of your life. You may view success through job satisfaction. Someone else may look at the monetary rewards. Keep the answer generic.

Very few people actually think or would admit to their career having been a failure. Say "I personally feel that I have been successful to date and I am more than happy with my

career progression. I have always put emphasis on enjoying the job as well as career progression. My track record of success is something I am proud of".

Q 164. How are you going to manage your child care responsibilities if you are travelling away?

This is probably an illegal question.

"I have considered this and have the necessary support network to help with child care if it is required."

Q 165. What do you dislike about the role being offered?

This is an unusual question but reeks of negativity. Keep the answer neutral by saying there is no elements that appear to be of any concern. Additionally keep the reply short and closed. You do not want to dwell on any negative conversation.

Try to keep the reply upbeat by saying you are thrilled to be considered for such an exciting position which is a great opportunity to advance your career.

Figure 52 - You know what, after all those tricky questions, they actually offered me the job, now I am thinking "do I really want to work for a company like that?"





Shatter Nervousness in 3 Easy Steps



After completing the exercises in this guide, and scanning through the interview answers, you will have an overwhelming feeling that you are ready for the interview.

Preparation is also the key to shattering the nerves, so you walk into that interview room confidently and ready to deal with any question they fire at you.

You know that the key purpose to an interview is:

- a) To verify the details on your resume and job application.
- b) To decide if you have the personal attributes to fit within their existing team.

The interviewer won't be able to see your true personality shine in the interview if you are distracted by your own feelings and thoughts, so its best to leave all your anxiety at home, hold your chin up high and believe that you really have a lot to offer this organisation.

Your confidence will come through, and the interviewer will be very attracted to getting to know more about you when you are your natural, relaxed and easy going self.

Be consciously aware that in the interview, you will be in a 'heightened' state of awareness, your mind is racing as much as your heart might be.

Use every power you have in your mind to slow your thoughts right down so you don't panic.

When water is offered, say yes, as water helps you to calm down. Don't drink caffeinated drinks before or during the interview.



1. Prepare for the Questions and Address your Weak Points.

You need to be honest with yourself and look at what aspects of your application that are potential pitfalls and could cause you to be nervous. So often a candidate will enter the interview room with half a dozen things on their mind which they know are potential weaknesses. They hope that the interviewer will not address these areas. The correct preparation can address these.

These weaknesses generally fall into two categories. Firstly there is the weaknesses in your resume or career history. If you lack experience or have had gaps in your employment then you need to be able to answer these questions. There is no point in entering an interview just hoping that these will not be addressed. You will spend so much energy fretting on this that you will harm your overall performance.

Every weakness that you have in your application can be answered in a way that either reduces the impact or turns a negative situation into a positive aspect of your application.

Your second weakness may be in answering difficult questions, which will be resolved once you've completed the exercises in this guidebook. The key to any successful interview is in the preparation.

Do not assume that the interview will go well and you will avoid all the areas of concern. Make sure you are properly prepared and so you do not have to take the chance.

Every candidate's situation is different so your replies will need to be tailored to highlight your most relevant examples.



Figure 53 - Complete the Activities in this Guide and You will Be Confident

2. Concentrate on Your Breathing & This Relaxation Technique

Before the interview, practice breathing in controlled long deep breaths. This is the most effective way to reduce your racing heartbeat. The body needs oxygen because the heart is pumping, so by controlling your deep breathing, you will reduce your heartbeat which will make you feel more calm and relaxed. Inhale deeply and then exhale slowly.

Do these deep breathing exercises immediately before the interview is going to commence, for at least 3 minutes. Sit on a bench around the corner and just relax.

Combine this with thinking of a peaceful image perhaps a quiet beach or a place in the countryside. Or imagine yourself soaring quietly like a bird. It will take your mind off of the interview. These types of relaxation exercises are very effective for reducing your heartbeat and reducing nerves.



Figure 54 - A calm mind and deep breathing are essential to controlling nerves

3. Practice positive visualisation

Nerves at interviews are universally caused by a negative fear, a fear of something going wrong. This negative image compounds itself and the situation just gets worse. You need to break the cycle and re-program your sub-conscious mind to believe in a successful outcome.

To do this you will need to visualise a successful interview. Pick out a small journey of positive events that you 'can see'. This is practised in the days prior to the interview but can be reinforced moments before the interview starts.

An example of a successful visualisation may take the following path....

Imagine yourself entering the interview room bursting with self-confidence. Not arrogance but deep self-confidence in yourself and your ability. Imagine yourself giving a firm handshake a beaming smile and strong eye contact.

The interviewer is now smiling. Previously they were nervous but you have immediately put them at ease. Now visualise yourself getting a great feeling from answering a question well. Feel the warm glow of satisfaction inside you. Imagine the picture as bright orange. See the large ball of light. Imagine a second question, again the same perfect answer. Picture the interviewer smiling, nodding their head replying 'that is a great answer'. Expand the picture and the bright colour so it fills the whole interview room.

Imagine shaking the interviewers hand to say goodbye at the end of the interview. See them smiling. Imagine yourself exiting the building feeling delighted with your performance. Imagine yourself glowing with pride at a 'job well done'.

Follow this route in your mind. You should feel very positive at the end of this exercise. Make sure that you can really feel the warm orange glow and feel the pride in your performance. These are all positive images or visualisations that you need to program into your subconscious mind.

Then take this journey and exaggerate it further. Increase the size of the smiles. The warm glow the feeling of puffed up pride. Imagine yourself to be the person you would like to be. Someone who is self-assured, talented, answering questions with ease, giving model answers. Ideally these visualisations should be done while you are sitting comfortably with your eyes shut.



Figure 55 - Visualise the perfect interview happening in your mind

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Topic 1 Why go to university?

I strongly believe that everyone should attend university. Entering university is at the same time a so much promising step into a world of opportunities as long as it is accompanied by a strong will and desire for distinction. The quality and diversity of opportunities and the spread spectrum of choices higher education can provide us is the core motive for everyone intending to attend university. I will try to examine below the specific reasons for entering university according to which I think are the most common viewpoints nowadays.

First let us look at what a person can typically gain from a successfully study at a university. It is a diploma and/or a degree. This is by default leading to a more distinct, respected, well-paid profession. Nowadays unemployment crisis is troubling not only the poor countries but the developed western countries as well, so that the ease of finding a job may play an important role in the decisions people are making.

Another important reason is that people want to get more education. University provides a higher level of education and has all these resources and facilities for people who crave knowledge. Learning is the key to everything that we want to improve. So, higher education helps us widen our understanding and increase our intellectual ability.

Apart from the points I made above there is also a well known fashion all over the world that is called career preparation. Many people attend university in order to seek either a career in science and technology or a career in business. It is believed that the ideas, opportunities, qualifications, in-depth knowledge and expertise in science areas often make attending university imperative. Many times a four-year study at a university may only be the beginning of a sequence of moves someone can make in order to accomplish what he thinks best for his career.

Finally, I cannot oversee the fact that many times studying at a university also means living in a city far from home. New responsibilities always appear but they do not become serious drawbacks. In contrast, the new sense of freedom and independence a young man can experience or thinks he will is thought of as something of great importance. One thing is for sure though, there is chance for everyone in the community of a university to meet people, make new friends and know individuals of great importance.

Last but not least I wish to say that the purpose of university is to harvest knowledge and to being educated, so it is obvious that everyone can find a reason for attending university.

Topic 1 Why go to university?

University is no longer a fresh word to people nowadays. Since the beginning of this century, more and more youngsters choose to enter university after they have completed the study in high schools rather than to join the army or become an apprentice. Therefore, it is kind of interesting to find out the reason behind.

First of all, students can only learn fundamental knowledge during high school while they are able to focus on their own interested majors in universities. This period is the key to knowledge accumulation, which will contribute a lot to the future of an individual. Moreover, university is no doubt the symbol of high education. It offers more than pure knowledge. A degree from a university gives people certain identity that makes them stand out among their competitors. It can be seen from the fact that most international companies will only hire those who have at least a Bachelor's degree in China.

But, as far as I know, sincere dreams might also be the reason for university or college. For instance, in the 60s and 70s, people in China experienced hard times. Many of them had to give up advanced education and take up the burdens of life at their early age. Now, as they became parents or even grandparents, their dream for university education had no doubt realized by their younger family members. Those young people, as reported, often study very hard in order to fulfill the expectations of two generations.

There is no doubt that university can be the turning point of one's future, because higher education will provide people with not only knowledge prepared for their careers, but also the fulfillment of their life goals. Meanwhile, the society has improved its strength to sponsor higher education. Compared with the past, people now attend universities also because they are able to secure various scholarships and supports from different channels. A very good example is that many Chinese students are now studying in the U. S. Their incentive for application should be attributed to not only to their own performance but also the comprehensive education frameworks in the U. S.

Broadly speaking, people who study in universities have their hopes: to fulfill themselves. At the same time, our society generously provides such an environment for people to achieve such goals. Therefore, when we see more and more fresh smiles on the campus of universities, let us just wish them a promising future.

Topic 1 Why go to university?

People attend college for various reasons. Some people consider college as a challenge and others take it as a new experience. In my opinion, I think that people attend college to increase knowledge, meet new people and develop a career. Studying at a college can benefit a person greatly since it augments a person's knowledge, aids in developing a career and gives a chance to meet new people of different backgrounds.

Knowledge is such a powerful tool that possessing it can diminish nearly all life problems. A college or a university is the place where one can gain knowledge and become valuable to the society. An individual can acquire knowledge about a wide variety of subjects. When my brother was in college, he learned about bacteria and viruses. He had learned that at high school a little bit, but in college he studied it in depth. In addition, he also learned how deal with life problems in college.

Developing a career is a very important stage in our life. Most students, after graduating from high schools, go to colleges or universities to be trained and educated. Some major in various subjects while others go for professional degrees. Universities help students in achieving their goals by preparing them for the career they have picked. If I go to a medical school, I know that the school will prepare me well enough for me to become a successful medical doctor.

Interacting with new people is always a challenge. A university is a place where people from different backgrounds get opportunities to interact with each other. Information about different cultures, different life styles and certain types of food is shared among students. My father used to study at a university, and he told me about all the different cultural backgrounds of the students there.

A college or a university is the place where dreams can be fulfilled. The subjects such as how to deal with life, how to interact with people and how to become independent are taught and experienced there. A college or a university makes an individual complete and help him/her to lead a successful life.

Topic 1 Why go to university?

A university degree often helps a person achieve his goal with more ease. However, do we attend university just in pursuit of a degree? Does a university only provide us nothing beneficial besides a paper-made diploma? As far as I am concerned, we enjoy university education in the following aspects:

Firstly, with the knowledge learned at a university, we will have a deep understanding of our society. It is true that genuine knowledge comes from practice, but it cannot be denied that genuine knowledge tells us how to practice. A systematic study in a college or a university, of course, enables us to realize how the society works and how to cope with certain problems arising from it in a more efficiently, and more skillful way.

Second, a university education usually makes it possible that we get hold of a decent job. As a result of the accomplishment of a four-year study, it is not difficult for us to find a good job in most cases. How can we imagine that a graduate majoring in astronomy has to be a vendor in the street! No doubt, he/she should sit in his/her laboratory, doing research on aircraft science before a computer. Obviously, a university education assures him/her a decent job.

Last, but not the least, we can help others much better if we put what we have learned at a university into practice. A university education fortifies our values, enhance our skills, and broaden our horizons. With those, we are more capable of giving a hand to those who are in need of help than ever before.

Knowledge is power. When achieving a degree at a university, we can get a better understanding of the society, find a decent job in an easy way, and help others better. All of those are due to the knowledge learned at a university.

Topic 2 Are parents best teachers?

Obviously, the first teachers we have in our lives in most cases are our parents. They teach us to walk, to speak, and to have good manners before we reach "the real world. " More than even the professional teachers that we have at school, parents are generally the most involved in the development and education of children.

Almost for sure our parents are the best teachers at the beginning of our lives, which actually corresponds to the parents' role in nature. Parents are most committed and involved in teaching their children; they have a kind of instinct to sacrifice a part of themselves for the betterment of their children. They love us and have great patience while passing down their knowledge to us. They wish us a success and thus will not teach us bad things. And of course, implicit learning occurs when children unconsciously copy some of their parents' habits and styles of behavior.

During the second stage of child development, adolescence, parents can still be in the best position to offer advice even though the children might not accept it. In this case, perhaps the child's friends would be the best teachers. Adolescents are notoriously rebellious in many cultures and may automatically reject any advice from their parents. My first marriage for instance, was solely a matter of doing the opposite when my parents tried to intrude in offering their advice. So in such matters, parents should be much more flexible and be rather the partners with their children. So we can see that being a teacher of growing child become more and more complicated case as the time passes and many parents are simply not able to meet the increased demands.

On the other hand, I would say that parents are not professional teachers and they tend to be very biased by their love of their children. So wishing good things and an easy life may prevent children from maturation. In any case, parents usually can present only one viewpoint of the world, while good teaching should be based on different attitudes. Thus, when children go to school and have a great diversity of teachers, they learn much more than their parents could probably give them. Furthermore, once our parents get older, they become more conservative and cannot always be objective in regard to modern trends and fashions. Thus we need to take their advice with caution during that period. However, some kind of intuition that I believe shared between relatives about what everybody needs and great love that exists in families still makes our parents very good teachers and advisers at any time.

In conclusion, while parents are not the ideal teachers, and well-rounded children will generally need a great diversity of teachers in their lives in order to have a more accurate view of the world, parents are generally the most committed of all teachers and have the greatest emotional investment in their children and their future.

Topic 2 **Are parents best teachers?**

Our entire education system is based on what we accumulate each day of our life. In spite of the fact that school teachers are those who give us lots of information in a variety of fields, our parents are still the best teachers; they start their educational process as soon as we were born and never stop teaching us.

In the initial years of our life, our parents are involved in guiding us, in modulating our personality and making us understand the differences between right and wrong. When I was five, my parents bought me a dog; they taught me how to take care of him, feed him, play with him and bath him. Thus, I learned that we all have responsibilities.

Even if parents are not specialized in education, their role in teaching the children to be aware of the need of improving their knowledge at school is tremendous. Our parents are not supposed to teach us Math, Chemistry or Biology, but they are very much involved in giving us lessons about being independent, strong and confident in ourselves. As my mother said to me, "fight your own battles because I will not be always able to protect you."

Teenagers have to be informed about all the negative effects that can occur if using drugs, drinking alcohol, or smoking. Regarding this issue, parents have to cooperate with school teachers to make children aware of those possible risks.

I believe that parents are the best teachers because their lessons last forever. My parents are old now. Even when I am a grown up person, I consider that they can still give me very good advices when I need them, based on their life experience. My parents have the most important roll in my education during my life and I will always be grateful for everything they have taught me.

Topic 2 **Are parents best teachers?**

Throughout all the years in my life, I was influenced by my parents in many fashions, from the way of thinking to the trifle everyday habits. No doubt, we inherit the gene from our parents and get basic knowledge and norms from them. What we learned from our parents in the early years will be encoded in our mind and be reflected in nearly every aspect of our behaviors. But in terms teaching, I do not think it's our parents who are the best teachers.

As is known to all, a child will be better trained with a systematic education. However, except those parents who are schoolteachers themselves, few parents grasp the systematic way of teaching. On the one hand, children can only learn a large scope of knowledge step by step from formal education at schools. On the other hand, the parents can only teach their children sporadic knowledge. It is obvious that the young will be better equipped through formal education in classroom.

From the emotional angle, the bond between child and parents are so tight that the parents cannot give a more objective instruction than a schoolteacher can. Some parents tend to spare their children from hard working and, to the extreme, some even spoil their children to do everything they want. All these are resulted from parents' love toward children. But from an objective angle, hardworking is sometimes a necessary step toward success. Parents should not be blamed for loving their children but such love may become obstacle for objective instruction.

With the coming of the knowledge economic, we may find that our parents' knowledge is becoming obsolete. In a changing world, the young are always the first to fashion the news ideas and technology. The elderly, however, are always not used to such rapid changes. Thus, conflicts are inevitable between parents and their children. Accordingly, the young are no longer willing to commit to their parents ideas. To catch the tide of such changes, it is of the best interest for the young to learn from the open world instead of from the obsolete knowledge of their parents.

All this is not to say that to learn from parents is useless. In fact, even in the rapidly changing world, the scope of parents' knowledge still has great influence on their children, especially on young children. But for the young to get the most needed knowledge, they should not solely rely on what they learned from their parents.

Topic 2 **Are parents best teachers?**

Nowadays, some may hold the opinion that parents are the best teachers. But others have a negative attitude. As far as I am concerned, I agree with this statement because, obviously, the first teachers we have in our lives in most cases are our parents. They teach us how to walk, how to speak, and what are good manners and bad manners before we reach the real world. Therefore, parents are the people who influence their children most, and children will carry on qualities of their parents. More than even the professional teachers that we have at school, parents are generally the most involved in the development and education of children. The reasons are presented below.

One of the primary reasons is that our parents are the teachers at the beginning of our lives, which actually corresponds to the parents' role in nature. First, parents are most committed and involved in teaching their children and have a kind of instinct to sacrifice a part of themselves for the betterment of their children. Second, they love their children and have great patience while passing down their knowledge to us. They wish us to become success and thus will not teacher us bad things. Surely, children will unconsciously copy some of their parents' habits and styles of behavior. Besides, parents will become their first role models.

There is also a more subtle point we must consider. During the second stage of child development, adolescence, parents can still be in the best position to offer advices even though the children might not accept it. In this case, perhaps the child's friends would be the best teachers. Adolescents are notoriously rebellious in many cultures and may automatically reject and advice from their parents. In such matters, parents should be much more flexible and rather be friends with their children. However, many parents simply are not able to meet the increased demands, being teachers of their growing children.

What is more, I would say that parents are not professional teachers and they tend to be very biased by their love of their children. As a result, wishing good things and an easy life may prevent children from maturation. Frequently, parents usually present only one viewpoint of the world, while good teaching should be based on different attitudes. For this reason, children may learn probably more if they have a great diversity of teachers other than the parents. Furthermore, technology develops very quickly; and parents may not always be objective in regard to modern trends and give children proper advices. However, I believe that the care and love among family members still makes our parents very good teachers and advisers at any time.

Taking into account of all these factors, we may reach the conclusion that parents are obviously the most committed of all teachers. Although well-rounded children will generally need a great diversity of teachers, parents can provide them the greatest emotional support in their lives without a substitute.

Topic 2 **Are parents best teachers?**

Are parents are best teachers? Different people will give different responses to this question from their own characters, emotional concerns and even educational backgrounds. However, when it comes to me, I believe that parents are our best teachers for the following reasons.

In the first place, parents are the people who are closest to us and who understand our real needs best. From infancy on, our parents have witnessed every step in both our physical and mental development. They share every hint of happiness or unhappiness with us and they even know what a little gesture of us might indicate. Based on such a deep understanding, our parents will teach us what we are interested in and what we are not. For instance, they can often buy books on our favored topics such as sea animals and astronomical objects. Little by little, we can mature our minds and broaden our horizons in our favorite fields. (Or are we prospective artists, scientists, teachers, or even businesspeople? Our parents might tell that at our early ages. Consequently, they will give us specific encouragement and abundant resources in our favored fields. Sometimes, our parents can even point out a direction to our future professional goals. Will other people do that for us based on such a solid understanding of us?)

In the second place, our experienced parents are our best teachers of today's complicated society. From our teachers at school, we can learn sophisticated knowledge. But how can our teachers tell us how to communicate with others, how to deal with strangers, how to behave in different occasions, and how to make important decisions of our daily life? Only our parents, who will spend their whole life loving us, caring us will tell us how to steer our own boats in the ocean of life without selfish consideration.

Admittedly, our friends and school teachers could provide us with valuable advice now and then, and maybe it will be easier for us to follow their suggestions. Their effects on us cannot be neglected or replaced by our parents. And parents might spoil their children or even interfere with children's privacy because of love. To be honest, the roles of these two kinds of people cannot be replaced by each other. However, it seems to me that only our parents, who will spend their whole life with us, will be our best teachers, not only for now but also for our whole life.

All in all, if all the factors are contemplated, we can easily reach a conclusion that, parents are not only our first teachers but also our best teachers. Let's be carefully aware of this point and take better care of our parents to repay their efforts to teach us.

Topic 2 Are parents best teachers?

Parents are the most committed, the most influential, and almost the best teachers any child can have. The amount of time a child interacts with parents makes them the most influential force in a child's life. The child gets to learn the most basics of things like walking, speaking and interacting with others. It is under the protections of parents that a child learns to behave in society and to comfort him or herself.

Although parents are the most influential teachers in their children's life, they may not be regarded as the best teachers. Parents generally provide a biased view of the world; they always favor their child, and thus they cannot provide a complete panoramic view of the society. Also parents may set a bad example for their child by abusing and fighting amongst themselves. Psychologists and recent crime charts have proved that young outlaws generally come from disrespectful families, and have grown up in extreme environments.

A child interacts with many kinds of teachers at schools and colleges. Although these teachers, being professionals, have limited time to devote to a child, they provide a complete and diverse view to their students. They provide unbiased guidance to a child.

During the years of adolescence, children tend to be aggressive and non-conforming to others' views. So the parents need to act like friends rather than teachers to get their experiences through to their children. Eventually, it is the parents who provide an environment for a child to develop and mature, and thus have the capacity to be the best teachers to their child. What is important is to provide an unbiased view to their child, to motivate independent thinking and actuate timely maturation.

Topic 3 **Has the ease of cooking improved life?**

People work hard to fulfill their principal necessities, and food is the one thing that is really important to their survival. Although sometimes belied by other things that seem important, food is the core objective that drives all people to work. But the outcome of the efforts of these people is not a direct supply of food; rather it is in the form of money. Thus these people use the money they obtain to prepare their food.

In old days, preparing food was cumbersome and time-consuming work for those who do it solely for eating purposes. This kind of preparing food in due time could not comply with the kind of life people lead today. The use of technological advancement makes preparing food practical even for the clumsiest person. This helps a great deal for those who work against time to make their living. It also avoids the waste of considerable amount of money from hiring a cook.

The development in the preparation of food is highly effective for those people who have no know how of it. A person who does not know how to prepare his/her own food would go to a restaurant or some other place where food is served everyday. But with the advanced food preservation technology, now he is free, completely independent of restaurants and other places. He can prepare his own food and enjoy the feeling of "home, sweet home".

For people at work, life has just become easy for them. They will not have to worry all day long about what they are going to prepare for their supper. They can fully concentrate on their jobs, and work with a mind full of peace.

In general this new way of preparing food has helped those who are concerned about their daily meals ~ almost everyone. Not only that, it would enlighten those who are frustrated with their jobs just because of the worry of that tiresome work ~ preparing food.

Topic 3 **Has the ease of cooking improved life?**

Food has always been the one of the greatest wants of humankind. It has influenced almost every step that humankind has taken. The search for food is the essence of life. Therefore if food is easier to get and prepare it is a real boon to humankind.

Food is the most important of the three basic amenities of life (water, food and shelter). Though it can be argued that water is the sustenance for any life form, food is more important because if you do not have water you will surely die. But if you are left with a scarcity of food it will lead to a very sickly and torturous life. Nutritious food is very essential for life, food has been the cause of many a battle. Thus if food was easier to prepare it will take away from the mind of the humankind a great burden.

Though the preparation of food becoming easier is considered a great blessing for humankind. The sudden rise in processed and canned food and all the junk food that one gets over the counter is not totally a boon. People who are so busy that they are not able to spend time to prepare their food, develop a liking for these ready-to-eat junk food. Though it might be thought of as a great way to save time, this is a shortsighted idea that could actually lead to a world of harm. Because one must understand that even though junk food saves us a lot of time, the nutritional value of the food is not so good. In reality the preservatives used in these foods are often found to be toxic in nature. Hence it defeats the purpose it is supposed to serve i.e., to provide nutritional value.

Moreover since people do not take time to prepare food, the art of cooking is slowly vanishing. Actually cooking is a good way of releasing pressure that builds up from our professional commitments. Cooking can easily provide relief from all the tensions that prevail in our life. In the past family weekend get together was considered to be a good time to know each other and they used to spend time cooking food for the entire family. They used to exchange recipes and it was a way of rewinding after the hard weeklong labor. Thus this junk food has denied the human kind of one of humankind's oldest arts. It could even be termed as a retrograde step in human culture.

Therefore I believe though the processed food has made the preparation of food much easier, it is not a good step for mankind.

Topic 3 **Has the ease of cooking improved life?**

Recent technological advancements have changed the way people live radically. They have also made food easier to prepare - fast foods and preserved foods are everywhere. The days when cooking of food was a major errand of the day have long become the past. Nowadays it's only a matter of minutes to cook food. However this improvement does not come without a price.

The most important loss we suffer due to these fast foods is quality. These fast foods are lower in nutritional value and contain less minerals and vitamins. Further they have high calories that result in weight gain, and that in turn leads to heart diseases and other problems. Further, they have added flavors, colors and preservatives that are not always very helpful to our health.

These preserved food have also taken away the natural taste and benefits of fresh foods from our lives. We now depend upon artificial flavorings to make a fish taste like a fish. However we cannot get the natural taste of fresh foods from preserved foods.

We have lost the fun of cooking because of these fast foods. Cooking used to be an art and people enjoyed cooking and the satisfactions they got by cooking a tasty meal. Further, cooking is the time when family members gathered and enjoyed their time together. However with less time devoted to cooking, the chances for such meals are now rare.

All these illustrations point out that although fast foods and preserved foods are unavoidable in today's busy world, we must not totally neglect the advantages of fresh foods. We must sometimes take time with our families to prepare a delicious meal and enjoy it together with the ones we love the most.

Topic 4 **Experience is the best teacher**

Books are considered to be the source of all knowledge, but all that one learns through a book is only of theoretical nature in the form of ideas and concepts. It is essential to utilize them in a real environment and experience the knowledge that is learned from books.

Learning is nothing but understanding the world around us. Books, no doubt are a great source of knowledge as it gives us an idea about a particular subject in detail. But all that one could learn from it is limited to the level of knowing how a certain phenomenon occurs, or how a certain concept works. The knowledge gained through books alone cannot help anyone, because what one learns through the books should be put in to use to harvest the benefits. For instance, a person who wants to learn driving can go through various manuals and guides that teach people how to drive, but all this knowledge is useful only when you are actually driving the car on the roads. It would be an utter waste of time if one just reads the books and does not use them for practical purpose.

Learning through experience is always a lot different from learning through books. Let us consider the same example of a person wanting to learn to drive: even if he goes through every book that is available on driving, still it cannot qualify him as an expert driver. This is because of the fact that books about driving can only teach people traffic rules and provide solutions on how to handle certain situations. The situations faced by a driver could be totally different from what he had learnt from a book. Sometimes we find that the real environment is quite different from the one perceived by us through reading books. This is the very reason why, even in educational institutions, all theoretical classes are followed by practical sessions.

Learning through experience can also be more effective than learning through books because one does not envision everything on his own, but is given a chance to experience the reality. The art of driving can be enjoyed only when we are behind the wheels and not when reading it in books. Moreover, any book is actually an account of past experiences, i.e. it is based on the experiences of people who tried to develop a new idea. The books are their experiences, telling us what they already have tried. Thus from their experiences we can correct ourselves and thus save valuable time and resources. It helps us to concentrate on their failures and to correct them, but they alone cannot teach us everything we need to know. The knowledge learned through books alone cannot help us to face all the exigencies that we would face in real life situations; we have to practice on our own.

Books are like a guiding light in one's pursuit for knowledge. But it is left to everyone of us to experience it first hand and learn new things for the betterment of their lives. So the notion "experience is the best teacher" is perfectly true.

Topic 4 Are books more important than experience?

It is true that "Not everything that is learned is contained in books." A person can learn a lot and retain what he learns through experience. In my opinion life's valuable lessons are learnt from experience and so the knowledge gained from experience is more important.

Books are a great source of information. A person in his lifetime cannot experience everything, but by reading a book on a particular subject he can gain knowledge over that subject in less time. There are books available on any subject that one needs. However experience seems more important to me.

Suppose a person living in the United States wants to learn about India. He has two options: he could visit India and learn about the people and places there or he could just pick up a book about India and read it. The first option will be expensive and time consuming, but at the same time it gives one first hand information and a sense of satisfaction while the second option is less expensive and saves time.

A person can gain knowledge and learn many valuable lessons through his/her own practical experiences and also the experiences of others. The knowledge learnt from experience is very likely to be retained in our memory for a long period of time. The conclusions that we draw from what we learn would be from our practical experience instead of accepting the conclusion drawn in the book by the author.

So in my opinion knowledge can be gained both by reading books and by experience but the knowledge gained through experience is more important.

Topic 4 Are books more important than experience?

Nowadays, most people appreciate learning at school, where a number of books are the source of knowledge. However, from my point of view, learning from experience is much more important than learning from books since our real lives concern more about knowledge from experience than knowledge from books.

Firstly, knowledge obtained from books is more abstract. As we enthusiastically study in classroom, we have learned several mathematic equations, or a number of science theories. Of course, they all are necessary for some professional occupations, such as scientist, engineer, and doctor, but not for all careers.

In addition, knowledge from books is rather logical and exact. The result of a matter is always follow-concerned theories. For example, a person who has learned science can know how long that an apple falls to the ground takes. Certainly, the answer can be obtained by using Newton's formula.

Nevertheless, I think that the most significant lessons cannot be taught; they have to be experienced. No one can teach us how we can get along with others well when we have to change to a new society. Books cannot teach us how to adjust behavior to satisfy others, and think optimistically when we confront a trouble.

In contrast to books, knowledge from experience is adjustable; it does not depend on any theory or equation. A solution from experience is always depending on the situation and other factors influencing the problem. This is because living experience is so fine and complex that cannot be determined by theories or equations.

In conclusion, although both books and experience can give us a variety of knowledge, in my view, the knowledge from experience is more important. The reason is that in everyday life we must face with a lot of situations, either extremely hard or easy to cope with, that cannot be handle by just knowledge from books.

Topic 4 Not everything that is learned is contained in books

Learning, as the name indicates has lot many meanings as to which source one would choose to understand things of his own interest. Books have always been an inevitable part of one's life as they have the ability to make people aware of the different things happening in our world. It is said that not everything that is learned is contained in books. This is in fact true because books can offer us knowledge regarding the things that have happened and sometimes the ways to deal with a situation that one can encounter in his life. I would appreciate the fact that the knowledge gained from experience is much more important than that we receive from books. I would like to further illustrate my reasons as follows:

Everyone would admit the fact that knowledge gained from experience is one that remains in our mind forever. It is correctly said, "Experience is the teacher of man." Being a science student, I have gone through different books where we come across different reactions and experiments, where the results will be shown in the form of diagrams or may be expressed in a simple language. Unless we conduct that experiment we will not know the problems or the difficulties we will have to overcome during the experiments. Textbook knowledge is merely a description of facts and outcomes, whereas the same knowledge when gained through experience teaches us a lot, right from the start till the end and its a journey through the various aspects of one process which one might not be aware of and might not be described in the books.

During my undergraduate years I had only knowledge from books and I used to wonder how the experiments are designed and how they are carried out. But, during my post graduate days I had to do a two month nutritional trial on fishes where I had to cope up with everything like procuring tubs and fishes, arranging aeration facilities, preparation of food for the fishes, daily water exchange, samplings, analysis and so on. Now, I am confident of carrying out similar works and the experience that I have gained will remain with me as long as I live. When similar instances occur, we will have more self-confidence and when such aspects are passed on to our juniors, they would also feel happy and confident.

Needless to say books are also very important. What I have mentioned is from my viewpoint as a science student. There are many different subjects where the conduct of work is tough and in such circumstances we gain information from books. Some aspects would be time consuming and tedious and performing such a work with a limited period of time would not be feasible. In such cases, books definitely open a person's eye towards various aspects and give him first hand information about what he wants to know.

A person who has learned from experience never forgets what has happened and if it was proved a bad thing then he would certainly try to avoid that situation in the future. If something good has happened then he will put his best to further improve it; that in turn will enhance his skill and boost his self-esteem. Knowledge gained by experience can be passed over to others who also are supposed to face the same situation and that helps the person to be aware of what he intends to do. He can even avoid those factors that can affect his performance.

In fact I would rather say that knowledge gained from experience lingers in our minds forever and that boosts our confidence when taking up a similar task. On the other hand, the fact that books are knowledge providers cannot be ignored, because books provide us with lot more information about the different things that are very difficult to be experienced. Hence it can be concluded that knowledge gained from books is second hand knowledge whereas knowledge that are gained from experience is firsthand and it takes a person through the different hidden intricacies of the task and makes him learn the knowledge in a practical manner.

Topic 4 Are books more important than experience?

To my opinion, books and real experience are two completely different sources of knowledge. It is really difficult to determine which of the two to be of much greater importance, because normally knowledge gained from experience complements that acquired from books, but not substitutes it. Comparing the features of the two sources, I would stress the following points of differences.

First, the knowledge gained from books is, to a certain extent, of abstract nature. Books are normally the collections of facts and general rules. Books give us the most complete overview of a subject in a more or less structured manner, covering all known details and exceptions. In some way, books are concentrations of knowledge and experiences of many generations of people, given in a concise and comprehensive way. Obtaining such knowledge just from the personal experience would take an immense amount of time or even would not be possible at all. The practical experience, gives us not general knowledge, but particular skills. Without these particular skills, all the knowledge gained from books might be just a useless collection of facts and rules. The best example of the importance of practical experience that comes to my mind is learning a foreign language. One can learn a lot of vocabulary and grammar rules, memorize many exceptions, but without actual applying of all this knowledge in real life conversations, writing letters and listening to real speeches, one can hardly be proficient in the language. The importance of having practical skills is also proved by the fact that most employers appreciate working experience above all grades and diplomas.

Another point of contrast between books and experience is that for some subject, such as economy of sociology, a book may represent a point of view of its author or authors. The conclusions given in the book might be out of date, or might be biased by the personal attitude of the authors. In this case, practical experience helps to build up personal perspective on the matter, to bring the matter up to date.

On the psychological grounds, learning from experience is much more efficient than reading books. Reading books is in most cases a passive action, which can be done without much effort. Despite the fact that there are people who can memorize thousands of papers, for a normal person, such work does not result in a deep, comprehensive knowledge base. On the contrary, doing things in practice, people have to overcome various difficulties, get through unknown areas, and pay attention to small details. The reward for these efforts is much more comprehensive and profound knowledge.

Summarizing the said above I want to admit that both books and practice is important in the process of learning. While none of the two can be considered as absolute substitute for the other, I would place the practical experience in a little bit advance position in terms of importance.

Topic 4 Are books more important than experience?

We gain our knowledge about the world and our life from two sources: from experience and from books. These two resources are both important, but which of them is more important?

Knowledge from books forms a very important part of our knowledge structure. In schools and colleges, we learn knowledge that is fundamental to our future career. We learn knowledge from books in order to make our contributions to this society in the future. A student learns mathematic equations and other scientific knowledge and become a scientist or engineer. We will be illiterate and ignorant without learning knowledge from books. Moreover, we acquire knowledge about life and the world by reading books, magazines and newspapers. This is also very important, as we cannot experience everything all by ourselves. Therefore books are a very important source of knowledge.

On the other hand, we cannot learn everything from books. "Experience is the best teacher" is an old cliché but I agree with it. The most important, and sometimes the hardest lessons we learn in life come from our participation in situations. We learn how to get along with others or how to gain self-respect from our experience, not from books. We cannot learn emotional feelings, such as love and care, through books; they come from our real life experience. Knowledge from experience is also a very important supplement to knowledge from books.

Needless to say both learning sources, books and experience, are very important to us. But in my opinion knowledge from experience is more important, because without knowledge from experience, it is impossible to get a real understanding of knowledge from books, and how to apply this knowledge to real world situations.

Topic 4 Are books more important than experience?

Upon the question "not everything that is learned is contained in books", different people have different opinions. From my point of view, I believe knowledge gained from experience is more valuable than knowledge gained out of books. In the following paragraphs I will try to explain my position more clearly.

Firstly, life's valuable lessons are learned from experience. Can you forget important lessons learned from your childhood years, such as jumping down from a high place and broke your arms? From that accident you knew the importance of self-protection. Knowledge gained from experience is likely to be retained in our memory for a long period of time, although most of the time we have to pay a price for it.

Secondly, knowledge that is gained by doing things can provide you with firsthand information. If you don't have the chance to experience on your own, you can only obtain second-hand knowledge and you will feel a lack of self-confidence.

Moreover, many skills and knowledge can only be learned through practical experiences. You cannot learn swimming by just reading from books on how to swim. You have to actually get there and jump into the pool. Experience is the best way to develop your personal abilities.

However, just as an English proverb goes "a coin has two sides," reading books is also helpful. After all, you will not have the chance to experience everything by yourself. For instance, to travel to foreign countries is expensive and time-consuming, while reading a book about different cultures provides you with plenty of valuable information in a short period of time.

To conclude, knowledge gained from experiences is more important. Life requires knowledge, and experience is the key.

Topic 5 Should a factory be built in your community?

I strongly oppose to the plan that a large factory be built near my community. My arguments for this point are listed as follows.

The first and foremost reason lies in the virtually inevitable pollution that a large factory is bound to bring about. Considering the limit of the present technology, hardly any kind of factory is able to secure its mass production without the slightest pollution to the environment. Once a factory enters my community, and embarking on its continuous activities, even a tiny element of pollution will by all odds accumulate to a dangerous degree that will eventually cause a serious damage to the environment of my community. To think of the exhaust gas or water and the noise given off by a factory will help you fully understand this idea. Cities have already suffered from those nightmares of modern industry that shows no signs of ceasing to emerge. No one would like to behold the air of his or her community is no longer clean, or to find his or her community totally removed of hush.

Besides pollution, which is to some extent an invisible but deadly threat to my community, there is an immediate problem that a large factory will force to confront with: it will occupy a large area near or of my community, which should be more likely exploited as a public site that benefit all residents in the community. For example provided a suitable area is available, it is more worth a gymnasium that will enhance the standard of health of every resident in the community, than a big factory leading to disgusting noise and suffocating gas.

Perhaps, some people would like to vote for such a plan of building a factory simply on an economical ground that a large factory will probably stimulate a prosperous future of the area around. But unfortunately, history has witnessed numerous counterexamples. Many factories neither attain an economical success nor left the environment intact. So I doubt this declaration.

Taking into account all these factors, I find the disadvantages weigh much heavier than the possible advantages. Therefore I strongly disagree the establishment of a large factory near my community.

Topic 5 Should a factory be built in your community?

As the company has announced to build a factory right here in our community, I am so eager to say a few words toward this issue. I really think that if the plan is carried out in the near future finally, there will be much more disadvantages than advantages to be brought to the quality life of our social community.

Of course, during these years' high unemployment rate, introducing of such a large factory will consume unemployed workforce in some respects. A family may increase their income by taking account of its new employed father during or after the construction of the factory, local government can increase its tax income and retail dealers of our community may sell a little more because of the increasing of population that may be the result of the new build factory. However, all these benefits may seem to be so small when compared with all those disadvantages the new build factory may lead to.

The most hateful thing is that you may not able to smell the fresh air in the sunny Sunday mornings because this huge industrial monster will probably deliver a great deal of waste fume and waste materials every day, far more than the amount you can imagine. And far more disappointed than this, those rumbling, non-stopping stream lines in the factory can make noises loud enough to bereave people of our tranquil town out of sweet dreams.

And you will no doubt feel uncomfortable to drive your family to the camping place because maybe the establishment of the new factory will bring more than 20% increases in population as well 30% increases in using of private cars and trucks, imaging how could it be in the street in rush hours, or even in the holidays. So, you can see clearly that increasing in population is not always good news for a small community like ours.

Basic food prices may probably rise and public transportation will burden more, which usually means poor services, public schools and community facilities which once made us feel so convenient living in this small town may get harder and harder to be attended or utilized as the increasing of population, upon all those disadvantages, why should we give applauses to the announcement of the company?

Topic 5 Should a factory be built in your community?

I support the idea that a factory to be built near our community. I list my reasons as follows.

Firstly, a new factory near our community helps to improve the living standard of people in our community. The factory will employ a lot of workers. As a consequence, the unemployment rate will drop significantly. Many people in our community will find a job in the factory. As people's income increases, they will be able to spend more money on their food, clothing and leisure, and the quality of life will be increased.

Secondly, a new factory will bring prosperity to our community. The tax collected from a factory is an important source of revenue for our town. As people have higher income, income tax collected will also be increased. With the increased amount of tax dollars, the town will be able to spend more money on infrastructures and other development. Moreover, in order to accommodate more workers, more homes and stores will be needed. This will boost real estate development in our community.

Some people say that a factory would bring smog and pollution, and destroy the quality of the air and water in the town. While this is partly true, modern technologies have made today's factories technology intensive and brought pollutions to the minimum. There are also worries that the social structure of this community will be changed and the traditional life will be affected. We should understand that our society needs to evolve and we cannot always stay in the old time.

Of course, there are some drawbacks of building a new factory here. But in my opinion, the benefits outweigh the dangers. Therefore I strongly support to build a factory here, and hope that others feel the same way.

Topic 6 **What would you change about your hometown?**

Today, everything seems to change in split seconds. But, there is something that still lacks among every soul that resides in my hometown. And, I think you have got what I meant, cleanliness. These ideas of cleanliness in my opinion are divided into two types: external and internal cleanliness.

I was born in Kuala Lumpur and have lived here all my life. The city that I see today is way too advanced and developed compared to when I was in primary school. Kuala Lumpur is well known for its magnificent and the most luxurious airport in the world. But, what is the use of having all these advancements when the sense of cleanliness among the citizens is still below average. In example, I have actually witnessed a man spitting on a beautiful pavement when there was a dustbin right next to him.

Apart from what I have mentioned above, I would like to emphasize on internal cleanliness. Most people in Malaysia treat foreigners with good respect and hospitality. But, there are some people who would take advantage of these foreigners. For instance, shop owners raise the price of goods when foreigners visit their shops. I have actually witnessed a cab driver bargaining the ride fare with a foreign lady who was extremely tired after a daylong shopping with her young kids. I am trying to wonder, what has happened to the moral and the culture of our fellow Asians that we used to be so proud of?

I understand that the government has taken lots of steps to improve the state of cleanliness within fellow Malaysians. I just hope that these steps were more comprehensive. We should cultivate the sense of cleanliness among each and every citizen in order to promise success to the planned manifesto. Last but not least, every citizen should willingly contribute to the efforts of maintaining cleanliness in their surroundings. We should not be self-centered when it comes to the matter of cleanliness because cleanliness ensures a healthy living. Think your deeds of maintaining cleanliness as a charity and start it from the steps of your home. At the end of the day, you will experience self-satisfaction towards your contribution to your hometown, as a wise person once said, "The greatest gift of charity is to give what is in your heart."

Topic 6 What would you change about your hometown?

I am from Arroz e Feijao, a small town in the northeast of Brazil. If I can change one thing about my home town, I would like to build a factory here. Building a factory in there will bring a lot of advantages and disadvantages, but I believe that Arroz e Feijao will mostly benefit from the building of a new factory because it is largely populated by poor people and the factory would bring many benefits to this small town. However, of course, a factory has disadvantages as well.

As you know, factories usually bring pollution. If this factory is not managed very effectively and efficiently according to specific rules, it's prone to polluting the local air and water. What's more, factories usually make noise. Beside clean drinkable water and fresh air, an ideal community should be quiet. If the factory cannot maintain this standard to the community, it will not last long. A factory that is too noisy or pollutes too much will eventually be relocated to a new area.

On the other hand, a factory could bring a lot of benefits to the community. So I would support the plan to build a factory to my community for all the reasons I will describe below.

First of all, the construction of a factory will surely improve the local infrastructure. To run smoothly, the factory will have to have a steady, reliable supply of water and electricity. Some old pipes will be changed, and some facilities will be renovated. The residents' living standard get improved as a result of these widespread changes, an important benefit in Arroz e Feijao, where many people do not have access to clean water.

Secondly, to make sure the shipping of materials and products and the employees' commute more convenient, the local roads will have to be rebuilt and broadened, resulting in improved public transportation. The town's residents can take a public bus to go shopping or go to work. As a result, air pollution and fuel consumption might be reduced.

Most important, a factory's establishment will bring up a lot of employment opportunities for the community. A factory needs experts from various fields. The residents can take just a few minutes to go to the factory to work. So, the local residents can benefit from this factory.

Generally speaking, I would like to build a factory near my community if I have a chance. If the factory can be managed successfully, the factory and the local residents can have benefit mutually.

Topic 6 What would you change about your hometown?

If I could change one important thing about my hometown, it would be air pollution problem, and I will give the following reasons to explain why I want to solve the problem.

The first and most important reason is that I hope that my hometown can become a beautiful city. As an old industrial city, my hometown has made a great deal of contribution for the country's economic development. As a result, the natural environment of the city has been badly damaged. The forest has disappeared; the mountains have become bald, and the most awful thing is that the air quality becomes more and more worsen. People seldom see the blue sky during most time of year.

Another reason why I want to change my hometown's air pollution situation is that the city's development needs clean and tidy environment to attract investors. Nowadays people have come to know that the city's environment, which is so called "software facility of the city", plays an important role in the city's future. For example, due to the fact that the environment of the city is very poor, many local students who pursue their study out of the city would rather find themselves a job in other cities than coming back to their hometown after they graduated.

In addition, nowadays people have paid more and more attention to their health. If the air pollution problem cannot be solved as quickly as possible, people's requirement for a healthy body will never be realized.

In my mind, changing air pollution will apparently be my first choice if I can change one important thing about my hometown. Fortunately people in my hometown are gradually aware of the serious problem and start doing something about it.

Topic 7 **How do movies or TV affect people?**

"Reel life is based on real life," they say. But how far it is true is left to the judgment of the individual's intelligence. The impact that movies and television have on our lives can never be over-emphasized.

Nowadays television and movies are the only sources to keep in pace with the latest trend in the global environment. Every part of our lifestyle is somehow influenced by what we see in the television or in movies. The advent of the motion picture has been one of the greatest influences of the cultural activities of the humankind. It does not require great intelligence to ascertain this fact. If we just give a glance to see hanging or posted on the walls are the photos of our favorite celebrities from the tinsel world, mounted on the table are things from our favorite T. V. show, the music blaring out of the system of the latest excuses for musical excellence, in your wardrobe are outfits last seen on our favorite stars, the hair cream, shampoo, paste, and what not, the list is endless. This does not stop with just what we wear and own it also extends to the way we behave in our peer group.

Some time back, my friend and I were at the cafeteria near our college when were suddenly mobbed by a group of students who were dressed up as people straight out from prehistoric age. They were carrying contraptions that resembled like weapons for a battlefield, which made us wonder whether they were struck in a time warp. And what followed actually bemused us completely, the group started speaking to each other in a very laboriously slow manner in a language which sounded nothing of this world. My friend and I were not able to understand a single word of it, we left that day with a really confused mind and were in the same state for quite some time. But it all ended on the day we decided to watch the movie "Lord of the Rings" Peter Jackson's adaptation of J. R. K. Tolkien's novel of early 1900s. We understood the costumes and the weapons were the film's souvenir collectibles, and the language they spoke was that of the elves originally created by the great author.

Thus we see people talking about 'molecular disintegrators', 'laser swords', 'elves', 'hobbits' etc., and also tend to act and perform like what they have seen in movies and television. We also see that big FMCG companies bringing in newer products inline with the latest movies. There are several institutions, which glorify such attitude. Those who dare to ignore are considered archaic and become the butt of all jokes. This can be easily acknowledged by the fact the elves language has already been recognized as part an official curriculum in a British university.

Thus the line between real and reel life is fast becoming a blurred one. The whole behavior and cultural activity of the human race is left to the mercy of the next big moviemaker.

Topic 7 How do movies or TV affect people?

Movies are popular because people are great watchers. They like to watch other peoples' lives. They like to live vicariously. By going to movies, we can escape our own lives, share other people's emotions, and imagine ourselves as someone else.

Many of our lives are not as adventurous or glamorous as the lives in movies. We do not battle evil all day long and then go back to our luxurious penthouse apartment. We just go to school, do our homework, eat, talk to our friends, and sleep. We need a little excitement in our lives and we find excitement at the movies.

Humans are very emotional people. We all like to cry and laugh. Fortunately, there is not much to cry about in my life so I like to go to sad movies where my heartstrings can be tugged. I also like to go to comedies so that I can laugh. I tend to cry and laugh more in a dark movie theater than I do in broad daylight.

Now I am a student, but I know someday I will be a scientist or a politician or a famous model. When I go to the movies, I can see my role models. I see how they act, what they wear, how they talk. I can prepare myself for the day when I will be like them.

Even though my life is quiet, I can go to the movies and watch someone else's life. I can share their emotions and their everyday life. I wonder if they would like to share mine.

Topic 7 How do movies or TV affect people?

Every human being tends to take some time off from his or her chores for relaxation. There is no doubt that movies and television play a major role in get tiredness and boredom away from us. Though primarily intended for entertainment, these media do influence the behaviors of human beings. I would like to discuss the effect of the media on the demographic divisions of children, teenagers and the adults.

No doubt that children are the most fascinated and fond of watching movies and television. Though parents are temporarily relieved from baby-sitting their children who are indulgent in watching television, they are certainly worried about the influence of this media. Today's movies are filled with violence. Heroism is being portrayed as the capacity to destruct (the enemies). This easily influences children. The fondness of children to watch WWF wrestling on television bears testimony to it. This proclivity towards violence tends to show up at schools, where they start to bully their classmates.

While teenagers tend to show some maturity over the issue of violence, there are separate gamut of factors in the media that influence them. Teenage is the important period during which one chooses his career and subsequently his direction of life. This media greatly influence the choice of ones career. Today's rock concerts and music televisions create an impression that becoming a rock star or a video jockey is the best profession in the world. Numerous teenagers are drawn into this whirlpool and it becomes too late when they come to realize the reality in life.

Adults watch this media mainly for entertainment and to relax themselves. However they too are relieved from being bitten by the media bug. The constantly running television advertisements have a negative bearing on the adults. The ostentatiously displayed by a Porsche car driving by the hero in our favorite films inadvertently propels our instinct to go for a similar car. Seldom do we think about the aftereffects and get entangled in the spider web. We tend to sink our ship by the exorbitant interest rate, mortgage and the overflowing credit card bills. Once overloaded with these, we tend to become peevish losing our natural gregarious behavior.

Hence I feel that the media has an influence on each one of in what ever above said categories we are in. While there are also many things which positively influence people's mind, I have purposefully chose to deal with negative aspects as understanding these problems instigates us to seek a suitable solution. We as a parent, a teacher and a good friend can help some of our friends who need help to get themselves out of these problems.

Topic 7 Movies influence people

It has been noticed that movies and television influence people's behavior. The influence appears in different forms such as the way of eating, the kind of food, and general attitudes.

Recently, there was a show called "Super Star" on Arabic Television networks where it showed how the actors are in their normal life situations. I have seen mature people as well as young children imitating the actor's behavior. They started eating pasta and kind of foods that won't increase the fat in the body. Also, they took more care to eat in a prestige manner such as using the spoons and forks. On the other hand, people started wearing clothes that doesn't fit the society standards. The actors in the show were wearing short and sexy clothes. This attitude reflected on the teenagers. They started wearing similar clothes since they feel that those actors are the models to follow.

A research done by Ohio State University at 1998 has indicated that people go into four stages when being influenced by a movie or Television. First, the model: the model is a person that wakes up people's awareness for something. For example, Super Star actor's new attitudes. Second is selective attention: people selectively start to imitate the model behavior. For example, the way of eating and kind of foods or clothes used. Third, selective retention: people still selectively repeat the model attitude even though he/she is no longer there. For example, the show ended but still some people retain the behavior. Fourth, feedback: it is the information perceived by people whether what they are doing is acceptable or not. Here people decide whether to continue or stop the model's behavior based on the standard norms.

In conclusion, movies and televisions have great influence on people. The influence can be in form of learning new attitudes, whether it is good or bad. It could be good behavior if it fits the standard norms or improve the daily behavior such as eating healthy foods and practicing sports. Or it could be bad behavior such as wearing clothes and performing unethical attitudes that contradict social standards.

Topic 7 How do movies or TV affect people?

Our life has gone through great changes since television and movies came into being, which provides a totally new and different way of using our spare time to the traditional way. As a matter of fact, with the wide spread of this mass media such as movies and television all over the world, people's behavior and thoughts have been changed a lot since it has become an inalienable part of our daily life. Movies and television influence people's behavior by altering their views of value, beauty, and the world.

People become more confident and seldom give up after watching the movie *Forest Gump*, they stop smoking and begin to do exercises after watching the TV program about smoking ruins one's health, and girls try hard to lose weight after actresses in movies and television tend to be thinner and thinner. All these changes, indeed, has much to do with mass media. It is obvious that, teenagers talk a lot when gathered together about sports games or newest Hollywood movies, whereas adults discuss the world's political situation or social problems when having time in their offices. The topics that they focus on, in most cases, are acquired either from television programs or from movies, and so forth.

Movies and television influence people's behavior by satisfying their imagination. Heroes and heroines achieve great success of their business, attain sweet love of their life, and gain high respect of their fame so easily within a two-hour long movie. When watching it, audiences can experience the same events, share the same feelings, and this whole process would fulfill their fantasies, as a result, cause them to find balance in their lives, or, to some degree, lose the balance, which depends on not only the movies but also the audiences themselves. All in all, mass media, including movies and television, has a significant correlation with people's behaviors. To put it differently, tasks are arduous for mass media to bring people laughter, joy and relaxation, and at the same time some pedagogic meanings.

Topic 8 **Has TV destroyed communication?**

To agree or disagree with the statement that television has destroyed the communication among family and friends is a matter of balancing its pros and cons. However, if one considers the following reasons, he or she may disagree with the title statement as I do.

First, some people may hold the view that friends and family would easily fight with each other for the programs on the television that he or she wants to watch. For example, the child may be likely to switch to the cartoon channel while the father wants to see the news program, and the mother prefers a romantic movie. However as far as I am concerned, the scenario is an exaggeration. I do not think such a trivial quarrel would destroy anything important, and as friends or family, the one result is to attribute to the communication. Each person would present their reasons for watching the program, so that next time they would not argue for the same thing again. They know the taste of each member of the family and they will probably try to avoid such conflicts.

In addition, television offers us numerous topics to talk about. Television informs us of what is happening around the world. Everybody has his/her own reaction towards these events. Without television, we may hold the idea that no one would have the chance to share. When the friends and the whole family sit tighter in front of a television, a nice and intimate atmosphere is provided for communication. Through such kind of communication, family members can understand each other better. A small example may give some light to this point. Once I had some disagreement and had not talk to my dad for several days. One night, when my dad and I were watching television together, we found an interesting topic that both of us wanted to say something about it, so we said a little first and talk much later and all the unpleasant disappear out of existence.

So, in my point of view, nothing has been destroyed by television. On the contrary it might improve our communication.

Topic 8 **Has TV destroyed communication?**

There are always good and bad consequences following technological developments. Television has served many needs of people. But, unfortunately, it has destroyed communication among friends and family. The reasons are that people are getting maximum information, entertainment and time pass through various channels. I will explain these reasons in detail further in my essay.

Though there are many sources of gathering information we rely on people for information most of the times. This is gradually replaced by countless advertisements coming up in television. They show different products, their prices and their availabilities in stores. They even give phone numbers to order by calling. Certain products which, we don't even know the purpose is also explained these days. For example, I have seen an ad about a hair dryer stand 2 days back. Initially, I didn't even understand its purpose but as it continued, I could easily make out and so I bought it the very next week with out even bothering to ask any of my friends.

Man is a social animal. He likes to be in society among people, which keeps him entertained by gatherings with friends and family. In television, different serials and movies are played. There are thousands of channels offering variety of programs. Once we get used to watching these programs, we don't see any point in going out and meeting friends. For instance, when I was a child, our family members and friends used to gather every weekend and watch a movie in a theatre. But now, every one watches movies in their own homes as there are some paid channels where we can watch latest movies. It saves time and money.

People are anyway busy these days with personal and professional works. On top of this, some channels like discovery, BBC, CNN, ESPN keep people occupied with all the knowledge they need. They don't see any time to meet friends or family. For example, they are even having dinner watching television.

There are advantages and disadvantages of everything created on earth. It depends on human beings to utilize or exploit them.

Topic 8 **Has TV destroyed communication?**

An invention of the new technological era, many people have deemed television as an obstacle for the normal communication in family and among friends. Although there may be some negative effects of television's presence in our lives, the positive ones are incontrovertible and even more compelling. TV is an acknowledged medium of communication that broadens our knowledge, thus providing more topics of conversation among friends and family.

Though the indiscriminate watching of TV programs tends to create inhumane zombies, addicted to the screen and incapable of normal communication, few people actually come down to this state. On the contrary, the discriminating choice of TV programs could enrich people's view and make them feel more informed. Through specialized broadcasts, people usually become more knowledgeable in their fields of work, thus getting capable of a more fulfilling communication with others.

At home, television can always create a warm atmosphere. Imagine a family in front of the TV watching a favorite funny show, laughing, and sharing a common enjoyment. At Christmas and the New Year's Eve, for example, there are shows that contribute to the celebratory atmosphere at home.

Although television is said to take up much of the time that we are supposed to spend with our friends, it does not, in fact, spoil communication between friends. It can even provide diverse topics for conversation, help friends share opinions and interests, and, if those are not enough - help to find friends.

In brief, television has proved to be a plentiful source of information for people of different tastes. Consequently, it has much contributed to the more enriching and fulfilling communication among family and friends. And although some "enemies" of the technological world try to dismiss it, television has become an inseparable part of our everyday life, making communication more enjoyable.

Topic 8 **Has TV destroyed communication?**

I strongly agree with the statement that television has destroyed the communication between family and friends. This is a very interesting and thought provoking statement, and I have specific reasons for agreeing with it, which are explained in the following paragraphs.

In today's world television occupies a very important place in our lives, more than it ever has. Before the television was invented people used to spend their free time in many different ways. Keeping close contact with family and friends, meeting new people, and playing sports outdoors are a few such things that used to be on the top of their lists. Even for a long period of time after the television was invented, people used to spend only limited and specific amount of time watching television. But with the advent of satellite television and the introduction of hundreds of channels, we are now spending a good amount of time just to decide what to watch.

These days an average family's typical day starts with watching television and ends with it. Add to that, different people in the family have different tastes that results in more than one television in a household. I know many of my friends who own at least three televisions that are on all the time airing a variety of programs. Among all these, where is the time for people to communicate with each other on a regular basis? I can give a very good example of this: I had an appointment with a friend of mine last Sunday at my house. But he did not show up. His reason was, "I was watching something interesting on TV and forgot about our meeting."

There is nothing wrong in watching television. There are so many good programs to watch, but there are equally bad programs that do nothing but waste our time. The secret is to balance our priorities in life. As much as it is important to watch television, friends and family are more important. Communicating with them on a regular basis is a very healthy thing and it should never be overlooked because of television.

Topic 8 **Has TV destroyed communication?**

I do strongly support the statement that television has destroyed communication among friends and family. This I support with the following reasons.

First let me describe the role of television today. Nowadays people spend a tremendous amount of time in front of the television. Thus communication among friends and family has become much more difficult in the 21st century.

Because television always keeps you up to date, gives you a good laugh and a lot of handy tips for life, people do not need their friends and family members anymore to support them in achieving their goals.

Sadly enough the likelihood of becoming addicted to television nowadays is tremendously high. Once you start to communicate less with your friends and family members because you prefer to watch television you will get lonelier and lonelier. In this case people will start to replace their own family members and friends with talk shows and comedies. In some dramatic situations people believe they are a part of the families shown on TV and therefore entirely lose their feeling for reality.

Last but not least I wish to say that I consider the television as a very useful information tool nevertheless it should be used like everything within some borders.

Topic 8 **Has TV destroyed communication?**

Nowadays, television plays an important role in people's life. It is the main information source and its popularity is still growing.

Every day many new technological inventions are introduced. Almost all activities at home have already been mechanized. We use machines for everything. For example, we use microwave ovens to prepare food more quickly than we used to do it before; we order food, books and anything else we need just by clicking on a few buttons on the computer keyboard. Also we use mobile phones to be always in touch with our family, friends and the rest of the world.

This is the good side of using technology. A few centuries ago people used to read newspapers and find out everything that had happened all over the world. Today newspapers are almost completely replaced by a newly invented gadget. This innovation is called television. It has been the most popular information "supplier" since its invention.

Every evening family members sit in front of the TV set and watch programs such as talking shows, news, and movies for hours, sometimes without even saying a word to each other. Instead of sitting around the dining table and telling each other about what happened earlier that day they sit on the sofa and gaze at the TV screen.

Is that right? Apparently, it is not. Everybody has to think for himself whether he and his family want to become 'couch potatoes' or they should continue to communicate with each other and avoid using television and all other technological achievements so much. We should ask ourselves whether we want to lead such a life with no real contact with other human beings. Is it really worth it?

Topic 8 **Has TV destroyed communication?**

What do you usually do to relax yourself and have some fun after a whole day's work? How do you spend most of your spare time with a lowest cost of both money and energy? Most of us will give the same answer: watching TV. As promoted by the development of modern science and technology, television programs today attract a vaster group of audiences by tremendously enriched contents and a 24-hour rolling schedule than ever before. The fact that television seems to control our choice of leisure and entertainment has recently brought a problem to focus: whether has television destroyed communication among friends and family? Those who agree with the statement insist that such lack of communication should attribute to television. However, I hold just an opposite point of view and I will demonstrate my opinion as followed.

First of all, the advantages of television will speak for itself. As known to all, what we find in television is not only some enjoyment or recreation to kill time but also an important source of knowledge and information. Imagine how television makes us familiar with the miracle creatures in the deep ocean that is unavailable otherwise. Undoubtedly television is an indispensable channel for us to learn the world outside.

As far as the interpersonal communication is concerned, television also plays a key role in improving, but destroying like someone thinks, the relationship and understanding among friends and family. A good case in the point is that television often focuses the attention of public by broadcasting current events, social news and popular teleplays. It is always easy to find interesting topics with friends and colleagues if you have watched the same TV program lately and want to share your ideas about it. Besides, in my own family, my parents and I enjoy the time when we are sitting together and watching tele-films. Because it is the moment for us to feel and enjoy the peacefulness and happiness of family life.

I do not deny that there may be some cases that people are so addicted to television or some other habits that he/she will probably ignore communication with friends and family. Yet it is the wrong attitude of the person him/herself that results the problem but television. Thus, for the reasons above, I shall say: television, like many other important inventions of human beings, benefits our life with both enjoyment and knowledge.

Topic 8 **Has TV destroyed communication?**

Has television destroyed communication among friends and family? Different people will give different responses to this question from their own characters, emotional concerns and even educational backgrounds. However, when it comes to me, television has severely affected our contact with our friends and family for the following reasons.

In the first place, watching television will obviously take up our leisure time that can be otherwise spent staying with our friends and family. In fact, the television has provided us with a variety of shows, which can easily catch our eyes. An example is that, a very hot television play will eat much of our free time magically! Many people will admit that the glamour of television is irresistible! So, how about talking with our old friends? Let us watch another hot television soap opera instead! Without television, we will obviously have more time to share with friends, namely, playing tennis, swimming, playing football etc. These activities are all good entertainment and improve our physical fitness as well! Do you expect getting in a good shape or having floppy muscles when sitting in front of television?

In the second place, programs on televisions have some negative effects on us in terms of violence, illusion and even brain malfunctions. People who are infected with long exposure to television will indulge themselves in a world full of illusionary love, violence or even pessimistic views of life. How can those people have good time with their friends or other family members? Without television we will have more chances to realize this world realistically, cherishing people who are loving me, paying more attention to social problems and leading an optimistic life! From this point of view, television seems to be the source of all these tragedies!

Admittedly, television is obviously a tool for us to broaden our horizon and entertain ourselves. And such positive effects of television should not be neglected. However, it seems to me that the disadvantages brought by television have outweighed its advantages.

All in all, if all the factors are contemplated, we can easily reach a conclusion that television has destroyed our communication with our friends and family and is not as effective as we might expect. Let us give up tonight's soap opera and pay a visit to our old friends instead.

Topic 9 **A small town vs. a big city**

I grew up in a small town and then moved to a big city, therefore I have experienced the good and bad sides of both. I never thought that I would like living in a big city, but I was proved wrong. After ten years of living in one, I can't imagine ever living in a small town again.

Small towns and big cities both have some problems in terms of transportation, but in different ways. In a small town, you have to own a car to ensure a comfortable living. You can't get around without one because there isn't any kind of public transportation. Big cities generally have heavy traffic and expensive parking, but then you have a choice of taking public transportation. It's not free, but it's often cheaper than driving when you consider gas and insurance. Especially if you don't have a car, you're better off living in a city.

I love the excitement of big cities. Small towns have a slow pace. Large cities mean you have to adapt to a variety of situations, like finding a new route to work or trying a new restaurant. I enjoy that challenge very much. Another aspect of the excitement of city living is the variety of cultural activities available. There is a wide assortment of theatres, music and dance performances available in big cities. These things are rare in small towns.

The final thing I like about large cities is the diversity of the people. The United States is made up of people of different races, religions, abilities, and interests. However, you seldom find such a variety of people in a small US town. Living in an area where everyone is just like me would quickly make me bored.

Of course, security is a concern, and that's one area where small towns are superior to big cities. Still, I would rather be a bit more cautious and live in a large city than to feel secure but bored in a small town.

Topic 9 **A small town vs. a big city**

In English, there is a well-known fairy story about a poor country boy, Dick Whittington, who goes to London because he believes that the streets of that city are "paved with gold." The story is a tale of "from rags to riches." Dick eventually becomes the Lord Mayor of London. Like the hero of that story, I always find wonder and adventure in cities.

Cities contain a great assortment of people. Whenever I walk around a shopping precinct at midday on a weekend, I am fascinated by all the different types of people hurrying around the shops. Sometimes, I just sit on a public bench and simply watch the variegated streams of shoppers. Today, in the age of globetrotting transport and communications, city life is more mixed than it has ever been. Capital cities are not cosmopolitan, and eager to attract foreign trade and currency. There is a contemporary English joke that tells, "You can never find an Englishman in London."

Whether rightly or wrongly, governments and local authorities usually build public amenities in the big cities. Money is invested in transport, libraries, parks and museums. Often, countries will compete with each other for the best "show-case" building. Malaysia has built a skyscraper that is taller than is anything in New York. In large countries, region will compete against region: New York against Chicago, Shanghai against Hong Kong and Beijing.

All of this is good for the citizen. The magic of the Dick Whittington story is rekindled in me when I enter a library in a magnificent building. If a person is at university studying art or music, a large city usually offers galleries and public performances. Even as a teenager, I appreciated the worth of living in a city because two or three times a year there was a rock concert by a favorite band.

Architecture is the urban landscape. If a person has an appreciation of architecture, a city can be as visually exciting as the Himalayas. A modern metropolis is a mountain range of height, light and solidness. And then there are the old buildings: the quaint, unspoiled side street or shops and homes from a distant age. If a person lived all of his life in one large city, he would continue to discover its architectural secrets into his old age.

Man is a 'social animal'. He talks, mixes and creates. Cities offer the libraries, universities and cafe bars for him to meet others of his kind.

Topic 9 **A small town vs. a big city**

Where shall we live? Some may choose to live in big cities, while other like the natural and quiet surroundings in the countryside. As far as I am concerned, I would like to live in a big city because living in a big city has more advantages than living in the countryside.

To begin with, the city is the symbol of human civilization and there are a many facilities for living, recreation and health care. Therefore, living there is more convenient than living in the countryside. For example, we can find a plenty of malls around our neighborhood, where we can buy everyday necessities at a low price. Furthermore, people concern more about their health and safety than other things in their lives. In big cities, medical facilities and emergency services are easily accessible than in the countryside. Big cities also have convenient transportation and utility systems. They also offer faster Internet connections. These all make our life easier in big cities.

In addition, we can take part in a variety of events in big cities. Human being likes to live together and need to interact with each other. In a big city, the population density is high therefore there are always plenty of social activities, sports events and concerts. There are more recreational places in big cities, such as opera houses, movie theatres, clubs, and swimming pools. You will have many kinds of entertainment in big cities, and meet many people. In countryside, however, the life may be dull and quite, and you may only have a few neighbors. Living alone with few activities can easily cause mental diseases.

Some may argue that the pollution in cities makes people sick. However, with automobiles and modern highways we can easily take a break to expose to fresh air in the countryside and sunshine on the beach.

In conclusion, I strongly hold that living in big cities is much better than living in the countryside because of the advanced facilities and social activities in cities. Moreover, the autos and highways enable us to enjoy the natural and quiet surroundings in the countryside.

Topic 9 **A small town vs. a big city**

The environment where a person grows up and lives molds his personality to a greater degree. He becomes a part of the culture of that community where he lives and the ideals, the line of thinking, the way people dress, the way they speak, the types of food they like, all of these are influential and somehow makes the person what he is. Taking this into consideration, I would prefer living in a big city.

I would like to be aware of a lot of things. I would like to be up to date as to the current technologies that would help lighten up activities of daily living, such as the Internet, washing machines, microwave ovens, cable television and the like. I would like to experience the benefits of living in the era where high technology is the trend and make total use of it. I would like to be exposed to things that would make me an achieving professional in order to succeed in life. It is not that I belittle those who would prefer to stay in a little town. I think they have the advantage of having a peaceful life, free of noise, air, and water pollution, live abundantly with fresh fruits, vegetables, milk and meat.

Also, the intimacy of having a small community far outweighs the crowded city. But they are deprived of what is new or if it comes to them, like television, people in the city are using far more advanced tools and gadgets, such as palm top computers or watching through their cell phones already. For example, it is very difficult for electricity to reach far fetched places and so how can they make use of the Internet over there. Nowadays, it is very easy to travel publicly, especially with the metro rail train in the city. In a matter of minutes, you are already in your destination without the hassles of traffic. But in a small town, one has to walk by feet or if they become lucky, some improvised moving carts made of plywood are the means of their transportation.

I would not prefer living in a situation where I think I would not grow as a person; where if ever I would learn things, those are still way behind those of the urban people. I want diversity. I want an evolving environment. I want to be at pace with the challenges of the place I am living at and not stay drowned in the stunted growth I may have if I choose to stay in a little town.

Topic 9 Country and City

People are always wondering whether the country or the city is the ideal place to live. If there is one preference-which I take leave to make a conclusion-then it is the country rather than the city that provides people with optimal living conditions. There widespread testimonies for it and the primary ones are listed as follows.

The foremost reason for dwelling in the countryside is the soothing and comfortable life provided by the pastoral view. Hardly anyone could resist the clean atmosphere, the friendly neighbors, the closeness to nature and the gentle pace of living. Those who have enjoyed the first cock crow in the morning, the twittering of birds in the tress and the breathtaking sight of the rising sun would go into rapture at only mere mention of the idyllic life. Relaxed and suburban dwellers are able to hold a more positive attitude for life and achieve more accomplishment.

Oppositely, the obvious things brought about by noisy and flashy city life are more pressure and forever-lasting anxiety, agonizing and torching people's mind day in and day out. Another subtle explanation rests on the fact that country habitants are fortunate enough to enjoy the cozy and pleasant ambience of the family without exhausting social life. How satisfactory and refreshing it must be to have dinner together with your loved ones in the spacious and pastoral surroundings after a frustrating day! Furthermore, nothing can be compared with the joy of watching heart warming TV programs, playing convivial games and sleeping in the tranquil and relaxing atmosphere.

On the contrary, it would be far more difficult to acquire such pleasure for those urbanites. Consecutive and excessive recreations not only thrift money but also deteriorate people's health, which is the last thing one would like to encounter. Naturally, it is possibly to reckless to assert that nothing beneficial combines with city life since several accompanying merits also come along with it. Living in the metropolis means having more accesses to various people involved in multiple attractive cultures. Living in the metropolis also provides plentiful opportunities, both in career and studies.

Nevertheless, the fact that city life makes it more convenient to purchase a job does not prevent us from concluding that country life is more enjoyable as well as healthful and placing a certain amount of reliance on the notion that country life is always the sensible choice.

Topic 10 **The importance of hard work**

That hard work is a key to success is a well-known adage. Parents, teachers as well as others guide a child to work hard so that he can achieve good scores. Though a little bit of luck plays a positive role but I believe that hard work is the key to success. In fact if only luck is to be considered, no one would work but just wait till their luck shines up.

But this is not the case. Today we see that technology has improved to such an extent that a person can have a lunch in Paris and a dinner in New York on the same day. There lies great contributions from people like the Wright brothers and Henry Ford to invent these means of transportation, which were the result of their hard-work and great efforts. If these people had waited for the D-day probably we could still have been using fire and wood to cook instead of using electrical ovens, and the globalization would not have taken effect.

A person can excel in his career due to hard work. If he sits at home, no one would offer him a job unless he initiates the job searching process. Also if you are working in a company you will be promoted only because of working hard; luck does not lie in the picture.

A student stands out first only if he studies hard. Many students after the graduation say that probably they were not lucky enough to get good marks, or the evaluators must have marked their papers strictly. But again these are merely reasons that can't be given preference.

Today science has developed so much that hand shaking can be virtually done between any two countries. This is due to the tremendous amount of researches accomplished by scientists. All achievements in science and technology are because of hard work contributed by people in different fields.

Thus a young individual has the potential to do something and crave in reaching a particular acme. Whether your luck prevails or not condition being hard work and efforts, which will pick you up wherever you are.

Topic 10 **Luck and hard work**

There is a humorous saying in English "The grass is always greener on the other side of the valley." The saying is used ironically to point out that there is a temptation in us all to insist that others are more fortunate than we are. This is nowhere more true than on the question of luck and hard work. When faced with the "bad times", we often find comfort in the idea that we are special in our degree of misfortune. I feel that such an attitude is negative, and that it can bring only further misfortune.

Many famously successful people have begun from small origins. Mao was the son of a (modestly prosperous) peasant; the explorer Captain Cook was so poor that, as a child, he had to work by day and study by night; many of the affluent Americans of today are the children of the poor immigrants of yesterday. Beethoven, it should be remembered, became deaf before the end of his career. There are many, many more people who have also made genuine, though less spectacular, successes against the odds.

Within his own terms, a person who is born into poverty in India is a great success if he manages to own a house in later life. Poverty cannot be reduced by merely complaining and blaming others: no matter how guilty other people are, each individual must reach out to success for himself. Indeed, some economists believe that the world operates by what they call "the rule of the jungle." They believe that in economics a person always attempts to gain profit from his neighbor: that given the chance the poor man would quickly make himself rich by trading to his own advantage.

Also, it is presumptuous to judge another according to his or her apparent fortune. No man can ever truly understand the sufferings of his neighbor. A man who appears comfortably rich may have suffered elsewhere in his life - through the death of a loved one, for example. Retired businessmen have often worked long hours in their youth. Surely, it must be wiser to respect achievement than to deny that anyone has achieved good in the world.

To rely on notions of luck - to believe that life is a kind of lottery - is an attempt to escape reality. Paradoxically, the only time a person can claim that luck is more important than work is when he reflects on his own success. Because of that modesty, the great man then becomes even greater.

Topic 10 **Does luck has anything to do with success?**

Some people believed that they achieved success by their own ability, whereas other people believed that they did it by luck. As for me, I would like to side with the former people. I am willing to discuss it by proposing two main reasons.

First, As for the genuine meaning of the term 'success', luck is not the dominant aspect to gain success. What is success? I like to say that success is a great integration of a good motivation, a good procedure, and a good result. That is, success means not only the self-realization or economic abundance, but also enduring endeavor or firm belief. Being a rich man or powerful man without hard work is never a 'success'.

Second, for the social cohesion, I support the former point of view. If we acknowledge that a person who becomes a rich man due to luck as a successful man, we would lose the moral principle that makes our community safe and harmonious. That is because most people are willing to buy lottery or play gambling instead of work hard. *TSlo* pain, No gain' is not fallacy.

As for me, I would like to live in a society where there is no luck for success. I believe that hard labor and great endeavor rather than luck is the origin of human happiness and success.

Topic 11 Sports or library?

When it comes to the issue of the arrangement of the university budget, some people suggest that universities should spend more money on their libraries rather than on student's sports activities, while others maintain the opposite view. As far as I am concerned, the former point carries more weight. I take this view on account of the following reasons.

First of all, libraries are the places that maintain records of traditional theories, which are priceless treasure of human being. To keep these important materials, a lot of special devices have to be purchased. For example, a vacuum chamber that is used to keep a book printed hundreds of years ago may cost a fortune and constant budget has to be applied for its maintenance.

Second point to take into account is that libraries need more money to meet the need of the increasing development of technology. With the exponential leaps of the information technology in the recent years, massive amount of information can be easily and instantaneously obtained through computers and the Internet. Libraries also have to purchase such equipment, which may be very expensive, to meet the student's acquirements.

Last not least, the quality and quantity of the library indicate the level of a university. Therefore, if one university wants to achieve a better recognition, it must spent more money to improve the overall situation of its libraries.

Just as the English proverb goes, "a coin has two sides" those who take the opposite view are partly reasonable that more sports activities and better physical conditions will greatly promote student's health. But with the factors I outlined, I still believe that applying more budget on university libraries is much more important than sports equipment.

Topic 11 Sports or library?

I disagree strongly with the idea that the same amount of money should go to university sports activities as to university libraries. Although playing sports is a wonderful way to learn about teamwork, strategy and reaching your goals, it should not be the principal focus of a university education.

Students need the most up-to-date library facilities available to get the best education. Many of those facilities are very expensive to buy and maintain. These include computerized programs and access to Internet research databases that students can use to find information all around the world. If a university is only offering its students resources of a decade ago, it's depriving those students of a tremendous amount of information.

Even the book and magazine budget of universities has gone up tremendously in the last decade. More is being published on every subject, and every university wants to have this information available to its students.

It also costs money for universities to keep their libraries open. Students need to have access to all the libraries' research tools as much of the time as possible. Because students are young and can stay up all night studying, many universities are starting to leave their libraries open all night during exam periods. This costs money, because the staff has to be paid extra to be there. It also costs money to run the building (electricity, heat) during that time.

Students at universities are only going to benefit from their education if they can get to all the tools they need to learn. Sports are secondary to the resources that students need from university libraries. For this reason, libraries should always be better funded than sports activities.

Topic 11 Sports or library?

Many universities offer their students a lot of facilities for engaging in sports activities besides their normal academic programs. There is a gym and a swimming pool on almost every campus. There are also many other groups like swimming or jogging societies for students to join and enjoy sports during their spare time. On one hand this is a good chance to help students maintain their physical health and fitness, on the other hand it takes up a lot of the universities' resources.

"A healthy mind lives in a healthy body." This is one of the main reasons why universities invest big money into their sports facilities. A lot of research concerning the relationship between physical fitness and mental abilities come to the conclusion that a good physical condition creates a strong mental power. One must emphasize that the investment on sports facilities is worthwhile and beneficial.

The opposite opinion is that it is a waste of money and resources to invest in sports facilities for students. Many people think that students should concentrate on academic issues. It is more important to spend money on buying books and computers for libraries, because libraries provide students an essential environment for their course studies and research.

In my personal opinion, when the financial resources are limited, it is more sensible to spend money on improving research and teaching facilities like libraries and computers, which are the key issues of a successful university education. Students can always find their own ways to do physical exercises, such as utilizing the facilities in the community. Nevertheless, after satisfying all the academic needs, if there is still some money left, the money should be invested into sports facilities.

Topic 12 **Why people go to museums?**

When people travel to new places, they often choose the local museums as a must-see place. Sometimes the museums are even more attractive than the most famous place of interest. This phenomenon can be easily explained if the function of museums is taken into account. As we have known, museums can help us understand the history, the customs and the most representative arts and crafts of a place.

Different place has different history. And the most convenient way to understand the history is to visit the local museum. Last year when I traveled to Xi'an, an ancient city of China, I went to the history museum to explore the course of the city's development. With the background knowledge provided by the museum, I found that it was much easier for me to understand the city. So the museum can take away barriers between the tourists and the city by help the tourists to be familiar with the city's history history. To a tourist, the most interesting aspect of a new place is usually its customs, which can be demonstrated by the local museum. The Beijing Custom Museum vividly shows the real life, the traditions and customs of typical Beijingers. A visitor can satisfy his curiosity by learning about the origin and characteristics of the quart-yard - the traditional residential building style of Beijing. Thus, with the help of museums, tourists can have a deeper understanding of local people's life and their customs.

Every place has its own representative arts and crafts. Tourists can have the access to a wonderful show of these arts and crafts in the local museum. For example, in the town of Jing-De-Zhen, which is famous for its pottery-making, tourists can be excited by the beautiful pottery products and the complicated making process exhibited in the pottery museum. It will be a pity if a tourist missed the wonderful show of the local arts and crafts in the museum.

In a word, museums serve as a bridge between tourists and the place they visit. That is why people are so eager to visit museums when they travel to new places.

Topic 12 **Why people go to museums?**

As a tour guide for a Japanese woman in the city of Beijing three years ago, I was amazed that she would be interested in the Chinese Culture and History Museum, which even Chinese pupils does not like to visit. Museum in my eyes used to be a really boring place, which could only display items that are dull and motionless. I thought Museums were dead. Until after I traveled to some places myself did I start to realize the life of museums.

A place consists mainly of its past and present in terms of time. When you are visiting one place, the existing scenery, streets and buildings give you chances to understand its present easily. But when it comes to the past of a place, things are different. With time going by, the past is always staying in the past. Sometimes with the new constructions, a place's past can even be burnt into ashes.

In most cases, museums preserve part of the original appearance of a certain place and present plenty of information in terms of objects and pictures that one cannot obtain from the present. Only when information from the present and that from the past are combined could one obtain a relatively integrate image of the place. That is why the Japanese woman insisted that she visit the Culture and History Museum in Beijing. Like most of other cities, Skyscrapers, glass walls and the modern street scenes are all over the place in this city. The red and gray walls, the palaces and small courtyards, which were typical scenes in the past, can only be found in the vintage photographs in the museum.

Thus, visiting museums is a very effective way to understand a place's past, therefore one can get a whole picture of a place that one visits.

Topic 12 **Why people go to museums?**

It is an interesting phenomenon that, when traveling to new places they have never been to before, many people choose to visit museums. Why museums are people's common choice? Based on my personal experience and according to my observations, I think this is because museums tell people a lot about the culture of those places and provide them with entertainment.

It is easy to find out many ways to obtain knowledge about the culture of the place where people visit for the first time. You can go to a theater, a church or a nightclub. Another option is to sit in the park and watch the people around you. Among various options, visiting museums might be the most efficient way. Museums show you the history and art and those things that the locals think important, some of the exhibits might be unique in the world. On the other hand, the museums themselves are part of the landscape of a place. Many museums are designed and built based on the historical and artistic characteristics of the places where the museums are located in. The Forbidden City Museum is the most favorite tourist site because not only it contains a large variety of historical treasures and art works but also it is the representative of the Chinese history and the highest achievement of Chinese ancient architecture. As a result, people are willing to choose museums as their first destination to understand culture of the place that they visit.

Museums also give people entertainment. Even if you are not interested in art or history, there is always something to catch your attention. Many museums now have what they call "interactive" exhibits. The "interactive" activities were originally designed to keep children occupied while their parents were looking at the exhibits. However, the interesting thing is that adults are keen to these activities as well as their children. It is fascinating to create your own work of painting at an art museum or to design an appearance of a robot by yourself in a science museum. People can be really pleased through performing the "interactive" works in museums, as well as gaining related knowledge.

Both local people and visitors welcome museums because museums are an essential part of our life. They reflect our history, our art, our values, our creations and our dreams. No matter who you are and what you like, somewhere there is a museum that will amaze and interest you.

Topic 13 Do you prefer to eat out or eat at home?

Nowadays, some people like to eat at home and prepare food by themselves, but others prefer to eat out side in restaurants or at food stands. As far as I am concerned, I prefer to eat at home.

Of course there are some advantages to eat out. Firstly, restaurants offer a more comfortable environment to eat and the food there tastes more delicious than home-cooked meals. In addition, eating at restaurants is a good way of getting together with friends. People also do not need to worry about washing dishes and cleaning. For people who are too busy to cook, eating out is certainly an ideal choice. Furthermore, for people do not know how to cook and do not have some one to cook for them, eat out seems to be the only choice.

However, I prefer to cook and eat and home. The main reason is that at home, family members can prepare their meals and enjoying their food together, which can enhance their relationships. Family members can talk, make jokes and exchange feelings on current affairs with each other while preparing a meal. Parents have a chance to communicate with their kids and keep track of what they are thinking and doing; while children can learn to help with some household tasks and develop intimacy with their parents. Image that you and your brothers and sisters help your mother to cook on a weekend, and enjoy the food later on, and you feel everything is so nice.

Another reason is that eating at home can save money. The same amount of money that you spend on a meal in a restaurant can buy a lot more foods from a supermarket. You can use the money saved to buy a new cloth, or attend a concert.

General speaking, eating out side is comfortable and convenient, but eating at home has more benefits. I prefer to eat at home.

Topic 14 Should university students be required to attend classes?

The extent to what level of efficiency modern education system could perform in teaching students is always a hot topic. Among many developing suggestions that could improve learning efficiency, the necessity of attending class has been argued frequently in recent years. When it comes to whether giving students freedom of attending class as an optional choice or not, tradition has it that class is a firm part of the school life. Nevertheless, in my part, I prefer having the rights as individuals to make our own decisions about attending a class.

I believe that studying out of class does certainly save our time and make learning more comfortable. Take e-learning at home as an example: students may learn at home via "visual classes", which are powered by computer and the Internet installed at home instead of pens & paper and white board in a classroom. Being connected with professors in different locations, learners do not need to battle rush-hour traffic for going to campus. Indeed, students could do their research at home or even at a vacation hotel. With modern technology, people could choose to learn any topic no matter what they are doing - drinking, eating or even listening music, at anywhere and any time. Therefore, studying without a real class attending requirement will save our time, and offer a comfortable learning environment.

Another advantage of making class an optional choice is that people could customize their learning process according to their own interests and capabilities. While classic class leverages learning speed and depth to satisfy every student in the class as a whole, learning out of class means self-control. Students choose to attend one class because its topic is just suitable for his study plan, and discard another class because he had learned it in advance during the weekend at home. He may then accelerate his studying speed and go on to the further topics that interest him.

Admittedly, attending class at regular time has its own advantages. Students in a real class may be regulated by a teacher to concentrate on their study. Teachers, who are well trained, could also give learners professional guides and interesting demos. Moreover, some special programs such as physical exercises and experiments may only be conducted at real classes.

All in all, from what I have been discussed above, I suggest granting students rights of making their own decisions for attending classes. To make classes optional in universities will certainly bring advantages for learning and benefit the whole society.

Topic 14 Should university students be required to attend classes?

Should university students be required to attend classes? There are two different opinions. Some people claim that attending classes is a must to students. Other people, however, argue that it should be up to the students to decide whether they need to go or not. As far as I am concerned, no matter whether students like it or not, they must attend classes.

Students who do not like to go to classes have their reasons. The main one is, they can learn knowledge by themselves. If they were asked to attend the class in which the professor teaches something they already have known, it would be a pain. By not attending class, students can control their time more freely and are likely not to waste time.

Although I agree that there are maybe one or two advantages of not attending classes, I insist that the advantages of attending classes far outweigh that of not attending. In the first place, professors can teach students a lot of things that are not written in the books, such as the way of thinking. In the dictionary, a university is defined to be a place where teachers lecture what they know to students. Books normally offer just concentrated knowledge. How the authors developed their ideas and reached their conclusions is usually not written in the books. How to answer these questions? Go to the classes. The professors will not only teach you knowledge, but also teach you methodologies and answer your questions, face to face.

In the second place, students will benefit from seminars and group discussions with their classmates when they attend classes. It is a society that emphasizes on the importance of communication and listening to other people's opinions and ideas. It is very important to share your ideas and knowledge with other people. In a class, the professor often gives some topics for students to discuss. In the discussions, a student will be surprised that he/she can get so many fresh thoughts and ideas from his/her fellow students.

In conclusion, I believe that students should attend classes not only because professors can teach you knowledge and methods, but also because students can learn from each other in the classes. In short, one must attend classes if one chooses to attend university.

Topic 14 Should university students be required to attend classes?

Some people may believe that going to classes should be optional, but I really disagree with them about it. I do not understand how a university student can expect to learn much knowledge if he doesn't attend classes. Although self-study is a good way to acquire knowledge, students, I believe, need to be in class.

In classes students receive the benefit of the teacher's knowledge. A teacher does more than just going over the material in the textbooks; she draws her students into discussions that may lead further understanding of the teaching material. She not only teaches acknowledge and theories, but also presents opposing opinions that help students think and absorb what they have learned. Additionally, she may invite guest speakers to give her students extra information from another prospect, or play some documentary films on certain subject.

Besides teaching knowledge, a teacher impart her students the right method of study. In that way, the students can understand how to study efficiently, how to find information from proper resources, and how to apply what they have learned into practice. In other word, if there is no teacher to lead them to the right way, the students may go into a roundabout and waste lots of time.

The last reason for attending classes is that going to classes can train students to be more responsible and have good sense of teamwork. In classes, the students may be given some group assignments. To achieve assignments, they can know what is their respective responsibility and how to cooperate with others. Meanwhile, they can learn from each other because each student has his strong points, different background and experience.

In short, going to classes give students more knowledge, help them to become more responsible, cooperative and thoughtful. I believe that attending classes cannot be optional, but should be a essential part of university education.

Topic 15 What are the qualities of a good neighbor?

When I think about my childhood years, I my first friends come to my mind, those who were the first people besides my family I got to know, who became my friends and grew up with me. Most of them were classmates, relatives and of course, neighbors. Neighbors are those people who share the street, block and fences with us. Their existence has always been taken for granted, and they haven't been given the importance or attention that they deserve.

For some people, neighbors can mean "troublesome" or "annoyance." For others, neighbors are considered as relatives, and they enjoy having a good and close relationship with their neighbors. Of course, the opinions depend on personality of individuals, culture, type of housing (house or apartment), place (a big city, a small town, or the country) among others. But both points of view may come to an agreement when determining "what makes a good neighbor?"

In the first place, a good neighbor should be considerate. Knowing that you should treat others the way you expect to be treated is a quality that makes people respect boundaries (physical, social and emotional). For instance, a neighbor who can tell when the noise of his stereo makes may bother the people next door, and is able to turn it down taking into consideration of his neighbors' needs.

In the second place, being sympathetic is another characteristic that a neighbor should have. Putting yourself in someone else's shoes makes you understand better the feelings of somebody who is in trouble, and consequently, offer appropriate help. An example could be a situation where you know that your neighbor divorced recently and is going through a hard time. Maybe you will be more understanding when you see her in a bad mood, and avoid an unnecessary conflict, because you can see the way she feels.

Finally, good manners and a polite way to address your neighbors can polish even the toughest relationship. When a neighbor is rude, even if we excuse him or her by saying, "that's the way he/she is", we feel a little rejected. A nice smile or a "Hello" helps a lot to start a friendly conversation, and to avoid misunderstandings such as "He never speaks to me, so he must be mad at me or something." Manners do help to start friendships.

There are so many more characteristics that we could list, and there are many ways we could make a more accurate picture of the perfect neighbor we all want to have. But I guess the best way to "edify" our neighbors is by being good neighbors ourselves. We cannot demand others to do something for us that we cannot offer to do for them. We should stop complaining about what our neighbor always does that bothers us; we'd better start analyzing what we are doing to make the relationships with "the people next door" flourish. Let us start setting the example.

Topic 15 What are the qualities of a good neighbor?

Human beings are social animals. It is therefore their instinct to live together. This factor has contributed towards civilization that gave rise to splendid cities and towns. However the basic unit of all these grand cities, and for that matter any human settlement is a neighborhood. Since we are social animals, we have to interact with each other and develop social relationship. In this regard, it is imperative to develop warm convivial relationship with our neighbors. For this purpose, it is also very important to have good neighbors as neighbors play a very important role in one's life.

There are many attributes of a good neighbor. First of all, a good neighbor should be a responsible person, mindful of others' rights, which include privacy, peace and security. A good neighbor must therefore avoid unnecessary intrusions into his or her neighbors' personal matters. Also, a good neighbor must avoid practices that are likely to disturb the peace of his or her neighbors, like creating noise, organizing congregations at odd hours, indulging in altercations with them that are likely to cause tension in the neighborhood.

Secondly, a good neighbor must be caring towards others and be ready to help them in time of need. This is especially true when there is a emergency, like a fire, an earthquake or other calamities. In such a situation, neighbors are the first ones who can provide help to those unfortunate ones who have been struck with the adversity, and must do so in a selfless manner. Also there may be instances when one may have to leave his or her family, especially children at home due to unavoidable circumstances. In such a situation a good neighbor is required to take care of their needs and help them in all ways possible.

There may be cases where there are neighbors who are not financially well off. In such cases a good neighbor is required to be helpful towards the unfortunate ones in all possible ways, like sharing one's food with them, or providing them with gifts.

It is said that one has the liberty to choose friends but one may not have the luxury to choose neighbors. Having good neighbors is thus a blessing and one must value good neighbors, while trying to be good neighbors towards them.

Topic 15 What are the qualities of a good neighbor?

Neighbors are the people who live near us, and their behavior influences our daily life. Good neighbors can make us feel comfortable and give us many help, and everyone will benefit from a good relationship among neighbors. In my point of view, these are three conspicuous aspects of the qualities of a good neighbor.

One of the most important characteristics of good neighbors is that they have a good living habit and are friendly to others. A person with bad habit will affect your daily life. For example, children are most likely to be influenced by bad neighbors and carry on bad habits. On the other hand, being friendly is also an important nature of good neighbors. If neighbors are unfriendly, they are hard to approach and difficult to get along with.

Another important aspect of good neighbors is that they should be willing to help others. In our daily life, emergency situations may happen, and we may encounter difficulties that cannot be resolved by ourselves. At this time, the quickest help we can get is probably from our neighbors. To some degree, neighbors are as important as relatives to us, because they could provide the immediate help. In the same way, a neighbor who likes to help others will get help in return. Help each others can form a friendly and harmonious relationship among the neighbors.

All in all, a good neighbor is someone who has a good living habit, is friendly and is willing to help others. Taking into account of all these factors, we may reach the conclusion that a good relationship among neighbors need the maintenance from us.

Topic 15 What are the qualities of a good neighbor?

Speaking of the word 'neighbor', it arouses different responses among people. Some people may frown upon it, others might nod their heads at it with their whole-hearted smile on their faces. No matter which category you belong to, as a person, especially as a person who has to live next to a neighbor, the concern on the qualities of a good neighbor is always a popular issue to bring about and to desire for. In my opinion, a good neighbor must be a friendly person, while at the same time, a person who is willing to offer help to you when you need the most.

As an important and fundamental quality of a good neighbor, she or he must be kind and nice. Neighbors are those persons we meet in every day life when we go in and out of the building. They are usually the people we meet at the very beginning of the day, and whom again we will encounter at the end of the day. A nice and sincere smile on their faces, or a simple 'hello' as a warm greeting on the way, may bring us a joyful mood for a start of a day. In a very same way, a caring 'how was your day?' on your way home might be treated as a big comfort on your tiredness at the end of your working day. As nice neighbors, they have provided us a very cordial living environment through their care and friendship.

Other than that, being able to help you out when it is necessary is also considered as a significant trait of a good neighbor. Through our entire lives, there are numerous difficulties or troublesome situations that we have to deal with. When those particular moments come into life, the first person come into our mind is often our best friend or one of the relatives. However, most of the time, they cannot be the real person who we can rely on at those hard times. We will soon realize they are either too far away or they are unavailable right now. We all have once had these similar experiences. Then here is the moment where good neighbors should begin to play their helpful roles so that we can immediately turn to them for help and useful advice for dealing and solving the emergency, and so that we do not have to lose our minds in trying to find everyone's phone number.

These are the precious and indispensable qualities of good neighbors. They are friendly and nice, and they will always be there ready for you when you need someone's help. Living with such a neighbor, you may start to sway at your old image of neighbor, and you may no longer frown upon that topic at the time we talk about it.

Topic 15 **Qualities of a good neighbor**

It seems, among so many qualities such as reliability, honesty, helpfulness, and patience, very difficult to prefer one to another because each of them has its unique advantages. Yet that does not mean that they are of the same weight to me. To be frank, I would prefer reliability and helpfulness.

Why I vote for reliability? I stand behind it because I can trust my neighbors only if they are reliable people. That makes me feel safe to associate with them. Imagine if your neighbor is not reliable, will you put your worries to rest to let your neighbor look after your children even when she offers to do so? Do you dare leave your key to your neighbor when she says she will keep it for you? Will you lend your car to her when your neighbor promises that she will return it within two hours? Obviously, reliability is not only a quality of a good neighbor, but also a quality of a good person, and it is the foundation of a good relationship.

Being helpful is another quality that I have chosen to illustrate here. A neighbor should be kind and helpful, because they live close to you, and you never know when you might need help. For example, when you go for a vacation, your neighbor can help you water the plants, and pick up the mail. It is always good when you know that if something happens, your neighbor is there to help.

Of course, other qualities such as honesty and patience are also important to some extent, but everybody has his or her own preferences. I chose reliability and helpfulness as the qualities of a good neighbor because reliability helps us develop a good relationship and helpfulness keeps the relationship remaining for a long time.

Topic 16 Should a new restaurant be built in your neighborhood?

What do you think if there will be a restaurant built near your neighborhood? People may have different opinions. Some people will be against it because of too much noise, potential pollution, etc. Other people, however, will welcome it very much. As far as I am concerned, I like to have a restaurant built in my neighborhood.

In the first place, a restaurant will make my daily life more convenient. As we know, cooking is a very important thing in people's life and it is also very time-consuming. When I come home from work and feel tired, I normally want to eat out. If a restaurant is very far away from my house, I have to give up that idea because I do not want to waste my time and energy on the road. As a result, I have to cook myself. What a pain! If there is a restaurant nearby, it will make a difference. What I need to do is to take a leisure walk to the restaurant, sit down, make an order, enjoy my dinner and then, the most important thing, and leave without cleaning the mess.

In the second place, I have another good place to meet my friends. Sometimes, meeting friends at home is tedious, especially meeting some friends that I am not very familiar with. If there is a restaurant nearby, I can invite them to go to the restaurant. While drinking and eating, we will have more topics to talk about. And the beautiful environment of the restaurant will make the talk more pleasant.

In addition, I can make more friends in the restaurant. A restaurant the best place to meet new people if you are not shy. If the restaurant is just within walking distance of my home, I will be there more frequently and have more chances to know more people.

In conclusion, I will support the plan of building a restaurant near my home not only because a restaurant can make my life more convenient, but also because it can be a ideal place to meet friends.

Topic 16 Should a new restaurant be built in your neighborhood?

A new restaurant in my neighborhood would be the most exciting event for me. I personally have positive feelings towards this proposal and also believe that the people of my neighborhood shall also feel excited about such an event.

Life in the fast lane today has turned out to be so hectic and tedious to us that at times we feel exhausted and therefore unwilling to prepare our food. We also feel a strong urge towards a change in the type and flavor of food that we eat. A new restaurant at such times near by shall make a difference to our lives.

In occasions of happiness, get-togethers and enjoyment, having a restaurant nearby is always a convenience for people here. For example, the restaurant can be a convenient place to hold a wedding reception, or a birthday ceremony.

A new restaurant shall certainly add lots of enthusiasms and excitements to people here and people who have the greatest amount of enjoyment would be the younger people. They can relax in a new environment with the experience of a new atmosphere and people around and most of all, tasting something new. On the other hand, a new restaurant in our neighborhood gives hope to young people who would like to make money through a part time or full time job.

In conclusion, a new restaurant will bring convenience to our community. So I personally welcome such a plan.

Topic 17 Do you learn better by yourself or with a teacher?

Some people prefer to learn by themselves. They think they can learn better in this way because they have more freedom, independence, and pressure in their self-study. There is some truth in their way, but they fail to see the many advantage of learning with a teacher. Especially, when you learn something more complicated, it is always best to have a teacher. My arguments for this point are listed as follows.

First, a teacher can act as a guide to lead you to success. When you grope for knowledge, you need help and advice. A teacher, who treats you as if you were his own child, will give you a hand when you encounter difficulties; he will render his advice when you are in a dilemma. Without a guide, you would be searching in darkness without a torch to light the way for you.

What is more, a teacher exerts real pressure on you. If you study by yourself, you must be strong-minded enough to keep on. You may become indolent for lack of a strong will. Studying under the guidance of a teacher, however, you will feel there is always someone to supervise you. The teacher may assign you some books to read or some homework to do. You must complete the assignments, or you will not pass the course. You are urged to go no by your teacher.

Last but not least, studying with a teacher will receive the benefit of the teacher's knowledge. In class, the best teachers do more than just go over the material in the textbook. They teach students how to learn, how to absorb information and then apply what you have learned to other situations. They guide all of you on classroom to develop discussion of the material and provide extra materials to broaden the scope of the topic. Without the help of teacher, it is nearly impossible to get these skills just by reading the textbook yourself.

In short, I prefer go to class, studying with teacher to guide and urge me. I choose to learn in a big family—my school. If I was obliged to learn by myself without a teacher or classmates, I would feel very sad and lonely. There would be no fun, no pressure, and no motivation. I could not learn well in such dull and depressing circumstances.

Topic 17 Do you learn better by yourself or with a teacher?

Learning is a lifelong theme of every person. How brilliant your achievement will be to some degree depends on whether you can learn anything efficiently or not. Some people prefer to learn by themselves. They think that they can learn better in this way because they have more freedom, independence, and less pressure in their self-paced study. There is some truth in it, but they fail to see the many advantages of learning with a teacher. As far as I am concerned, I would like to learn with a teacher.

Firstly, when you are a beginner to a new subject, a teacher is able to provide you with a lot of fundamental knowledge, which is ready to become a solid basis for your later knowledge system. As we all know, entering a brand new area of knowledge usually demands sharp altering of minds and a gradual accumulation of new information. Without a teacher as a guide, you could still march along this road but at the cost of large amount of time and unpleasant experience. However, equipped with a certain amount of basic knowledge, which resembles a map, you will easily steer clear the obstacles barring on the beginning of your long journey. And that knowledge is what a teacher will help you gain without troubles.

Secondly, The storage of concrete knowledge is one matter, while understanding how to learn a certain subject of knowledge is another. As many students confess, it usually takes them quite a long time to find a way of learning suitable to a special subject. Again, a competent teacher is the key to this problem. The teacher will equip the students with some insightful views over the whole subject and much rewarding experience in overcoming difficulties of the subject. For example, a teacher of a Computer Programming Language will certainly let you know lots of rules in programming that is probably hard to accumulate by yourself.

Some people may argue that to learn with a teacher will lose some kind of freedom. For instance, heavy load of assignments will eat up too much time. But a good teacher will take control over such assignment so that the load is only sufficient for students to strengthen what they have learned. It seems that this turns out to be another advantage of a teacher.

In short, I prefer go to class, studying with teacher to guide and urge me. I choose to learn in a big family - my school. If I was obliged to learn by myself without a teacher or classmates, I would feel very sad and lonely. There would be no fun, no pressure, and no motivation. I could not learn well in such dull and depressing circumstances.

Topic 18 **Important qualities of a good supervisor**

Though everyone will work in different places such as a company, a college or university, a factory and so on, I think there are the same standards judging a good supervisor in several aspects.

Firstly, a good supervisor treats his/her staff fairly. He knows how to balance the workload. He will not let some members of his staff do many things while others only do a few things. If he gives you a task, he will tell you in advance. Moreover, he will not ask you complete a project in a few days that actually needs half a month to do. A poor supervisor never considers his employee's feelings. A poor supervisor is usually not a good planner, so he is very nervous when a project comes to its deadline, and he will use his fault to punish his staff. A supervisor like this would certainly not benefit the company.

Secondly, a good supervisor praises or criticizes in a straightforward way. If you do very well, he will praise you, and encourage you to do better. If you have made a mistake, he will criticize you face to face, and he will not complain to your co-workers. He will also analyze how to improve your work and point out the ways to do thing right. Furthermore, he will encourage you and trust that you will do well next time.

Thirdly, a good supervisor cares for his staff. He is aware of your feelings and emotions. When you are sick, he will send you flowers or visit you, or he will arrange other members of staff to see you if he is busy. He treats his staff like family members. He is gentle and cheerful. Smile often appears on his face when he greets you. On the contrary, a poor supervisor often pretends to be serious. He never understands what his subordinates are thinking. His staff will never have a good mood when he is present at work.

Finally, a good supervisor must set a good example to his staff. He must work hard, and has a strong sense of responsibility about his company. He must understand the operation of the company, and can do every staff's job in his department when necessary. That way he will win respect from his staff and his spirit can motivate them.

In short, a good supervisor treats his workers fairly, cares for their feelings, treat them as family members, and set a good example for them.

Topic 18 **Important qualities of a good supervisor**

When asked what are the important qualities of a supervisor, different people hold different perspectives, due to their different experiences. After pondering this question on many occasions, I sum up three vital qualities that a supervisor or a boss should possess.

In my understanding, the most essential trait of a boss is that he or she should be able to do what is required of his or her subordinates. As an English proverb says, "Example is better than precept." If a boss wants the employees to be hardworking, he or she should be diligent himself or herself. The dean of my department, for example, is a very conscientious man. He is never late in the morning and never leaves earlier than the rest of the staff. By setting himself as a good example, he teaches us what is a right attitude to work.

Another crucial feature of a boss is communication skills. The duty of a boss is to give instructions and directions to his or her employees. If the purpose and the means are not clearly explained, people may feel at loss as to what to do. Again, our dean is an expert in explaining a task. He usually not only lets us know what and how we should do, he also stirs up our interest and enthusiasm in the job to be done.

The last but not the least vital feature of a boss is that he or she should be an understanding or considerate person. If an employee made a mistake, the boss should not rush to criticize him or her. Instead, the boss should first figure out the reasons behind the wrong deed. By saying that, I do not mean that a boss should always be lenient. What I mean is that a boss should consider himself or herself equal to the employ as a human being. In that case, both parties can reach an understanding on the basis of mutual respect.

In short, a supervisor should be a person who is self-disciplined, expressive and considerate and who does not deem him or herself a superior being to others.

Topic 19 Highways or public transportation?

Transportation is among the most important factors affecting the living conditions of people in the society. A prosper transportation system has different components, among which the roles of public transportation facilities, highways and roads are prominent. But if a government finds itself in the stage of defining its priorities in transportation, should it place higher importance on public transportation facilities, or should it prefer to invest more on highways and roads? There are many advantages in investing on roads and highways, however these advantages cannot surpass the advantages of investing on public transportation systems.

The most important advantages of investment on roads and highways include higher potential for the transportation of goods, reduction in costs pertaining to problems caused by low-quality roads, and notable effect on the thriving of the whole region and country. If a government invests on roads and highways, the quality and quantity of roads and highways will increase, so that the potential of the region for transportation of goods will be improved which will result in booming of the economy and higher income for the government. Furthermore, problems such as accidents, and gradual damages to vehicles that are caused by low-quality roads and highways will be reduced. So, the roads and highways will be safer and fewer damages will be caused on drivers. Finally, a country with vast number of high-quality roads and highways is more apt to prosperity. Because there will be more opportunities for the people of the country to have access to various resources. If the system is organized and managed well, it can lead to greater development.

However there are also many advantages in investment on public transportation facilities. A well-designed and managed public transportation system can eliminate traffic congestions in cities. Less traffic problem means the less air and noise pollutions, and can provide society with more physically and mentally healthy people. In addition, prosperous public transportation can save lots of our valuable time that otherwise is usually wasted in heavy traffic. Prosperous public transportation can also lower the huge amount of costs consumed on private vehicles including fuel, service and insurance costs. This saved money due to a good public transportation system can compensate the money spent on public transportation facilities. Finally, public transportation will increase people's contact with each other, while private cars may to some extent isolate them from the society.

In conclusion, although there are many advantages in investing on roads and highways, there are more advantages in investing on public transportation. So, government should consider public transportation as its first priority in any transportation investments.

Topic 19 Highways or public transportation?

In this modern society, governments always confront the dilemma whether spending more money on improving roads and highways or on improving public transportation. This problem is a much-debated one in that it affects everybody in his or her daily life. Personally speaking, I would be one of those who argue that governments should spend more money on improving public transportation.

Though it is quite rational for average people to choose roads and highways because of the obvious reason that a better road condition could suspend more vehicles and accelerate the speed of them. A close scrutiny of the potential benefits of choosing roads and highways would reveal how flimsy it is to stick to the propensity. A better road condition would bring with it more vehicles, thus a much more crowded traffic. Have you ever been caught in a traffic jam? Then how could just spending more money on improving roads and highways do?

Besides, putting the discussion in a wider context, a further reason why I advocate the latter lies in the fact that improvement of road condition would stimulate more people to use cars and hence more energy would be used and more pollution would be exposed. This would be the last thing that everyone would like to see. But if we choose to improve public transportation, a quite different result could be. This can be demonstrated by the undeniable fact of our city. We have greatly improved the bus network and reduced the parking places since several years ago. Now more and more people shift from cars to buses and other public transportation, and an azure sky can be highly savored again.

Finally, frankly speaking, there is also a more practical reason why I choose to improve public transportations. Public transportation encourages a sense of community. People who travel to work together all the time get to know each other better while cars isolate us from neighbors. An improvement in public transportation would make it fit more people's schedules and more people would choose to take public transportation to enjoy communicating with each other.

When taking into account all these merits and drawbacks I have numerated, we may safely arrived at the conclusion that we should put more money and concerns more about public transportation. We would experience more convenience when traveling as well as an appreciable nature environment.

Topic 20 Should children grow up in the countryside or in a city?

There are advantages and disadvantages for a child to grow up in the country or in a city. It's hard to say which is better. Growing up in the country means a certain degree of isolation. You're in a small town or on a farm with few people. In addition, the people you meet everyday tend to be just like you. Most have the same background with you, and go to the same schools with you. In the city, people you meet are all different. People come from different culture backgrounds.

City people tend to come from a lot of different places and move around a lot. So, there is not a sense of community in the city like what you have in the country. People in the city can live in the same apartment building for twenty years even without getting to know each other. In the country, however, everybody knows everybody. A child can get lost or hurt in the city and have no one to turn to. In the country, everyone is a neighbor, and people feel connected to each other.

A child growing up in the city has a lot of interesting and exciting places to visit. He or she can go to a zoo, museums, art galleries and concerts. There are a lot of restaurants with different kinds of cuisines. It's easy to see new movies that come out. Children in the country don't have a lot of these activities to go to.

To my opinion, a childhood in the city is better because it prepares a child more for what real life is like.

Topic 20 Should children grow up in the countryside or in a city?

Where is a better place for children to grow up, the countryside or the big city? The answer to this question differs from individual to individual. As far as I am concerned, it is better for children to grow up in a big city.

Some people argue that the countryside is an ideal place for children to grow up. For one thing, it is less polluted than the city. The air is fresh in the countryside. The sky is bluer and the water is clearer. Living in such a place is good to the children's health. For another, as children like playing, only the countryside can offer them a big playground. They can run everywhere, play games in the fields, swim in the river. On the contrary, the city cannot provide such places for children. They can only stay at home and watch TV.

Although I do agree that growing up in the countryside has one or more advantages, I insist that it is far better to choose the city as the right place for children. To begin with, living in the city can broaden children's horizons. They can meet a lot of people and hear a lot of things that will never happen in the countryside.

In addition, a city means more chance to receive better education. In most countries, it is no doubt that the level of education in the city is higher than that of the country. As a result, children can meet better teachers and receive high quality of education in the city.

Last but not least, children can also develop many hobbies in the city. They can learn to play the piano, painting, and dancing, to name a few, which are impossible in the country.

In conclusion, I believe that it is better for children to grow up in the city not only because it can broaden their horizons, but also because they can receive better education and have a chance to develop many hobbies there.

Topic 20 Should children grow up in the countryside or in a city?

I think that it is better for children to grow up in a big city because living there and getting use to it will prepare them for the real life. Living in the countryside, for instance, in small towns or villages may prevent children from fitting into the society.

As a child born in the countryside (in a small town) I thought life is wonderful and people are always kind as they were in my hometown. When I grew up and I had to think about my further education. The best alternative was to go to study in a language school in a big city fifty kilometers away from my town. The school I chose was a leading institution in the whole country. It was a great opportunity for me to meet new people and to get better education.

I arrived for the school opening day. Everything was absolutely perfect. I met my new classmates and they were great. In a few weeks I understood that life was not as ideal as I thought it was. Students in the school were competing with each other for being the first in everything. It was strange for me and I was drowning in the puddle of cruelty and selfishness. My grades were not as good as these of the other students in my class and at the end of the first semester the headmaster informed me that if I did not improve my grades during the second semester I would be suspended from school.

The idea of being suspended was an unacceptable one. I could not let it happen. I became like my class-fellows - brutal and egotistical. The fight for the first places in the school's rank list was merciless. At the end of the academic year I was ranked number 5 (five) of one thousand students in the school.

Today I am at eleventh grade and I am still one of the best disciples in the school. I realize that now I can afford dreaming. For example, now I want to get a university degree in the United States and I have real chances to be admitted.

However, before I came out from my hometown I did not even think of such fundamental things. It was just an issue regarding the geniuses, not me. But now I can say that I am ready to face the challenges of real life and no difficulties can deter me because this big city taught me how to overcome obstacles and to be one of the best.

Topic 20 Should children grow up in the countryside or in a city?

Nowadays, technological development is directed to such people-crowded places such as big cities, resulting in significant differences of lifestyles between people living in the town and in the countryside. It is said that big cities are no longer suitable for bringing up children. In my point of view, I strongly agree that children should grow up in the countryside. Being close to nature, children in the countryside are likely to improve both physical and mental behaviors better than those who are in the city. In the rural areas, children are endowed with real nature that affects to the development of children.

First, fresh air in the countryside provides children with good health. Research has it that more and more children in the town nowadays are exposed to allergy on account of pollution from both vehicles and factories. On the other hand, children living far away from any high technologies are liable to be much healthier. Polluted air is a main cause to destroy the health of everybody, especially children.

Another benefit of living in the countryside is that a majority of children spend their free time wisely. After coming back from school or during vacations, most of the city-dwelling children waste their time by watching TV or playing video games. Big cities have limited areas and hardly furnish people in the communities with public places for relaxing such as park and playgrounds. Therefore children in the cities are limited to conducting useless or even harmful activities. In contrast, rural children devote their leisure time playing with others in large open fields or helping their parents look after their cattle. As a result, not only be rural children so strong from everyday exercise, but they also spend their time in a meaningful way by helping their parents do some work.

Finally, children in the countryside may become more considerate man than those who are in the big city. In the cities, there are very high rate of rivalry.

Topic 21 **Why are people living longer?**

It is a common phenomenon and an indisputable fact that people are living longer now. There are many reasons of this phenomenon. Generally speaking, it is due to the better living conditions people enjoy, the improved medical treatment people receive, and the healthier lifestyle people adopt.

With the development of science and technology, people's living conditions have been improved considerably. They have foods sufficient enough to keep them alive, clothes warm enough to protect them against cold, and houses strong enough to shelter them from danger. Hunger, cold, and danger no longer threaten the lives of the human beings. When facing with nature disasters, people can use all available means to survive.

To human beings, diseases may well be another killer. They took away lives of a large number of people, some being very young. But things are quite different today. The quality of medical care has been improved. Doctors know more now about what causes diseases and how to cure them. Many diseases that were used to be incurable can be cured now. Patients who get timely and effective treatments may recover in a couple of months, or even weeks. It is estimated that today's deaths are mostly caused by unexpected accidents.

In ancient times, people did not care much about their way of living for lack of knowledge and shortage of daily necessities. Now, thanks to the progress men has made and the civilization men has built, the present-day people can afford time, money, and energy to consider their living habits and lifestyles. They are eagerly seeking healthier ways of life to live longer, such as giving up smoking, doing physical exercise, and eating low-fat foods such as vegetables and fruits, which are now available year-round.

It is announced by scientists and doctors that human life expectancy will be extended to over 150 years. Men and women of longevity, say 100 years old, are increasing in number. Senior citizens already dominate many cities in developed countries. Although it may present some problems, living longer is a blessing to human beings.

Topic 21 Why are people living longer?

With the development of human society, people are living longer now. Many factors interact together to enable a longer life. There are three most important causes: the quality of food has been greatly improved; people could have access to medical services; more and more people realize that regular sports benefit their health.

The improving quality of our food is the most important factor of the longer life. We could have not only enough food as we want, but also more healthier food. When we preparing food, we no longer consider the cost, but pay more attention to the nutritious value of the food. With the development of transportation systems, inland people now could also enjoy seafood and tropical fruit.

Furthermore, governments are paying more and more money on medical establishments. Citizens could have access to medical services more easily. Because of the convenient medical service, more illnesses could be detected at an earlier stage. Also, many illnesses that had been considered fatal could be cured today. The better detection and cure enable people's longer life.

Last but not least, people care more for their own health. Every morning you could see people doing sports outside. More and more people have realized the saying "life is in motion." Regular sports build up a strong body. Naturally, people with stronger body could resist more diseases.

To sum up, the development of our society ensures that people have longer life. People now enjoy better food and better medical services, and they spend more time on sports and exercises to build up stronger bodies. As we could predict, people are going to live even longer in the future.

Topic 22 **Important qualities of a co-worker**

We spend more time with our co-workers during weekdays than we do with our family. Thus, it's important for our co-workers to be the people we can get along with. In my opinion, there are certain characteristics that all good co-workers have in common. They are cooperative, considerate and humorous.

We no longer observe now a time that worships individual merits with great enthusiasm. Everyone should cooperate with each other. Teamwork is curial to a business. A good co-worker is willing to contribute to the office community and not too stubborn to accept advice. He realizes the fact that if one's work is left not done in time, it may hold up everyone else.

Besides, a good co-worker is very considerate. He may change his own schedule to accommodate another's emergency. He may be a sympathetic listener, comforting others when they are miserable.

What is more, a good co-worker should have a sense of humor. His positive attitude may create a pleasant environment. When we are under the great stress of work, what we need most is not a delicious meal but merely a few good jokes to relax our nerve cells.

What I have listed is not the complete set of characters of a good co-worker, however, we can feel how comfortable it is to get along with a good co-worker. Being a good co-worker is not difficult but really very necessary. Such experience of being a good co-worker will definitely contribute to other aspects of life such as friendship and a healthy lifestyle.

Topic 23 Should teenagers work while they are students?

In some countries, teenagers have jobs while they are still students. After thinking about it from several aspects, I do not believe it is a good idea. The reasons are presented below.

Part-time jobs may affect students' academic studies. Working several hours a day consumes a lot of time and one might be too exhausted to study. The main purpose of school life for teenagers is to learn scientific knowledge and techniques in preparation for their future. It is generally suggested that in order to master what they have learned at school, students must spend at least 3 hours each day on their homework. It would be impossible for a student to work part-time while maintaining a high standard of academic learning. As a result, they may find it hard to adjust to what the school and society expects from them as well as what their employers expect them to perform on the job.

Another reason why I do not approve teenagers to work part-time is that working while studying will deprive their time of sleep and will do harm to their health. Teenagers are in the process of building up their body. They need time to do exercises and engage in other activities, and they also need plenty of rest. If they work, they may sacrifice their time for sleep, club activities, exercise, and recreation. Sometimes, teenagers have jobs that consume more strength than they can afford. This will be definitely harmful to their health.

Finally, working part-time and making extra money may contribute to their bad habits. Teenagers are not mature enough to spend money wisely. However with part-time jobs they make money that allow them to spend whatever way they like, such as playing electronic games, smoking, drinking, and even gambling.

Based on the above discussion, I do not think it is a good idea for teenagers to work while they are still students. Compared with their whole lifetime, school life is a short period. Teenagers should value their school life and make full use of the time. Only by working hard during school life can they find their proper jobs in their future life.

Topic 24 **The advantages about living in my city**

It is almost always the case that a person who has been living in a rural area for a while confronts certain conveniences and inconveniences of living in a city. One convenience is the number and diversity of stores and shops available in a short distance in a city. A big inconvenience is the traffic congestion that takes place in many places.

One big thing I remind my foreign friend who is planning to move to my city is that there is cultural diversity, or even conflicts. My friend is an international student from Japan who is living in a small town in California. As a foreigner, he confronts with cultures of local people everyday. On the other hand he realizes that there are few stores and restaurants that are native to his culture. It is very normal that such a person gets homesick and starts missing people and foodstuffs from his own country. Moving to a big city will satisfy such needs of him because there are many stores, restaurants, and supermarkets that are run by Japanese companies so he will less likely to be homesick any more.

However, there is one big inconvenience about living in a city, which is traffic. Especially people who drive often feel stressed on the streets that are always packed with cars lining up in the streets. It is always difficult to find parking spots either in the parking lots or on the street. Furthermore, apartments do not always provide sufficient parking spots to their residents. A lot of people who live in city feel less convenient to keep cars and choose to use public transportation. However, unfortunately, the public transportation system is not perfectly great around my neighborhood.

My city satisfies and dissatisfies my foreign friend who drives. The availability of stores and shops that are native to his country soothes his dissatisfaction about being surrounded by different cultures. However, on the other hand, traffic jam that is always the problem in big cities gives new stress that he is currently free from. It is a matter of balance between the two features that he needs to settle in.

Topic 25 Does the neighborhood need a new shopping center?

There are both advantages and disadvantages of establishing a shopping mall in our neighborhood. I am worried about the traffic and how it will affect our community. However, I believe it will benefit local businesses and increase appreciations for our local area. Overall, I think it is a good idea.

For those that I am worried about, traffic congestion and parking problem are obvious. First of all, traffic congestion is always a concern when building something new. Our streets are narrow, with parking on both sides. A shopping center will certainly bring more traffic than ever before, and heavy traffic means big congestion. At the same time, parking is also a problem in this area. There are few garages attached to houses. Most of residents depend on finding spaces on the street for parking. If a shopping mall is built, we must compete with customers and patrons for those parking spaces. Furthermore, if the shopping center offers valet parking service, it would be even worse because valet parking works in terms to grab every possible space available in street.

On the other hand, building up a shopping center will give this neighborhood more opportunities and benefits. Residents in this area could certainly take the job that shopping center offers. People would earn more money and spend on other businesses, such as entertainment and education, which are operating in our neighborhood or adjacent communities. As a result, not only local businesses but also inter-community businesses are boosted up and a prodigious amount of fortune will be accumulated to our neighborhood. A shopping center can also attract people to visit our community. When they drive to the shopping center, they will see what a nice place this area is to live. Therefore, we would have an increasing number of residents in the next couple of years. It is very important to introduce new population because we have lost many residents to suburbs during recent years.

In a short, there are several details to consider when planning a shopping center. In my part, I support to have a new shopping center in my community because its advantages outweigh disadvantages.

Topic 26 Should a new movie theater be built in your neighborhood?

There will be a hectic debate about whether to build a new movie theater near our region or not. Building a new movie theater will cause some problems such as traffic jams, noises, pollution, but based on the specific case and environment near our community, my point of view is to bolster the scheme.

Living in a small town far from the prosperous city, people in our community always complain about the boring life during the weekends. If we wish to entertain ourselves with some new movies, we have to drive all the way to a theater far away. Although digital cable and satellite TVs are available, they cannot totally replace the enjoyment that a movie theater brings. So it is not surprising that many people including me support the plan.

Besides, a new movie theater will provide more career opportunities. The theater has to employ people to work in it. In the meantime, some new restaurants and shopping centers will be built around the theater for people to eat and shop before or after they see movies. All those new commercial facilities will offer more job opportunities to people hunting for jobs during the economic depression.

The final aspect that makes the choice reasonable is that a new movie theater can encourage people to go outside rather than watching senseless TV programs all night. People will meet each other, and exchange information and ideas. People can use the new movie theater as a place to communicate and socialize with each other.

From what we have been discussed above, we may safely draw the conclusion that it is positive to build a new movie theater in our neighborhood.

Topic 26 Should a new movie theater be built in your neighborhood?

Some people will say that a new movie theater in our neighborhood would be a bad thing. However, I fully support the plan to build one. I feel that a movie theater would bring more opportunities for recreation, reduce teenage delinquency, and lead to several improvement in the town.

As it stands there is little to do in my town. There are no parks here, and there is certainly no nightlife. Additionally, the nearest movie theater is more than thirty minutes drive away. That is inconvenient for anyone here. Many movies end late at night. Who wants a long drive at 11:30 p. m. or midnight? A new movie theatre near our homes will certainly welcomed by people living here.

Building a new movie theater here will reduce juvenile delinquencies. Like every one else, teens here are bored. They need activities to keep them busy and out of troubles. The jobs that the theater will provide will help teens, too. We also need more businesses that are willing and eager to employ young people.

Overall, the new theater will bring many improvements to the town. For example, it will help other business. The movie theater will attract customers from neighboring towns. Those neighbors do not have a reason to come to this town now. However, if they are coming here for a movie, they will be more likely to spend time and money here. If we get more visitors, we will need more roads. While this may be costly, it will also make travel easier for people living here. We will be able to get around faster. Safety will be improved with the new roads, because they will be in better conditions than many that we have now.

I believe that our town needs a new movie theater. Again, I support it fully. I hope that others in our community will join me to convince residents and local government.

Topic 27 Should people do things that they do not like?

When it comes to the topic should people sometimes do things that they do not enjoy doing, optimistic and pessimistic people have different attitudes toward this topic. For me, a person who likes changes a little, I would prefer to do some different things sometimes even if I do not like them. There are many reasons why I should sometimes do things they do not enjoy doing.

The first reason is that I could get more experiences from the things I am doing, no matter I enjoy it or not. There are pros and cons for every experience. What I learned from doing something I dislike is to conquer the similar situation and take the advantage of good changes I may encounter again in the future. In addition, I will see such a disagreeable thing as diversity to my routine life.

Secondly, many things which I do not enjoying doing can actually do well to me. For example, I do not like to sweat because it makes me uncomfortable with those sticky clothes and bad smell. But for exercise, the activity will cause me to sweat, surely keep me in good shape and benefit my health. Besides, I feel happy whenever I see my figure become more slender. Moreover, Overcoming displeased things gives me a sense of achievement.

All in all, it is not bad for me to do something I do not enjoy doing. Therefore, I agree that people should sometimes do things that they do not enjoy doing.

Topic 27 Should people do things that they do not like?

Should people sometimes do things that they do not enjoy doing? Many people strongly oppose this idea, while others insist that although people naturally favor doing what they enjoy doing, under certain circumstances people may well be advised to act against their interests and it would benefit people in many ways. Personally, I would side with the latter.

For one thing, it usually takes quite some time for people to discover their interest. My personal experience serves as a typical example. From my childhood, I learned a lot of time to discover my interest. I tried to play an electronic organ, draw oil paintings, and even learn ballet. Superficially, it seems to be a sound solution to find out what my interest is, but when carefully weighing in the mind, I find that it has wasted me plenty of time. A scrutiny of these arguments would reveal how unnecessary they are.

For another, many things that people instinctively hate to do will actually benefit them in the long run. A basketball star's personal experience is a good example. He likes running when he was a child. When he was in high school, he joined the track and field team. By a chance, he met a basketball coach and was asked if he wanted to become an occupational basketball player. Although he was not interested in playing basketball, nevertheless, his parents told him that doing something he hated to do might change his whole life in a good way. By taking the advice of his parents, he went to the basketball team and now he turned out be extremely successes! For another example, we are not always interested to move to different places. In fact, we will have more opportunities of improving our lives by moving around. As President Kennedy pointed out, "Change is the law of life, and those who look only to the past or the present are certain to miss the future."

Still some people might list other reasons to explain why people should do some things that they do not enjoy doing. However I assume the points I have discussed in the above analysis are the most relevant!

Topic 28 **Has the media paid too much attention to celebrities?**

In this global information age where newspapers or magazines are always handy and TV has already turned so many people into couch potatoes, few people concern about what these mass media has brought to us; we just accept it anyway. While I think the current focus on personal lives of famous people by these media requires further consideration.

Admittedly, it is reasonable for those media to continuously pay great attention to celebrities, the present fierce competition of the various media, the hard-to-pleased audiences' taste, the bombastic effect of coverage of these shining figures. No surprise sometimes that we feel we just know more than those famous people than themselves.

However, the consequence of such intense coverage on public figures' personal lives not only violate those being-focused on a certain level, but also do harm to us being-informed in some ways. Firstly, the privacy of those celebrities is ineluctably encroached from time to time. Sometimes the result is sad - do not forget the tragedy of Princess Diana. Secondly, our attention is certainly being diverted by such tide of craziness about celebrities. What about those viewers who want to see something about ordinary people' lives? How can mass media not concern more about those people suffering from pain and poverty?

Furthermore, one of the significant results of the current fad on famous figures is that their behavior is so influential while at the same time the media have little guarantee to ensure what they say and do will not mislead the mass public and even cause more problems. For example, if a famous figure is being asked about his or her point of view in a field he or she is not quite acquainted, the words presented to the audience may be misleading. This is especially harmful to those young people who are more likely to watch those programs of their idols, and also are mostly vulnerable to influential but harmful sayings.

In a sense, I don't quite appreciate the coverage of people in the center of spotlight, maybe once the mass media turn a little bit from their current focus to other aspects of the society, they may find out that the world is wonderful all the same.

Topic 28 Has the media paid too much attention to celebrities?

With the prosperity of both science and culture, people are accustomed with an abundant supply of information. Modern media, such as television, newspapers magazines, reinforce our accesses to news and information of all kinds, the most prevalent t of which are those about public figures and celebrities. Now there is a growing awareness that media now pay too much attention to the personal lives of famous people. As far as I am concerned, I cannot agree more with the statement and my point of view is well founded.

Nowhere in the history has the condition been more visible that reports about famous people, like music stars, movie actors/actresses and sports figures are easily available and unusually in details. When we turn on the TV, we may be led to the new apartment of a fashion star; when we glance at the paper, we may see dim pictures of an actress and her new boyfriend; especially when we get online, it is almost impossible for us to get ride of the latest affairs of a talented football player. It seems that the personal lives of public figures weigh much more important than the contributions they make to the society. All those absurd attention paid to their privacy is a waste of resources and degradation of public interest.

Another equally important aspect is that most of reports on lives of famous people are always focused on brilliant achievements and extravagant enjoyment, which overstate the gorgeous part and understate the painstaking part. Therefore, young people are often biased and tend to pursue such kinds of lives but with little endeavor. In addition, since the teenage are inclined to adore their idols with such a passion that mass of negative news and information of popular figures may even twist some youths' view of life.

Besides, public attention excessively paid to individual privacy of celebrities not only deteriorate social morality, but also derive the regularity and peacefulness of daily lives from those figures. Furthermore, tragedies are sparked in some extreme cases. One of the most well known examples is the death of Princess Diana of Britain.

Certainly I do not deny that some decent habits or features of the famous individuals add to his/her attraction and help to characterize him/her better. But our interests and curiosities should be properly controlled. All I want to assert here is a rational attitude to public figures and respect for individuals.

Topic 28 Has the media paid too much attention to celebrities?

Some people feel that television, newspapers, magazines, and other media pay too much attention to the personal lives of famous people such as public figures and celebrities, although others have different opinion about that. As far as I am concerned, I fully agree with that. Safe to say, more than 70% lights are focused on those famous people and all kinds of stars. This is because common people like to watch, to know about and to become famous guys.

Let us look at the television first, when you turn on the television, there are more than 60 channels in United States, but almost all channels are either talking about celebrities, movie stars, or showing some TV soap programs in which some movie star is in it. There are daily programs such as "E-Talk", "Access Hollywood", and "Entertainment Tonight" which concentrate on lives of famous stars. You can tell from their names. Not to mention there are a lot of awards such as Oscar award, Emmy award, Gold Globe, and so on. They are all about famous people. For the program of talking show, such as the Opera Show, or the Larry King Show, most guests that are invited to these programs are celebrities or politicians. And people love to watch that.

As for magazines or newspapers, it is the same situation. The first front page, second page and Headline are very often about famous people in different areas, even sometimes discussing the private life of famous people. It looks like if there are no celebrity photos on the front page, the subscription will decrease. People love to read stories about these stars or celebrities.

Especially, there are so many photographers who want to take pictures of these famous people's private life. They do not care how this will invade those people's privacy, because they know these photos of celebrities may help them get rich. Think about how Princess Diana died in 1997. Nobody can say that it has nothing to do with those paparazzis. The fact that people love to know everything about Dianna, one of the most famous celebrities in the world, killed the princess.

In conclusion, TV, newspapers and magazines need these celebrities to attract people's eyeballs. Otherwise, they cannot survive. And the average people seem to enjoy these personal lives of famous people or celebrities. So it is quite normal for media to pay so much attention to these big guys in the world.

Topic 29 Has human harmed the Earth or made it a better place?

The Earth 'our home' is a planet with a wide range of inhabitants. This diversity helps to maintain the balance of the life cycle on the Earth. We humans have a key role to play in maintaining this ecological system. But today, even amidst the huge cry from environmentalists, we seldom recognize the importance of the environment. Some of the changes on the Earth like deforestation are a result of industrial and automobile emissions and nuclear activities. They bear testimony to our negligence towards the environment.

Right from our school education we have been taught about the key role played by the forests in maintaining the ecological balance. Forests attribute to release of oxygen and absorb the toxic carbon dioxide exhaled by the humans. Thus the forests act as the natural recycling agents balancing the life on this planet. Deforestation has been taking place for many reasons like manufacture of paper from wood pulp and timber, and for inhabitation by humans. If this trend continues there is no doubt that in the years to come the Earth will become a dry planet.

If deforestation is plundering the gift of God, the pollution of environment by automobile and nuclear emissions is a man made menace. Metropolitan cities have been so congested that we are getting used to everyday traffic snarls. Though there has been a worldwide awareness in controlling the automobile emissions in terms of imposing the emission norms on the automobile manufacturers, there is still much left to be done. One step could be to impose the law, to get the vehicle owners check their vehicles for emission norms, once in six months and obtain a valid test certificate.

No one can deny the fact that nuclear emissions are more vulnerable to damage the environment than any thing else. But we are always at the threat of a nuke war, despite the strong efforts of the international organizations like UN. It is a pity that most of the governing nations of the Un are the major threats with nuclear weapons.

Not but not least, the knowledge and the responsibility of safeguarding the environment is seldom seen in the individuals. The fact that all of us have been taught about the importance of environment in our education system makes no difference. The governments should organize more effective campaigns to educate everyone across all demographic levels. Only a socially responsible citizen can make a difference towards the environment our descendents have to live in.

Though I feel that with all above references, we humans damage the earth, I feel that I have dealt superficially some of the solutions that help to make the earth a better place to live. Let us hope that in the coming years future generations become socially responsible in safeguarding the earth. After all, we have just one planet (right now!) to live in.

Topic 29 **Has human harmed the Earth or made it a better place?**

Some people believe that the Earth is being harmed by human activity. Others feel that human activity makes the Earth a better place to live. In my opinion, human activity is damaging the Earth. There are many reasons for my perspective as follows.

First, human activity causes many kinds of animals and plants to disappear. Today many species of living beings died out or near died out. We only can see some animals in the zoo because in nature they have disappeared. Human beings have been using their brains and machines to remake nature for many thousands of years. We use the habitats of animals and plants. We eat their food and eat them as food. Because animals and plants cannot grow fast to satisfy human beings, we cannot see them today. If some animals are dangerous to us, we kill them with our weapons. If meats of some animals are delicious, we eat them. No animals can copy with human being.

Secondly, human beings cause pollution to the Earth. I remember when I was young; I drank water from the river and stream. Today we can only drink bottled water bought from the market, because natural water is polluted by human activities. Air in some countries is polluted very badly, so many people died of lung cancer. I saw some reports that says in London people could not see each other clearly in a short distance in the morning because of much smoke and fog.

Finally, population on the Earth exacerbate rapidly. Human beings need more food and shelters because of increased population. More food and houses mean more needs from the Earth. Thus people need to cut more trees to build houses. People need to plant more vegetables and feed more cattle, so they demand more lands from the nature. Thus people are destroying more forests and natural lands. The living beings are losing their habitats.

Take into account of all factors I think the earth is being harmed by human activity. Today we cannot breathe fresh air and drink natural water. We have not enough places to live. We worry about our health because of pollution.

Topic 29 **Has human harmed the Earth or made it a better place?**

When it comes to what human activity made the Earth, tradition has human activity that damaged the Earth. Nevertheless, although human activity has caused some damage to the earth, our Earth has certainly been turned into a much more beautiful world than it was centuries ago.

First of all, due to the development of human productivity made possible by science and technology, we now enjoy living conditions that our ancestors could never dreamed of. Nowadays, we use machine to plant crops, use synthetic fodder to feed livestock, use water conservancy project to generate electric power and so on. In term of substantive level, no other reasons in my decision is more crucial than the one above.

Furthermore, the use of machines has greatly improved our working conditions, enabling us to enjoy more leisure and entertainment. Tape recorder's invention serves as a typical example. They are small and have well sound quality. We can take it everywhere with us and the tape recorder has a valuable argument that it enabled me to listen to my favorite music wherever I want in a variety of different formats.

Of course, it should be admitted that human activity has resulted in the environmental crisis, which I believe we could overcome with the help of science and technology. The majority holds the opinion that human activity carries lots of pollution, which made the air quality worse, and endangered species increases everyday. On the surface, these seem to be terrible. However, people are taking a fresh look at it that they can be improved sooner because of science and technology development.

In short, human activity makes the Earth develop. It is difficult to imagine how the world will be without human activity. Similarly, a person who does not use machine in peacetime that cannot get anything done. Therefore, after pondering this question on many occasions, I believe that human activity makes the Earth better and beautiful and a great place to live!

Topic 29 **Has human harmed the Earth or made it a better place?**

People have learned how to turn wild natural areas to farm land, how to exploit minerals to adapt their needs, how to build roads and houses to expand their territories. People continuously improve their knowledge and develop technologies to improve their lives. It is undeniable that these activities of human beings make their lives better than ever before. Nevertheless, those activities also cause side-effects to the Earth because of pollution, deforestation, and exaggerated natural resource exploitation.

Nowadays, pollution becomes one of the most concerned problems. Because of the increasingly expanded factories, the industrialized areas, the burning of population etc, too much pollutant spills out everyday. Consequently, all of these things cause bad effect to the Earth. The purity of atmosphere is reduced seriously, the Earth is continuously warmed up, and ozone layer is holed.

Additionally, forest is asking for help in desperation. For last few decades, the forest areas have been reduced to 50 percent because of human deforestation. Green forestland of the Earth can be compared to the lungs of human. How healthy you are if their your lungs are trespassed. I am sure that you will get more difficult with aspiration; as a result, your health will be affect badly. From this example, we can infer that how serious problem our Earth has to face with. I wonder how long it can endure.

Researchers show that the natural means is limited, but today, they are exploited so increasingly to adapt infinite human needs that someday, all mineral can be ended up. Because of serious pollution, alarming deforestation and progressive mineral exploitation, the ecosystem becomes unbalance. Consequently a lot natural calamities happen each year such as flood, hurricanes. A lot wild living creatures are exposed to narrow place of shelter and lacking foods. For these reasons, the Earth will become unhealthy.

In conclusion, the human beings harm the Earth. Human beings as well as their dear planet, the Earth, have been badly suffered by what caused by humans themselves. I hope that humans are soon aware of those problems so that they can have suitable policies in order to not only improve their lives but also keep and maintain the Earth fresh and green.

Topic 29 **Has human harmed the Earth or made it a better place?**

Although the quality of life has improved over the past decades due to new technological advances but the damages made to the earth weigh more. Damages include increase in pollution and change in climatic patterns. Irreversible damage to earth can include depletion of natural resources.

As the technology advances more factories are built. These factories dispose waste material into natural water, which could be harmful to aquatic life. Emissions from the factories and automobiles pollute the air, which we breathe. Nuclear waste and radiation from power plants are harmful to our health.

There can be drastic changes in the climatic pattern due to the increase in the carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere, which is the main cause of global warming. Global warming would increase the temperature of earth and make it inhospitable. We are cutting more and more trees for furniture's, and wood. Trees purify the atmosphere by absorbing the carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and releasing the oxygen. Furthermore, the roots of tree hold the soil and prevent floods.

Resources of petroleum, oil, and minerals are not endless. There is shortage of water all over the world. Once depleted of these resources, our life would be difficult. Killing elephants for their teeth, and other species for their furs disrupt the food chain. For example killing of carnivorous animals would cause increase in the number of herbivores, which would consume more plants. We also depend on plants for food so there can be shortage of vegetables and cereals for us.

We should preserve the earth and respect all its valuable resources. Pollution and climatic changes can make earth inhospitable. Our future would not be good without sustainable development.

Topic 30 **Should a high school be built in your community?**

I oppose having a new high school built in my neighborhood. Although I know there's a real need for a new facility, I have to say that I don't want one built so close to me. I think it would cause a lot of problems.

First of all, there are very few teenagers in this neighborhood, or in our suburban subdivision, for that matter. Most of the residents here are either retired or are just starting out with young children. This means that the kids coming to the new high school wouldn't be walking to school. They would come on buses or would be driving to the school. Either way, this would mean a lot more traffic on our streets.

In addition to the traffic on school days, there also would be traffic whenever there was a sporting event, such as a basketball or football game, or activities at the school. Would there be enough parking in the school lot for everyone attending those events? Probably not. Consequently, those extra cars would end up parking in our neighborhood.

My neighbors and I would also be upset about the loss of the park, which is the site that's been selected for the high school. Mothers with young children gather there every morning for their kids to play together. People my age like to take a walk after dinner. On weekends, that park is a place for picnics and relaxation. We'd be sorry to lose our neighborhood park.

I also have some concerns about all those young people being in our neighborhood. Would there be problems with drugs or fights? Could the school district guarantee us that security would be a priority? These are concerns that I don't think can be addressed sufficiently for me to support a new high school in my neighborhood.

Topic 30 **Should a high school be built in your community?**

I support the plan of building a new high school in my community, as currently there are no high schools in my community and the nearest one is almost three miles away from the community.

Students in my community have to travel a long distance either by any available conveyance or independent transportation. As all of them cannot afford to have their own transport and the parents are also finding it difficult to drop their children daily at the school that is far away from their work places. As the high school is far away and many children have to take either auto rickshaws or buses, there is a traffic problem caused in the route during the school days. There are also potential dangers as the auto rickshaws tend to transport more children than it can carry, therefore there is a risk of accidents causing by these overcrowded autos.

Also the land that was allocated for high school construction is being encroached by private people. Our community mostly consists of middle class people, and they cannot afford to send their children on school buses and there is a lot of time being wasted on transportation to the school. Our community consists of other facilities like a university and a hospital, but lacks a high school. It would also be comfortable for small children to go to the school if it is made in our community and the parents would not worry about dropping off their child at school.

Finally the high school that is going to be built in the community can also provide employment opportunities to college graduates who are unemployed in the community and ready to take up the teaching profession. In sum, I support that a new high school should be built in my community.

Topic 31 Do you prefer to stay at one place or move around?

Staying in one place or moving in search of another place? Some people prefer to living in one place because they enjoy a harmonious relation with their neighbors and environments. While others prefer to moving from one place to another because of various reasons, a better job, house, community, or even climate. Looking back to my education and looking forward to my future career, I have been and will be moving a number of times. But considering my personality, I would rather live in one place when I am old.

For a student, a good education opportunity is the most important concern. Students leave their homes for good university education. Different schools have different teaching styles. It is very common for students to choose among different schools to find a most suitable one. I did pursue my bachelor's degree far from my hometown, and I am pursuing my master degree at another university, and would like to pursue a ph. D abroad.

Career development is another important issue. In order to have a strong experience and to get a fulfilling job, people would work in a number of companies. In different companies, we could experience different cultures and ways of doing things. The variety of people and culture will do much good to our future career development.

However, frankly speaking, I am not an aggressive person. I would rather enjoy my live in a stable pace. When I am old and without the pressure to struggle for a better job, I would prepare to stay in a peaceful and quiet place, where I could chat with my old friends everyday.

Taking into account all these factors, I would like to present myself such a solution: To try a number of places for better education and job opportunities when I am young; to stay in a peaceful place to enjoy live with my wife when I am old.

Topic 31 Moving vs. staying at one place

Living in one place all your life may seem very convenient. For my part, I am inclined to believe that not everyone is born in the place that is best for him/her, and thus one should take the chance and move to a place that is more suitable. For me at least, in this particular time of my development I find it better to stay in a place for a while, and then move on, to another place. However, as I would grow old I do believe my opinions in this matter will modify.

When I had decided for a career in art history, in a way, I had also chosen for a life on the road. I had always seen myself traveling from one place to another, organizing an exhibition here and there, and moving from one university to the next. In the five years before I started my undergraduate education I had been enrolled in four universities in three different countries. At a first glance, such a way of living seems really appealing. It is always exciting to see new places, and meet new people.

Also the idea of moving in order to find a more interesting and challenging job seems to be quite legitimate. However, one needs to consider that not everyone moves during his/her life because he/she wants to, but on the contrary because he/she have to. There are people that are running away from their pasts, or for one reason or another they simply cannot stay in the place of their choice. Moreover, moving from here to there have disadvantages even for those who enjoy moving. Family and friends are often left behind. Most likely, they miss the places that they have left. A piece of our soul remains in every place we spend a considerable amount of time. And what are we left with in the end? Probably with nothing more than the pain of being away from so many relatives, friends, and places we love.

Best thing to do, in my opinion, is travel all around the world, see as many places and cultures, make friends, but always keep a special place to return to, even if this place is not the one where you were born.

Topic 31 Is it better to move around than to stay in one place?

With the development of the transportation system and some residence facilities, the world is getting smaller and smaller, and people are not restricted to live in only one area. In addition, since there are different places with diverse cultures, living standards, education environment and others, people are inclined to move from one place to another. Is it better to move around than stay in one place? I believe there are no uniform answers, but in my opinion, I do agree with the claim that to move around is better than to stay in one place.

Most people's growth comes with the transfers in their life. As for me, when I was young I lived in a small county. Because the school in there was not suitable to me, I transferred from my little county to a city to get a better education. As soon as I got to the city, I was amazed that the world was so different here compared with my hometown. If I were still living in my hometown, it was impossible for me to make the wildest guess at what the real world looked like. The first transfer has made me to imagine my own life and urge me to go further. With confidence, I went into a university that is located in a different city so that I have to come into another world. Compared with my living city, the new one is more complicated in which there are different people, more convenient transportation system, and more competitive environment. I love all of this very much. By communicating with different students and teachers, I have learned much from them, and the experience will benefit me throughout my life and influence my lifestyle. Now I am in a graduate school and I will never regret my choice of leaving my hometown because the transfer has given me a splendid life.

Also, like us students, there are many adults transferring their work place in order to seize better opportunities. No matter in industry, in agriculture or in service, workers have rights to choose the companies that they work for. Many of them work from place to place and then they accumulate precious experience and skills to excel others.

People not only move within their own country, but also go abroad to get education, work or live. We can see that many students want to go to foreign countries to further their education, and that many parents send their little sons or daughters to foreign countries to study. After all, diverse circumstances give persons new experiences and broaden their views, and even help them get more comprehensive understanding of the world, the society and life itself.

However, some people may say that if people move around, they will spend money, time and energy. It is right to say that it takes one person some time to get use to his or her new environment, new personal relationship, work efficiency and stability of the society and family. I have to admit that people should make extensive plans before changing their places and may not move aimlessly and frequently.

Topic 32 Do you spend money or save them?

Some people say that it is better to enjoy your money as soon as you earn it while others prefer to save the money for later. It's a difficult choice faced by lots of people because of the different attitudes they hold towards money. As far as I am concerned, I vote for the former choice, which is that it is better for one to enjoy his or her money as soon as it is earned. Spending money as soon as possible is my preference because of three reasons as follows.

First, we can observe easily in the modern society that the dominant philosophy nowadays is 'enjoy your life when you are still young'. Most young adults like to work for a period of time and then go on for a trip to visit some places they have never been to. Those trips not only helps them to keep in shape but also provides them different kinds of knowledge and new perspective in looking at their environment. Other people spend the money for their leisure, which helps them to relax and go back to work with enough energy.

In the old days, it is said that people who save money in a bank understand the philosophy of thrift. Actually, economists say that in the modern world saving money in a bank is the quickest way to lose it. Moreover, none of the rich people became rich by getting interests from the bank. Living in a constantly changing world, we should adjust ourselves to accept the new ways of investing our money to different areas in order to get the most of it. That is probably the reason why most of the people nowadays put their money into business to get a better payback.

The third obvious reason why I prefer spending money rather than saving them is that it is part of the contribution for the economic growth in our country. If nobody has the needs to buy stuff from others and the market, nobody will think about how to produce useful products and sell them to make the most profits. Some countries continue to lower the interests in order to force people to spend their money and therefore benefit the society as well as the people themselves. In this broad view, I prefer spending money rather than saving them.

In conclusion, I prefer spending money because it benefits ourselves as well as people around us. It's also important for kids to know how to save money as a sense of thrift. Nevertheless, spending money is still the best way to make our lives enjoyable and worthwhile.

Topic 32 Do you spend money or save them?

When I am economically independent, I will choose to enjoy the money I earn instead of saving it for some time in the future. Life is a process of consuming; and we are growing old day after day. So why not taking advantage of being young to enjoy yourself fully, deeply and truly with money - which really can give you many things although we say that money cannot buy all?

No one would deny that we are all in pursuit of happiness. And this happiness should belong to today but not tomorrow. Imagine a person, who saves all he can save in the hope of living better in his later life or making use of the money when necessary, suddenly dies from a traffic accident one morning, leaving all his savings without enjoying a pit of them. Since no one will know what will happen in the next second, we had better enjoy what we own now, thus at least nothing regrettable left in our life if something does overtake us. Money is just what can provide us most of the enjoyments. In this highly commercial world, nothing can be done without money - seeing movies, watching a game, eating at a fancy restaurant, and so on. Money itself indeed cannot give us happiness, but at least it can offer us such opportunities to seek happiness in certain aspect.

For the young, youth is such a valuable period that none of us should leave something regrettable in this golden age. Ascetic-like life is not I want to lead. I am a person who thinks material things the most important because I like commodities of famous brand, I like eating in expensive restaurants instead of snack bars, I want to traveling all over the world, things for which money is indispensable. I earn money to fulfill what I look forward to but not put aside to prepare for something that may happen.

Furthermore, in view of the nowadays economy situation, governments in all countries encourage people to consume but not save. Economy in many countries is down and down, the most distinctive indication of which is the poor consumption. If every person saves instead consuming, how could the situation be better? Enjoying what you earn cannot only bring you your own happiness but also contribute to the economy of your country, why not?

In one word, I myself choose to spend what I learn and enjoy in time but not save my money for some time in the future. And I believe that is better both for you and for the society. So, never hesitate, buy what you want to buy if you have enough money, and enjoy yourself as much as you like.

Topic 33 A piece of jewelry vs. a concert

Depending on personal experience, personality type and emotional, we find that some people hold the idea of enjoying a concert if a gift of money has been received, but others choose to buy a piece of jewelry and that is also my point. My arguments for this point are listed as follows.

The main reason for a piece of jewelry I like is that it has a great value of collection. With the resistance of fading, erosion and alteration, jewelry is probably the first durable ornaments humans possessed. In addition, owing to rareness, costly jewelry is regarded as particular merchandise and left behind to the offspring. Furthermore, its value will not depreciate like paper currency because of turbulent society and economy. According to the three points above, we can reach the investment value of choosing a piece of jewelry.

Another reason can be seen by every one is that jewelry can make people pretty, and always symbolizes something. For example, through the centuries, rings have perpetuated the talismanic role of the diamond. In the Middle Ages and Renaissance period, every ring that was set with a precious stone was not so much a piece of jewelry, but an amulet that conveyed the magic powers of the stone upon the wearer. On the other hand, "A diamond is forever" is internationally known to men and women of all ages and may very well mean something different for everyone. Aside from its status as the ultimate symbol of love, diamonds have been around for millions of years, thus in their own right symbolizing, "forever." So, it is a good present that you buy a piece of jewelry for your love.

Admittedly, listening to a concert also has advantages, but the influence is short-lived. So, taking into account of all the factors that I have discussed in the above analysis, I believe that it is more advisable to buy a piece of jewelry rather than a ticket to a concert.

Topic 33 A piece of jewelry vs. a concert

People make money for living first and then use the money for other things that lead them to a happy and healthy life, such as buying something they like, watching a movie, or eating a big meal. In my opinion, if I have received a gift of money, I would like to buy a ticket to a concert.

For me, music is always attractive. When I have completed a whole day's study or finished the discussion on some academic problems, my spirit will be eager to relax for a while. When people want to relax, it is a wonderful thing to go to a concert: the music playing on the concert is the best thing to set your mind free. If you spend the money to listen to a concert, you will feel that the cost is valuable.

In addition, you can attend the concert with your friends. It is a good chance to build up the relationship between your friends and you. People are always busy with their work and study, losing many occasions of communicating with each other, a splendid concert and link us together. The music, the conductor and all the musicians on the concert can offer us a common topic; we can discuss those things together.

Furthermore, listening to a concert let me learn more about music and all kinds of instruments, it also culture the appreciatory ability. To think that I spend the money to buy a piece of jewelry, I can acquire nothing but being a little bit beautiful at one of my friend's birthday parties. In that case, I just feel that the money has gone.

Money, even a little money, can make your life more valuable, for this reason, I prefer to buy a ticket to a concert than to a piece of jewelry.

Topic 33 A piece of jewelry vs. a concert

Some people believe that attending a concert may enrich their cultural experiences, whereas others may agree that jewelry can be permanent and perpetual, therefore a good item to invest. As far as I am concerned, I prefer the latter point of view to the former. I would like to substantiate my conclusion from the following perspectives.

First of all, buying a piece of jewelry is an excellent investment. Once you buy the jewelry, its price tends to be higher and higher due to the limited number of precious gems. Besides, you can sell it for liquidity, when you are financially in trouble. Conversely, you cannot keep a ticket to preserve its value or resell it for money. If you believe "save it for rainy days", you must invest in jewelry other than a concert ticket.

What's more, jewelry symbolizes perpetuity. You must have heard of the famous commercial slogan from De Beers: "Diamond is forever". A piece of jewelry is always a good item to memorize some important days, such as a wedding anniversary. In addition, you can win the heart of the girl you appreciate at the critical moment by buying her a diamond ring! That is exactly the way I used to conquer my current wife.

Finally, a piece of jewelry, like a bracelet or an ear ring, cannot only deliver you fashionable aroma but also provide you with a luster of elegance. You may wear luxurious jewelry when you attend your friend's wedding party. Likewise, you can put it on for more formal social activities. Wearing suitable and decent jewelry may distinguish you from the others, thereby making you feel more self-confident. In general, you will look totally different with the jewelry.

Admittedly, it might be true that attending a concert may satisfy your taste or edify your cultural sense. However, purchasing a piece of jewelry turns out to be more practical and helpful for most of people according to the above reasons. Consequently, I agree that if I have money I will buy the jewelry rather than a concert ticket.

Topic 34 Should business hire employees for their entire lives?

In the modern society, people are taking a fresh look at whether companies should offer employees job security for their entire lives, since many businesses are now realizing that job security make employees less motivated to work and this leads to less profit for the company. Even though job security also has its own merits, it is becoming a conspicuous obstacle to develop businesses. Consequently, after pondering this question on many occasions, I believe that offering job for entire life is not a wiser choice for the development of a company and the society. My arguments for this view are based on the following points.

The main reason is that job security has an obvious disadvantage to motivate employees' work attitudes. Further, it leads to decreased productivity for companies. Workers who are certain that they can never lose their jobs tend to work less efficiently. Many government workers are so indolent that it can take them days and months to complete a task that should only take a few days to finish. Moreover, it is not uncommon to walk into a government office and see employees filing their nails, making personal calls on the office's telephone, or surfing the Internet for fun.

The above reason is but one of many factors, in addition to, for the employees, there is a growing awareness that job security is not absolutely beneficial. With improvement of the society, workers are more eager to choose a better job, because a new job means a higher salary as well as challenges. Even some career consultants are starting to recommend that employees should find new jobs every three to five years.

Admittedly, job security has its own advantages, as a proverb says, "Everything has two sides." The most extreme manifestation is the fact that employee represents an investment because of the number of hours of training required and the company will continue to have a return on this investment. However, we have no complete evidence to agree that businesses should hire employee for their entire lives.

Generally speaking, taking into account of all these factors, I do strongly disagree that companies should offer their employees jobs for entire life. Job security was regarded as an outmoded way of conducting businesses. Nevertheless, the temporary professional jobs are proving to be the most effective way to raise the standard of living of a country.

Topic 34 Should business hire employees for their entire lives?

Whether businesses should hire employees for their entire lives is relatively a subject of discussion as hiring employees for the lifetime increases the level of commitment and an undying loyalty and gives the feeling of security to employees whereas hiring new employees brings fresh blood into an organization.

I personally believe that businesses should hire new employees from time to time as this process brings new ideas, new expertise, new motivation, new energy, new technology, new beliefs, new culture, motivated spirit and other similar features which is very necessary for an individual and organization growth.

The inculcation and stirring of fresh blood in an organization keeps the company/organization/business going towards achieving more sales and more profits as new employees are better motivated to take new challenges with a positive attitude and proactive approach. They embrace new culture and offer their values, they bring potential ideas for the internal and as well as the external employees. Rejuvenating new employees helps the company from many perspectives as after certain period of time old employees becomes less contributing because of the same monotonous work, same environment, same relationships and no new challenges and risks to take on.

If you look at all the new multinationals i.e. Microsoft, HCL, HP, etc., they are achieving stunning annual growth and profits because their policy is to bring the best in an organization and keep hiring new employees. Employees are the back bone of every organization and pumping fresh blood to it after certain period becomes evitable for growth.

My advice to all will be to adopt a policy to inculcate fresh employees from time to time and investing time and money on them to help them deliver their best and also to retain some amount of old employees because it is said "OLD IS GOLD" to get the ship going through hard times and conquers at last.

Topic 34 Should business hire employees for their entire lives?

Should business hire employees for their entire lives? My answer is no. A business has the responsibility to take care of the right and interests of its employees; therefore it should keep them as long as it can. But it is not realistic that a business can hire its employees for their entire lives.

Firstly, on the business side, in order to survive and thrive, a business, like a human body, needs to constantly bring in new ideas and fresh minds into the corporation, and eliminate those positions that are not needed any longer. Although this might sound cruel, but it is for the survival of the business. If the business itself cannot continue, every employee will lose his/her job. People generally think big companies like IBM or Wal-Mart are the kind of place where people can keep their jobs forever, but these days we often hear about the news that these companies also lay off hundreds and thousands of people due to economic depressions.

Secondly, on the employee side, securing a lifetime job in one company is always not good for his personal advancement. He tends to be satisfied with his current job, and make no plans for the future career advancement. This is harmful for both the company and himself. In fact, it is those hop around among different companies who can get a big increase in terms of salary and benefits, and bring new experiences and skills to their new employees.

In conclusion, I believe it is not a good idea to hire employees for their entire lives. It is both harmful to business and its employees, and therefore, also harmful to the society.

Topic 35 A live performance vs. television broadcast

I do not agree with the statement that attending a live performance such as a play, concert or sport event is more enjoyable than watching the same event on TV, because there are many disadvantages in attending a real performance.

Firstly, there is too much trouble in attending a real performance. You have to buy tickets, sometimes stand in a long queue; you have to plan the trip and set out a few hours before the show started. After arrival at the theatre or stadium, you will have great trouble finding a parking place. During a sport event, your personal safety might be jeopardized: the sports fans might get too excited about the event, and become a mob. Many people might have heard the news that a girl was killed by a puck during a hockey game. If you take public transport or a taxi home after the show, you might find it very difficult to catch a bus or find a cab.

Secondly, the seating arrangement can greatly affect the comfort of watching the show. If your seat is far from the stage or playground, you cannot even see the show clearly. People's heads and cheers will distract you from viewing the show, and in the end you do not even know whom you have seen in a play, or who wins in a sports event!

Thirdly, there is no flexibility in a real show. After you have been through so much trouble and eventually start to enjoy the show, you might find that you are quite disappointed about the show after all. Unlike watching TV programs, you neither simply change channels nor leave the theatre in the middle of a concert or play. You might spend a lot of money to suffer from a show that you do not like.

On the contrary, watching TV at home, where you can make yourself a cup of coffee, sit back comfortably and relax, watch the show closely, and enjoy the realistic image and sound from your SONY home-theatre system. Besides, you can watch programs whatever you like, and go to bed right when the show has ended.

Although many people enjoy the excitement of watch a real show, I think nothing is more convenient and comfortable than watch TV at home.

Topic 35 **A live performance vs. television broadcast**

Some people like to attend a live performance while others think that watching the same event on television is more enjoyable. To me, I choose watching an event on television because it is easier and not limited and you have choices and can know more details of the event.

Watching an event is easier than attending it. You need only a TV set in your room. You do not have to buy a ticket or drive to the place where the event is performed. You can drink some coffee or tea when you want. But if you attend a concert or a play, you have no freedom to drink or do something else. In addition, at home, you do not need to worry about the traffic jam and being late for the event, so you have a light mood to enjoy the event.

The other advantage of watching an event on television is that you can enjoy it at any time and you can choose what you like from many channels. But if you attend a real event and find you have no interest on it, you would regret that you have wasted the time and money. Watching it on television can avoid it. If you are interested in the play, you can stay on it; if you are bored, you can change the channel to find some programs that are interesting.

Watching an event on television has another advantage in that you can get more details of the event from the interpretation. You can understand the background, the present situation and such information of the event. But if you attend it, you cannot get these information.

I choose watching an event on television. I think it is more enjoyable than attending a live performance.

Topic 35 **A live performance vs. television broadcast**

To many people, attending a live performance, such as a melodrama, a concert, or a sporting event is so incredibly attractive that they will go all out to get a ticket, regardless of the expense or the difficulty involved. But why not enjoy the performance on television while you can comfortably lie in your sofa or couch with popcorn at hand? That is because attending a live performance provides you with far more enjoyment than watch it on TV.

In a live performance, you will feel that you are in the company of many friends who are indulged in the same interest, who can share your sorrow or pleasure or excitement. This kind of resonance at heart is so rarely sensed in our daily life that this one reason itself is sufficient enough for many people to attend a live performance. While watching it on TV, we certainly find it hard to feel the emotion sharing, and our loneliness is hardly mitigated.

Furthermore, attending a live performance gives you a sense of participation that cannot be replaced by watching on TV. Live performance is an interaction between the audience and the performers, and both parts of the performance decide whether it will be a wonderful one. In this way, you may lament or laugh, may sob or smile as you are so influenced by the misfortune or happiness of the characters. You may fall into the indescribable intoxication while listen to a favorite piece of music. And correspondingly, the performers will receive the response of their audience and act accordingly. So the final success of the performance results also from the participation and interaction of the audience, of which you are a member.

With these foregone advantages, we may say that attending the live performance is definitely much more enjoyable than TV watching.

Topic 36 **Which transportation vehicle has changed people's lives?**

The ancient Chinese people dreamed of flying to a place thousands of miles away within minutes by utilizing the force of a special wind. In many ancient mythologies, deity heroes who had the magic power of traveling a long distance in minutes were highly admired by the common people on earth.

The invention of airplane, which I think is probably one of the greatest achievements of mankind, has helped people fulfill such dreams. In the past, it was a very difficult and daunting task for a person to go far away. Confucius, the great ancient Chinese scholar, once said that a man should not travel a long distance while his parents were still alive. By this, he not only stressed the importance of interpersonal relations among family members but also indicated the difficulties and the time spent on going far way. In ancient books, we can find numerous descriptions of the hardness and risks travelers often faced, not to mention the long time they had to spend on the road.

However, the invention of modern transportation means, airplane in particular, has greatly transformed people's way of traveling. Now, they can easily go within hours to places thousands of miles away, a distance which people would have taken several months to go in the previous time. Besides, airplanes make traveling much safer and comfort. Sheltered from sunlight, rain, hot or freezing temperatures, people can now fly in the air and avoid being exposed to bad climates and strong winds. Another advantage of airplanes is that they can transport people as well as goods swiftly to other places. For instance, airplanes play an important role in sending rescue teams and goods to an area damaged by an earthquake, as a result of which the lives of thousands of people are saved. Now, in the global anti-terrorist war, military forces can be dispatched and deployed in a short time to areas where an terrorist attack occurred.

Airplanes have undoubtedly changed people's lives. The earth has become "smaller" now because of the convenient exchanges of people and commodities made possible by airplanes. We can accomplish many things that could never have been done by the ancient people.

Topic 36 **Which transportation vehicle has changed people's lives?**

An airplane is a form of transportation that has changed people's lives. Thanks to the plane, our lives are now faster, more exciting, and more convenient than before.

You cannot deny that a plane is fast. For example, the Concorde flies at supersonic speed. A businessman can leave Paris at 11 a.m. in the morning and arrive in New York at 8 a.m. the same morning in time for a day's work. Many business people in Europe will fly to London for a noon meeting and then return home to Rome or Madrid for dinner.

It is always exciting to take a plane trip. When you take a trip by plane, you know that you might cross many time zones, many oceans, and many countries. When you get off the plane, you could be in a place that speaks a different language. A plane is like a magician's trick. You get in a box and you come out somewhere totally different.

Nothing can beat the convenience of a plane. In the old days, it might take you days to do what the plane can do in an hour. Boats, for example, only leave on certain days of the week and take a long time to get to their destination. Planes give you the option to leave several times a day and get you to your destination quickly.

Although other forms of transportation may be more comfortable, none has changed the way we do business and live our lives more than the plane. Thanks to the speed, excitement, and convenience of the planes, our lives are richer.

Topic 37 **Is progress always good?**

Is progress always good? Scientific progress brings us many conveniences and advanced machines, such as computers, automobiles, and so on. Progress seems to have made life simpler and more comfortable. But if we analyze it carefully, we will find that progress is not always good.

Modern industry brings us many conveniences. But at the same time, some problems emerge. For example, "the green-house effect" is a very serious problem that scientists try to solve. It increases the earth's temperature, causes icebergs to melt and the ocean level to become higher and higher. Maybe someday the oceans will swallow some big cities nearby them.

Progress enhances the efficiency of industrial production, but it also brings us another serious problem -pollution. Pollution in some countries is so serious that ecological balance is damaged and many animals and plants lose their living environment and become extinct eventually. The air is polluted and it is not suitable for people. The water is also polluted and people are facing deficiency of drinking water.

Progress makes the pace of life faster and faster because of the application of computers and automatic machines. People have to work faster than before and it makes them nervous. More and more physical and psychological problems disturb people's life. Many people do not have time for recreation.

From the above statements, it can be concluded that progress is not always good. It has its own negative influences on our life. Let hope those problems can be solved by more progress.



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Topic 37 **Is progress always good?**

With the evolution of civilization over the past several thousand years, man has made tremendous progress in all aspects of human society. While enjoying all the convenience and happiness brought about by this progress, we cannot deny that it has also caused severe problems. Scientific advance is always praised and extolled by many as the most essential cause of social development.

However, we shall not forget that on the other hand, major scientific inventions and technical advancement sometimes also form big threats to human society. The two world wars happened during the past century witnessed the blood shedding battles that cost millions of lives. Weapons made with modern technology have brought about such large casualties and devastations that could never been done by people in the previous time. Environmental problems have attracted more and more attention of the people around the world. With the development of modern industry and farming, global environment has kept deteriorating. Scientific researches indicate that the green house effect has contributed to the warming of the earth.

We live in a much worse surrounding than our ancestors: polluted air and water, extreme high temperatures in summer, etc. which are all harmful to our health. The world now is undergoing a globalization process that has caused divided opinions among different people. I think we should be highly aware of some of the problems it may cause. For instance, globalization would eliminate the differences between different people. The languages and unique customs of some ethnic nations are on the verge of extinction.

What a world would be if we see people everywhere speak the same language, wear similar clothes, live in houses of the similar styles, and use the same brand of products? We do benefit a lot from the progress of human civilization, but we must pay closer attention and be highly alert of the problems it brings about. Progress is not always good if we neglect its side effects.

Topic 38 **Is learning about the past useful?**

It is often argued that spending much time on studying history is unreasonable, since the information people obtain lacks the practical implementation. However, after careful thought, I have come to disagree with it. I believe that history provides valuable sources for understanding different people and societies, predicting future trends and building a person's identity. History generates past experiences and formulates the steps of development. It provides us with numerous examples of "cause-effect" events, which help to understand different social mechanisms.

Everything that is happening today stems from the past and will have direct effect on the future. Being aware of our history helps to avoid old mistakes and make right decisions. The majority of all the political conflicts have a long history, for instance the Middle East or Russia-Chechnya tensions. A closer study of their deeper reasons and the measures taken beforehand can prove to be invaluable in finding the right solution today. It can save thousands of lives.

At the same time, studying history of our own country or region builds up our identity, gives us a feeling of belonging to a certain group of people. Therefore, if we face a problem of communicating with a person of other culture, the basic knowledge of his history can prove absolutely necessary for a successful and productive interaction.

To sum up, I strongly believe that it is highly beneficial for modern people to possess a good knowledge of the history, because it assures a profound understanding of social mechanisms, helps to avoid many mistakes and promotes a better communication between different nations.

Topic 38 **Is learning about the past useful?**

Every country, every nation, even every person has its own past, present and future. Events from our past reflect on our present. Events from our present will reflect on our future. The time-line is unbreakable. Therefore no one should live only for today isolated from the past or without any connections to the future.

Every one of us is a member of the society. Living without learning about our history is the same as building a house without foundations. Furthermore, everyone is strongly connected with his past even when he does not comprehend it thoroughly sometimes.

Our life is a result of a series of events from our past. Our success today is a consequence of hard work or some victory in the past. Our present failure is maybe a result of not taking our chances in time or not making a proper decision in the past. I truly believe that everyone makes his own destiny and fate has nothing to do with it.

In my opinion, learning about the past is of great importance to all of us. Even if we are completely devoured by our present existence we should look back to the past as carefully as we can. Thus we can avoid our previous mistakes or to find an easier way to success. In this case history is our best teacher. And if we learn the lessons of the past we will make progress much faster in the present.

We have made our history step-by-step and day-by-day. Those of us who live only in the present and only for today are like trees without roots-so easily 'fragile' in a stormy day. The past is the base on which countries; nations and communities build their present. That is why I think learning about the past has really no value because learning about our history is invaluable.

So let us take a look back to learn a little more about ourselves.

Topic 39 **Can new technologies help students?**

"With the help of technology students nowadays can learn more information and learn it more quickly." I agree with this statement. Technology has helped a student cross national boundaries, open up new views and increase the speed at which he imbibes information.

New technology in the form of Internet has helped breach the limitations of a country's frontiers. A student sitting in a small town of India can access the latest course material released by MIT on his topic of interest. He can gain access to the latest info that is happening in physics and thus improve his existing warehouse of knowledge. He can browse through the previous papers in physics and dwell deeper and deeper in his specialized study. And how long does this all take? A click of a mouse. Compare this with searching through the mazes of his small hometown library, only to find some outdated articles and consuming a great part of his daily activity.

Technology has helped open up many new avenues that previously were considered impossible. Take for example the simple LCD projectors. They give a visual feel of the subject that the student is studying helping him to learn not only quickly but also effectively. Or for that matter video conferencing. A student can ask questions and clear his lingering doubts when he interacts with a professor considered as the authority in his field.

An overlooked aspect of technology is the transportation. With rapid advances in transportation, a student in Japan does not think twice before signing up for a program in the US. Would this have been possible 100 years back? Certainly not.

In concluding I would like to say that technology has played a major role not only in increasing the speed at which students learn but also in bringing a radical change in the way they learn it.

Topic 39 **Can new technologies help students?**

The information technology is developing so rapidly that nearly all families in Hong Kong have at least one computer. Not only can students surf on the net and search for information at home, but they can also use computers at schools, at cyber centers and even in certain fast food restaurants. No doubt, the convenience in accessing information on the Internet helps students to learn more knowledge and learn it more quickly.

In the past, students can only learn from traditional books. In addition to the school curriculum, students might be able to learn from the extra-curricular books. They can go to the library and search for information. But this is much inconvenient than just sitting in front of the computer and learning things from websites from all over the world. In comparison, the information from the traditional books is so limited. By surfing on the net, students can get a wider horizon about any kind of information and have a deep understanding on each field.

On the other hand, students can never have such a quick way to search for information that they required. In a library, students might have to spend a whole hour in searching for a single book with relevant information. Yet, with a computer, students can search for an entire page of links with a search engine such as Yahoo. The whole process involves just few clicks and several seconds. Moreover, information from books in library might be outdated. On the net, students can learn the first-handed information. With the help of technology, students can get information much quicker.

However, searching on the net for information has its disadvantages too. It is difficult to ensure the information is accurate or not, as the publishing of website do not have the controlling policies as that of publishing books. Yet, in general, it is still true that information technology help students to learn more and learn more quickly.

Topic 40 **Never, never give up**

Continuous exertion may sound very exhausting and thus, it is understandable even if some people suggest it should be better to give up sometimes. It is true at some points because the human race is not almighty creature. However I would say it is not about giving up, but just changing a goal. Recognizing life events as a sequence, I think even when giving up something, it is just adjusting the goal to more reachable level and processes for previous goals always play a role in reaching next goal.

In the first place, I would like to emphasize that this is not only about the youth becoming competent, but also about all the people making their own lives more comfortable and enjoyable. For instance, both following examples I present can be seen as continuous exertion: a young person trying to become a professional musician and a person on the verge of death exercising hands in order to move them better than the previous day. If their goals are too high for them, the young person may have to change it to be working in a related field such as becoming a commentator, a voice trainer or so, and the dying person may have to change it to exercise fingers instead of hands. That is, people naturally keep trying in any case until the last minute they accept death.

Furthermore, there are also two advantages of indomitable attitudes. Firstly, some different approaches to a goal are necessary, other than blind efforts. Such a contrivance activates brain and makes human beings more alive. I do not think it is exaggerative to say.

Secondly, this attitude is also important when trying to achieve something extraordinary, because chances and right ideas do not always lie all together. Other chances and ideas never show up if it is given up. Totally different idea or better chances sometimes appear after groping in the dark.

From what I have been discussing above, there is no doubt about favorable influences of continuous exertion. Whether agree or disagree with the statement of this topic, people keep trying by nature and it does make us alive. When I have no energy left to keep trying, I simply keep it on my mind so as not to miss any possibilities. In other words, it is possible to keep trying even when feeling like giving up. Thus, I strongly believe that we should never give up.

Topic 40 **Never, never give up**

My English teacher always want us to remember Churchill's famous speech near the end of Second World War "Never, never give up. " This brought people in many countries extremely strong courage in front of blood and death and helped them overcome the most serious difficulties in the human history.

"Never, never give up because I can always see the coast and it brings me courage all the time." This is what the girl who swam across the English Channel successfully answered when the reporter asked what had made her reached her goal. She said that she chose a very sunny day to make sure that she can see her hope and just went for it. To be able to see the goal helps us a lot when we feel frustrated somewhere and even almost lose our confidence. In the long term to success, hope is our belief and it can make us be very strong when we face great difficulties and even want to quit. Some people failed simply because they lost their sight of their "coast" although they are very qualified and capable.

Never, never give up and always give yourself a second chance. We may fail sometimes but it absolutely does not mean that we will fail very time. Thomas Edison, one of the most famous inventors in the 20th century, tried more than one thousand times before he found out that tungsten was the right material for the electric bulb, and so as most of the great scientists in many fields. When the Curie couple faced failures they never gave up and always told themselves to stick to what they were doing. It's not likely to achieve a great success by the first try. The real success is always based on a great deal of failure.

Psychologists tell us that the influence of what we strongly hold in mind is so important to our career. First we have to make sure that our goal is achievable and practical then just go for it no matter how difficult it is and we will never lose our passion and will always be positive. The characters in *The Lord of the Rings* have thousands of chances to turn back. However they kept going because they were holding on to something ~ There is some good in the world that worth fighting for. "Never, never give up" is always the secret to success.

Topic 40 **Never, never give up**

To me personally the expression "never, never give up" sounds pretty optimistic, but not terribly encouraging anyway. No matter how good this nice piece of advice is, it would not always be easy to do exactly what it tells you, that is, to brace up and to keep your head above water no matter what happens. I am not sure it is worth discussing whether this happy-go-lucky motto is in the right or in the wrong. I simply believe that for different people placed in different situations it may mean totally different things.

It goes without saying that for some this expression may sound like their personal life slogan. In my view, category of people has the whole life planned out for them in advance. They are very likely to have a set of short-term and long-term goals and to do their best to achieve them all. They would work hard, try many different ways to get to their aim and finally, they would most certainly succeed. Which at first may seem to be a fairly natural run of things. Their second favorite expression may be at first you failed, try, and try again. This is what they do and this is something they are good at. Sometimes it may also seem that they are just awfully stubborn and even stupid, not being able to see that some of their goals are just beyond them. But they still prefer to try to work for their so-called goals, regardless. No one wants to be a loser.

At the same time, I have the impression that once in a while? And quite good once in a while it is? it might be useful to be able to face up the facts and realize that some of your goals are too much of a job for you. I don't think it means being pessimistic, by no means. This can be called realism though. If you have already tried to do some particular task a hundred of times and it still didn't get you anywhere, what's the use of trying? Wouldn't it be more reasonable to admit the hard truth, rather than to go on with the same senseless grind for ages? I believe that this capacity to admit your own failure is a highly important, but incredibly difficult thing to do.

Anyway, I suppose that giving up is not a part of the human nature. Because if it were, the rate of suicide will be incredibly high, because as I understand that is the greatest giving up ever. But well, things don't happen this way. So, if you don't succeed, you try again because first of all you don't have much choice left. If you failed the second time and the third time and then over and again. You just realize that you failed. And even if you did fail, what are you left with? You just have to put up with that and start getting by it. It's the easiest way, after all. The one many people go for.

Topic 41 **Should we save land for endangered animals?**

In the past, there have been many endangered animals. Now they are extinct. Does it matter? Has our environment been affected by their absence? Has the quality of our own life been changed? The answer to these questions is "Yes."

It does matter if we destroy an endangered species habitat to develop more farmland, housing or industrial parks. There is a delicate balance of nature. If one small part is removed, it will affect all the other parts. For example, if certain trees are cut down, bats will have no place to roost. If they cannot roost, they cannot breed. If there are no bats, there will be no animal, or bird to eat certain insects that plague our crops.

Our environment has been affected by the absence of certain animals. Certain flowers are pollinated by butterflies that migrate from Canada to Mexico. Some of the breeding grounds of these butterflies were destroyed. Now these flowers are disappearing from certain areas. We will no longer be able to enjoy their beauty.

The quality of our life has been changed. America used to be covered with giant trees. Now we have to visit them in one small park. Rainforests around the world are being cut down to make room for humans. We will never be able to see or study this fragile ecosystem.

I would encourage us humans to look for other alternatives for our farmlands, housing, and industries. We have alternatives; the animals do not.

Topic 41 **Should we save land for endangered animals?**

Human beings tend to put their needs in the first place all the time. It is obvious, that we all need shelter, food and clothing to survive. For some people possession of mentioned above things is not enough and they start to build houses and industrial institutions all over the world. In my view, this way we put the wild life of our planet in jeopardy. I definitely do not agree with the statement that our need for farmland, housing and industry is more important than lives of endangered animals.

We all know that industry provides not only necessary things for people, but also destroys our environment. Of course, every person in the world needs such things as food, clothes and home. People already has built abundance of mega polices, small towns and villages with all kinds of industrial institutions. Human's activity influences our environment dramatically every single day. For example, people cut forests, throw garbage into the ocean and create pollution all the time. Many species of animals are already endangered because of our poisonous activities. Do we need to destroy our picturesque world even more, or it is time to stop now? I believe that people should decrease the development of industry, housing and farms where there are wild forests and animals.

Also, I would say that everything in the nature is connected so strongly that by killing one kind of animals and destroying one type of wild plant, we can destroy many other species. As an example, Panda bears eat only bamboo trees and leaves. If people cut bamboo forests where Panda live, they would disappear too, because of the lack of their favorite food.

Et the end, I would say that the land should be saved for wild and endangered animals. People should start thinking not only about their goods, but also about saving our planet.

Topic 42 What is a very important skill a person should learn?

Success has been an issue broadly discussed and defined by different approaches. Some say that being successful means being wealthy. Others associate success with popularity and power. A third approach would relate success with social and emotional well-being. So we come to the questions: "When can be someone considered successful?" and "What skills make success easier to achieve?"

In order to answer the second question, we should have a point of view about what success is. I consider that someone is really successful when that person is able to handle and enjoy social relationships. A leader can be powerful and recognized, but if he is unable to enjoy his leadership and feels lonely because he cannot establish a deep friendship, can we really say such leader is successful? On the other hand, a wealthy person may have all the possessions money can buy, but again, what if he cannot manage a marriage or a friendship? This person is likely to feel lonely and unsatisfied.

Developing social abilities may be a very helpful skill for a person to learn, in order to be successful in the social-emotional side of his or her life. One ability to develop could be effective and assertive communication. Many misunderstandings and conflicts can be prevented if we express our ideas clearly and respectfully, and if we learn to ask for clarification when we feel threatened or offended by something someone told us. Another ability could be learning to handle teamwork. We need to learn to work with others at work, at home, at school, in our community. Getting into an agreement with our parents, children, coworkers and friends is a situation that can become hard to handle sometimes. Dealing with teamwork can be really helpful. Finally we could add the ability to deal with conflicts with others and conflicts with our own wishes or decisions. We will always find obstacles in our paths; it can be quite useful to know how to overcome them.

In my opinion, I would define success as being able to enjoy what you have, what you do and who you deal with everyday. And to achieve success, you should have skills that help you handle relationships with your peers. We are social creatures; we need each other to succeed, and to enjoy our success.

Topic 42 What is a very important skill a person should learn?

"It is never too late to learn" is an English proverb meaning that people should never stop learning all his life. In other words, life is a process of constant learning, which enables an individual to make continuous progress to perfect him or her as a human being. Therefore, I deem the ability to learn is the most important skill of a person in the world today to achieve any accomplishments.

We are living in an era of knowledge explosion. There are too many skills to be grasped by a single individual within a comparatively short period of time. Skills considered necessary nowadays include English, computer, driving, etc. It is not very likely for a fresh college graduate to be proficient in all these skills. The most possible occurrence is that a person first chooses his field of profession and then starts to master those required skills in his field. Thus, I argue that the ability to learn new skills is more essential than the skills themselves.

Another reason for my avocation for the learning ability is that if a person is capable of acquiring new knowledge soon, he must be a smart, trainable and adaptable person who is what the rapidly developed society needs. In a society fraught with new difficulties and problems, a quick-witted person, when faced with them, will come up with solutions more easily than those who only know "the skills." That is why I believe the capacity to acquire knowledge carries more weight than "the knowledge" itself.

In short, in a time teeming with many unprecedented events, the problem-solving ability or new knowledge-acquiring skill is the most crucial one necessary for a person who wants to be successful.

Topic 42 What is a very important skill a person should learn?

Two years ago, if you ask a person what do they think is the most important skill to be successful in the world, you will get a variety of answers. If you ask a person who is about my age the same question, presumably, eight out of ten will give the same answer as mine - the computer skill is the most important skill a person should learn.

Why I think computer skill is the most important skill? First, computer skills such as operating a word processing software package or typing are convenient and efficient. For example, I am writing this essay by using a computer. If I do not have computer skill, I cannot make a composition as quickly as possible; maybe I can only write on paper. Another example is that many colleges is offering online classes for student to choose from, which means the students can study in the comfort of their homes and acquire their knowledge by means of using computers at home.

Secondly, computers are an important tool for teaching and communicating between teachers and students. Recently, school teachers have an increasingly demand on students to turning in their papers or school works, and the teachers can score on line. If the teacher has a assignment, they just send an e-mail to the students. In addition, many young people use computers to communicate with each other. They use online chat rooms, ICQs and messengers. They even play online games through the Internet. Therefore computer skills are important for students to communicate with their teachers and fellow students.

Last but not least, computer skill helps a person to find a good job after they graduate. As we open newspapers and search for a good job, we can find that computer skill is a required skill for nearly every job. Indeed, whether you work as a receptionist, salesperson, warehouse manager and office clerk, you have to operate a computer and therefore computer skills is absolutely necessary for these jobs and most others.

Although there are many other important skills for a person to succeed in today's world, judging from what I have mentioned above, I think my point of view is solid and sound. Having computer skills is one of the most important things in today's world.

Topic 42 What is a very important skill a person should learn?

Nowadays people say that we have stepped into "The Information Age", therefore computer skills are one of the most important skills in today's society. Being able to operate a computer is an advanced technique and can increase one's work efficiency and simplify many works.

Using a computer can help people do many complex works. You can calculate a very complex arithmetic problem. Many arithmetic problems in engineering are too complex to work out by hands. A computer can do these works conveniently and easily. You can also look for some references from a foreign country from a computer if you login in the Internet. You can save your documents in some discs on a computer no matter how large they are and you do not need to take a lot of paper.

Using a computer can increase your work efficiency. With its help, you can book plane tickets and hotel rooms for a business trip. You can easily compile your files in a shorter time and retrieve them whenever you need. If you are an engineer, you can control machines automatically with the help of a computer. The products are more precise than those controlled by hands and the product efficiency is higher. You can save a lot of time to consider other things and this is important for your success.

If you can operate a computer, you can sit down in your own home and control distant work. All you need to do is pressing some keys. With the help of a computer, your work can be simplified. You also can use a computer to communicate with your friends by e-mails and it is quicker and safer than ordinary means.

There are many other skills a person should learn to be successful, but I think that being able to operating a computer is the most important.

Topic 42 **What is a very important skill a person should learn?**

Upon the question that what is the very important skill a person should learn in the world today, different people have different opinions. In my point of view, I prefer to think that communication is the most important skill for almost every person. There are many reasons to support my view.

Firstly, communication is a bridge between people. Nobody is omnipotent; people depend on one another in their daily lives. We all hope we can be become the person who masters every skills and can complete every kind of work by ourselves. However the real world tells us that this just is a dream. Therefore, people are interdependent; no one can say that he does not need other people's help. The society requires cooperation among people. Communication is the link. Communication is the first step of successful cooperation among people. By communication, we exchange thoughts and information, and get other people understand our needs and ideas. For example, in a company, big or small, a manager always has to communicate with his boss, colleagues and subordinates.

Secondly, communication can help us keep friendship and make new friends. Friends need to communicate to each other, so that they know each other's needs and feelings. Indeed, one of the most important qualities of a friend is communication and understanding. If you are a good communicator, it is very easy for you to keep your friendship and make new friends. If you do not communicate with your friends, you will not only feel lonely, but also can eventually loss your friends.

From all above, I think that communication is the most important skill for people to survive in this society. I hope everybody works hard to get the skill.

Topic 43 Why are people attracted to a dangerous sport?

Have you experienced the fear of bungee jumping? Have you ever enjoyed the excitement of car racing? Nowadays, more and more people are attracted to such dangerous activities, especially the young people. Wondering why? After thinking about the lifestyle of those people, the reason goes as follows.

While the world is becoming more and more competitive, the tasks on each person's shoulders become heavier and heavier. People's everyday activities are very intense. The best way to relax and get relieved is to go in for dangerous activities, because while you are doing something dangerous, you have to concentrate on it, and you cannot think about anything else. Hence you relieved all the unhappiness and the troubles you had in the daily work.

In addition, to take risks and try out new things is one of human being's basic instincts. People always like to do something new, especially when something is popular as well. According to some statistics, the dangerous activities are becoming extremely popular among young people. If you do not try some dangerous activities, people will think that you are a coward and you are afraid of doing it. So it is reasonable enough for them to do dangerous sports to show their braveness.

However, I do not like dangerous activities and I believe the phenomenon that people are attracted to dangerous activities is just a whim. After realizing countless disadvantages of them, people will reconsider about them. Some safer activities to help people to get relieved will be developed afterwards.

Topic 43 Why are people attracted to a dangerous sport?

I think some people get attracted to dangerous sports or other dangerous activities for diverse reasons. There are many dangerous sports or activities, but for the purpose of this discussion, I will just mention a few of them. These are: Car racing, Bull fighting, Skiing, Horse racing and Mountain climbing. Some people are attracted to dangerous sports/activities based on the following reasons I will present in the next three paragraphs.

First, some people engage in dangerous sports/activities for recreational purposes. Often, they derive pleasure from such activities, and they believe it's fun. For example, horse racing is dangerous, accidental fall from the horse back during the race could lead to death or serious injury. Nevertheless the fun and excitement of horse riding cannot be replaced by other sports/activities.

Second, some people get attracted to dangerous sports/activities for economic reason. Some earn their living through their participation in dangerous sports/activities. For example, there are two famous mountain climbers in my country that earn a lot of money through this dangerous activity 'mountain climbing'. Unfortunately, one of them can no longer participate in the activity because of his predicament. He missed his step and fell from the peak of the mountain and broke his spinal cord.

Lastly, some people are attracted to dangerous sports to get attention from the people or to prove that they are brave. Such people may engage in bull fighting, they want to show people that are fearless and can face any challenge that might seem inevitable.

In conclusion, people have different reasons for engaging in dangerous sports/activities. I believe with the above mentioned reasons you can see why some people are attracted to dangerous sports.

Topic 44 Travel with a companion vs. travel alone

Traveling is a very pleasant thing. Some people like to travel with several friends. Other people, however, would prefer to travel alone. As far as I am concerned, traveling with my friends is better.

Why do some people like to travel alone? For one thing, they can experience more freedom. They do not need to discuss the itinerary of travel with others. He/she can just go whenever he/she wants. For another, they do not need to keep an eye on how to get along with friends.

Although there may be one or more advantages to traveling alone, I insist that traveling with friends is better. In the first place, the trip will become easy. Traveling is not a very easy activity. For example, you need to find transportation, hotels and restaurants in new places. Several friends can share these tasks so that everyone has a chance to enjoy the journey.

In the second place, you can get help when you need. There will be many unexpected things that could happen during the journey. Such as, someone gets lost, gets sick, or cannot wake up early for the morning flight. It is very tough for people to handle these situations by themselves especially when they travel to a new place. Friends can give you a hand to overcome all these difficulties. Every one needs the help from others.

In addition, you can have more fun by traveling with friends. Enjoying the scenic spots is wonderful, while traveling on the road is boring. How to spend this boring time? Talking with friends, playing cards will help.

In conclusion, I prefer to travel with friends rather than travel alone not only because the trip will be easier with friends, but also because I can have more fun by with friends' company.

Topic 44 **Travel with a companion vs. travel alone**

Traveling is a favorite recreation for many people, especially for young students. It can enable us not only to accumulate our knowledge about history, culture, geography and local tradition, but also to edify our minds and spirits greatly. However, upon the question, which is better, traveling alone or together with several friends, people seem to have different opinions. As far as I am concerned, I like to travel with friends.

When traveling to other places, the most important thing for us to consider is safety. In China, many famous scenery spots with Buddhist temples or shrines are situated in deep mountains or remote areas. Travelers sometimes have to go on a tiring and even dangerous road before they can arrive at these places: crossing rivers with rapid currents, climbing high mountains, walking along a narrow path on deep cliffs etc. If a person travels with others, he may receive aids or lend a hand to his companion in time of needs. Several years ago, I traveled with some other people to Wuyi Mountain, a famous scenery spot in Fujian Province. When climbing a high cliff, one of the people slipped, but he was grasped by hand almost instantaneously by a man at his side. If he had traveled there alone, he would have fallen down the high cliff and injured himself.

Another reason why I prefer to travel with others is that we can ease the feeling of loneliness and nostalgia by talking with each other. When traveling to far away and unfamiliar places, we may easily fall into a low spirit and have strong nostalgic feeling. There are numerous ancient Chinese literary works, poems or essays etc., which describe such feeling on road. A man sat in an empty hub, facing a small lamp, seeing the dumping rain outside the window, etc., all constitute a typical picture of a lonely traveler. But if at this time, the traveler had a companion to chat with him, his sad feeling would be much lessened.

In a higher sense, life is like a traveling, most of us need someone to accompany us to go through the road. I think those who have to live alone are unfortunate ones in human society.

Topic 45 **Getting up early vs. staying up late**

Some people prefer to get up early in the morning to start the day's work; while other people like to get up later in the day to work until late at night. Which option do you prefer? I would choose to get up early in the morning. This view is based on the following reasons.

By getting up early in the morning you can enjoy a lot of good things that the nature offers. You can breath fresh air, smell aroma of flowers, listen the birds singing in the morning. What a beautiful world! In the meantime, these can refresh our brains and quickly get ready for the day's work. We can immediately concentrate on the work, and solve the problems with great efficiency. For example, when I was in senior middle school, I got up early in the morning everyday to go over my lessons and prepare for the courses that I would have that day. I found it was so efficient and I memorized my study material so deeply. On the contrary, people who get up late and go to bed late tend to leave all the day's work to the night, and tend to go to bed until the finish the day's work. This is not a good living habit and also not an efficiently way of working.

Another reason why I would like to get up early to start a day's work is because I believe that it is good for our health. The body's cycle follows the nature: when the sun rises, it is time to get up; when the moon rises, it is time to go to bed. Besides, by getting up early we can have time to do some exercises such as jogging, hiking and swimming, which will benefit our health. Many statistics show that most people who live a long life get up early and go to bed early. While getting up late and go to bed late violates human biology and therefore will do harm to the health. And people who get up late never got a chance to do morning exercises.

In a word, getting up early in the morning to start a day's work is a smart choice for people; it can benefit both people's work and health.

Topic 45 **Getting up early vs. staying up late**

Some people prefer to get up early in the morning and start the day's work. Others, however, prefer to get up later in the day and work until late at night. As far as I am concerned, getting up early is a good habit because it is good for health, and it is easy for people to take care of everyday work.

In the first place, everyone knows that getting up early is a very good habit for our health. You can enjoy the fresh air in the early morning, and also you can get a good night's sleep during the quiet midnight. Moreover, if you get up early, before go to work, you still have enough time to do some exercises, such as walking, running and riding the bike. Without doubt, all of the exercises can help your to stay healthy.

In the second place, it is easy to take care of everyday work if people get up early. For example, if everyone in the family gets up early, the wife will have enough time to prepare the breakfast for the whole family, the children will have enough time to catch the school bus, the husband will never forget to change his dirty shirt. Everything is in order.

Admittedly, some people who work until midnight and get up later in the day claim that working in the midnight is more efficient for them and they can concentrate on their work without distraction. However, the advantages of getting up early carry more weight than those of getting up late.

To sum up, from what I have discussed above, we can safely draw the conclusion that getting up early can benefit us not only because it is good for our health but also it is easy for us to take care of everyday work. Therefore, I prefer to get up early in the morning and start the day's work.

Topic 45 **Getting up early vs. staying up late**

Meng Haoran, an ancient Chinese poet, wrote in one of his poems his happy feeling when wakened by the chirping of birds in a spring morning. It seems that he did not get up early and waked "naturally" after a sound sleep. What kind of timetable a person should follow depends on the character and habit of him and even on the job he does. I think it is important to arrange our life in such a way as to ensure high efficiency of our work and good to our health. Some people prefer to work until late at night because they feel that they can concentrate their mind in a quiet environment when others are in sleep.

For instance, many writers like to write at night. It is said that a famous French writer who lived in a small house on a hill at seaside was accustomed to working so late at night that the lamplight from the window was perceived by the sea crewmen as a signal leading their ships into the harbor. In China, people are encouraged to follow a regular living habit, which requires early sleep and early rise. For a long time in the past, China has been a traditional agricultural society, in which people lived a life that progressed slowly with the change of time.

As an old Chinese saying goes, "a man should get up early so as to clean the house to prepare for the day's work." Even today, we can see many old people do exercise early in the morning in parks or open areas of cities. However, with the rapid social and economical development, people are now forced to some extent to abandon such a living style based on the progress of the time.

Nowadays, we are living in a fast changing society, sometimes we have to following a rhythm or timetable according to the need of our work instead of our own will. But however we arrange our life, we should try to take into account of our own conditions in order to do our work well.

Topic 46 Important qualities of a good son or daughter

Both sons and daughter are a blessing for the parents. It is a fact that the strongest and the most sincere love exists in the relation of the parents and their children.

No child is born good or bad, it is the qualities he adopts with the passage of time that make him stand good or bad. A good son or a good daughter would be obedient to his parents. It is a religious obligation, a social norm and an indication of refined behaviors and a peaceful family set up for the children to be obedient to their parents.

Such a son or daughter would be dutiful. He would know his duties as regards his parents and would always try to fulfill those in time. In the age when a son or daughter can earn; they would earn and instead of taking money from their parents they will try to give them money. This will make them feel proud and think that they are getting back for what they had spent on their children.

Not only this good son or a good daughter would be caring towards his/her parents. It is a fact that as children grow to their youth, parents start their journey of old age. And in the old age they demand as much care and attention as children need when they are very young. It is obligatory for the children to remain caring, dutiful and pleasant to their parents and make them feel as part of family. It is often seen that children start feeling that their parents in the old age are no more than a burden. This is a very wrong attitude and in my religion this is strongly condemned. Instead it is advised that when in the old age, parents should be taken care of by the children as children were taken care of in their early age.

A good son or daughter would look after all the needs of his / her parents. And by no action of his/her will make them feel as if he/she are fed up of them. Also they will be respectful to their parents and would always give thought to their suggestions and would always try to act upon those. Since the advices given by the parents are the result of their experiences which children in their arrogance often ignore. They should think that there is no alternate to the experience and parents would never give a bad opinion to their children.

It is a pity that with the passage of time the children don't give the parents their due rights nor do they look after them in the right manner. This situation has resulted in the formation of many old houses where old parents are trying to pass the remaining days of their lives, they can not enjoy the joys of their children because their children don't want to keep them with because of their busy schedules.

Islam lays a great importance on the respect of parents. Islam says that Heaven lies under the feet of one's mother. Like wise there is a great status of father in Islam too and one is asked to act upon the advices of their parents always unless they order him to change his religion.

In our culture too, we see that with the passage of time the children have developed the habits of not obeying their parents. This has with the passage of time played a vital role in weakening the family bonds.

The unit of any society is a home in the very basic perspective. When the basics would not be strong how can the building be strong which is developed on those basics. This is the very same situation in modern societies, the family bonds are not that strong as they used to be resulting in the weakness in the society as a whole and a frustrated youth which can not play its part productively towards national growth.

Topic 46 Important qualities of a good son or daughter

It is commonly known that parents expect to see their children behaving decently and respectfully. It is extremely important for parents to provide to their kids a clear explanation of what is bad and what is good. Hence, by having parents' support and advices, children could achieve the important qualities that later their parents could be proud of. In my opinion, the basic qualities of a being a good son or daughter have been remaining the same over years.

The most important quality, I think, is that we should respect our parents. It was our parents who brought us into the world and brought us up. They provided us food and clothes, and send us to schools to be educated. They tried their bests to make our life happy and comfortable. Accordingly, it was our responsibility to respect our parents, including their efforts and opinions. We should not spend too much money on useless items because the money comes from parents' hard work. At the same time, we must listen to the right advices from parents and don't act according to our own wishes and desires despite the objection of our parents.

The second quality for a good son or daughter is that we should take care for our parents when they become old. Nowadays we have already attended the university, usually far away from parents. So we should keep in touch with them by telephone, letter and e-mail, not making them feel lonely. We may talk about their life at home, such as their work and their health. In fact every time when I give a call to my parents, I may feel that the call bring them happiness. The reason is that not only can they know that I am doing well, but also they know that their son cares about his parents.

A good son or daughter should have many merits. From my point of view, respecting the parents and caring for them are the most important for everyone. What's more, these values cannot be changed with the development of the society because they are the fundamental qualities of a good son or daughter.

Topic 46 Important qualities of a good son or daughter

In Chinese culture, a person who is filial and obedient to his parents is regarded as a good son. Confucianism, an ideology that had great effect on the Chinese society, stresses the importance of harmonious interpersonal relations between family members, particularly that between parents and children. Judgment on a man is often based on his attitude toward his parents.

Confucian classics contain many principles regarding the "right" conducts people should have to handle the relation with their parents. For instance, people in the past were required to pay respects to their parents everyday in the morning. Children should follow whatever orders or instructions their parents issued. A person who was most respectful to his parents was highly praised and often set up as a model in the society.

The ancient Chinese thought that there was a connection between the relations within the family and political institutions of the country. They extended the formula of administering a family to social and political affairs. In other words, the Chinese people ran the country on the principles based on family life. The emperor was respected by his subjects as a father was by his children. An official faithful to his lord was often compared to a son filial to his father.

However, China has undergone great changes over the past century. Influenced by western thoughts, the Chinese people have revised and transformed many traditional ideologies and ways of thinking. Parents have no longer had absolute authority over their children. Now young people may stand on an equal relation with their parents and they stress more personal freedom and independence. But the traditional ideology remains to be very influential, a good son who is respectful to and takes cares of his parents is considered by others as one of high moral character.

Topic 47 A large company vs. a small company

Some people show special interest in working for a big company, while others are more willing to work for small ones. Of course, every individual has his own opinion about the strengths and weaknesses when it comes to serving in a big firm or a small one; for me, my choice is definitely to work for a big company.

Now let's use the analysis of "SWOT", which was always employed in the field of economics to get the problem solved. Here, S stands for "strengths", W for "weakness", O for "opportunities" and T for "target".

Working for a big company will have many advantages for your development in your career, because a big company usually provides more competitions and it demands its employees to be self-educated at the very beginning of becoming one member of the group, or he or she will be dismissed without hesitation. For a big company, there is always a pool of talents waiting for a position to be filled.

Besides, in a big company, you will deal with different kinds of people, who are from different provinces or even different countries, having various education, thus you will be inevitably influenced by "multi-culture", which is of great importance to a person with the hope of tailoring himself to be an international talent.

Finally, in a big company you will be given more opportunities to be charged up either at home or abroad and be endowed with more chances to contact with more elites in the specific field.

When speaking of the weaknesses, every thing is a double-edged sword. Working for a big company, there might be little chances for many people to stick out due to the bulk of talents, but compared with the strengths and the opportunities mentioned above, it can be ignored.

When it comes to the target, you, as a member of a big company, will be more likely to motorize your target because of the plentiful resources including material resources, as well as human resources.

All that I have said above boils down to the conclusion that if you are a person who craves for competitions and desires to be an international or inter-provincial talent, you should choose the big firms for your future development.

Topic 47 A large company vs. a small company

Each year, millions of students graduate from schools and join the army of people seeking for jobs. Many of them aim at getting a position in a large and outstanding company that often means higher income on average and good fame. Walking in and out the high buildings in downtown areas and wearing professional clothes and attires, those lucky people working in big companies are admired by others. They are often referred as "white collars" or even "golden collars" that rank high in the society.

A large company offers many advantages that are helpful to a person's career development. I am now working in a company that is one of the largest ones in China and ranks among Fortune top 500. Our office building is located at the most prosperous downtown area in the city. Staff members of our company have higher income than those of many other companies. In recently years, our company is aiming at proceeding into the world market and has established business connections around the world, which provides us with opportunities to work abroad. In short, working in a large company may enable us to gain valuable experience and have broader views in a competitive environment.

But not everyone is suited to work in large companies. For those who like to work independently and enjoy more personal freedom, a small company may be a good choice. People in a large company may feel stable and be less likely to be dismissed, but they are also subjected to many restrictions imposed by the regulations of the company. A small company may require their employees to do more comprehensive works and give them more free choices.

In business, stagnation equals retrogression. Wherever we work, large or small company, it is essential to work hard to make progress. In a fast changing society, if we always stay where we are, we will face the risk of being surpassed by others.

Topic 48 **Why people work?**

When talking about working, some people always complain a lot about it. They regard working as affliction that means hardship, vapidness and low earnings. They may even dream that they can also live a happy life without working. But as we all know, that won't come true. Everyone needs to work for many different reasons. I believe the three most common reasons are to acquire knowledge, to seek fame and to enjoy life.

In the first place, we work to practice our skills and we have to learn many aspects of knowledge to solve the problems and to overcome difficulties. So working makes us skillful and effortless. The experiences we learn from working are the most important wealth. They are the major sources of wisdom. If we don't work, how can we improve our intelligence and then how can we expect a wonderful life?

In the second place, we work to realize our value by producing large amount of goods and serving others. A farmer is not a farmer until he plant corps, a teacher is not a teacher until she teach classes. They all have their responsibilities and they also win our respects because of their contributions to the society. That's the meaning of life, which gives us courage and confidence to exert our powers to build a happy home.

In addition, we work to keep us healthy. We can communicate with each other during work. Meanwhile, we are helped and encouraged. We have to work to relieve our pressure. When you do something you are very competent to, you will view it as a kind of entertainment. You even find joy from them. If we don't work, we will become torpid and fat.

In conclusion, I believe that working is a tool by which we can make a key to the gate of knowledge; it is a road that leads to tomorrow, and it is a prescription that can keep us fit. All in all, working provides us so much that I love work.

Topic 48 **Why people work?**

At the outside, it might seem obvious that jobs are just to earn our daily bread. But as we explore the facts beyond the selection of job, there are myriad of factors that go together in selecting a job. Earning money might be a priority because no one likes to live in penury, but it is not the only determining factor. I feel that the selection of a job based on remuneration might be a priority for entry-level aspirants who are in searching for their first job. But once people climb up the corporate ladder there are other factors one looks for. Going by my own experience I would say job satisfaction, recognition in society and realization of a long dream or vision will become the deciding factors as we progress.

With the information technology (which is the most human resource dependent industry) growing at an exorbitant rate, Human resource managers have a tough time to understand what is really needed to retain the cream of talents in their organization. Recent studies show that job satisfaction and recognition are the prime factors that matter to the best talents, of course not to mention a competitive compensation package.

Every man has a vision, and continuous progress in the realization of their vision give a great feeling of satisfaction and moral boosting. I believe that without this vision we would never have our soldiers sleeplessly safeguarding our country. 'Serve with honor' is the mantra which keeps them going strong. It is the same sense of responsibility and pride in serving the humankind that propels the doctors to serve the people without looking at their watches.

Every job is important and has their pros and cons. But it is still our social stigma to weigh a person based on their profession .It is this stigma which instigates the people to be finicky in the selection of a job when it comes to social recognition. Even in a social gathering the treatment given to a so-called executive is totally contrast to that of an ordinary low profile truck driver. Yes, people love to be recognized and it does matter to have a job worthy of it.

There is a never-ending list to follow in addition to what is said above, like flexible working timings, Profit sharing policies, free insurance, and others that lure the aspirant to take up the job. But, in my view I would priorities that job satisfaction and sense of recognition are the prime factors in a person choosing to retire (of course only after serving their life time) from a company.

Topic 48 **Reasons for work**

Though people work primarily to earn money, there are some other reasons that they work: enjoyment, honor, assistance to others, etc. For some people, to work is to produce something to enjoy themselves and others. Musicians compose songs and melodies that give pleasure to listeners. Writers create novels and stories that arise deep emotions in readers. Painters produce beautiful artistic works that appeal very much to the people who see them.

But on the other hand, these people, musicians, writers, and painters, are often beside themselves with joy in their work. Some people work for honor. Military men devoted to battles to safeguard the freedom and dignity of themselves and their nations. In human history, many people would rather sacrifice their lives than submit to foreign rules. Sports people contest with each other for the honor of championship. To get a gold medal in the Olympic games is a dream cherished by many athletes around world. There still some other people who work to help others. It is the responsibilities and duties of doctors and nurses to relieve the pains and strains of their patients.

Wherever an accident occurred, we can see the relief team rescue and give assistance to the people in need. Teachers, who often referred as "the engineers of human souls", work to help students not only in their study but also in their moral progress. No wonder that teachers are highly respected in a civilized society. Socrates, the ancient Greek scholar, once said to his disciples, "I eat to work while others work to eat." Most people work to get money for a living, but money is not the sole reason for many to work.

Topic 49 **Face-to-face communication vs. emails or phone calls**

Many people hold the view that face-to-face communication is better than other types of communication, such as letters, e-mail, or telephone calls. As far as I am concerned, I do not agree with that view. There are many reasons that support my point of view, and I would explore a few of the most important ones here.

The main reason is that people live and work with a fast pace nowadays. They are busy with everything. However, they also need to communicate with their friends or relatives. The result is that they have no time to set an appointment. This situation is very common. The best solution is to communicate by letters, e-mails or telephone calls. We could write letters or e-mails in our leisure time and send them out immediately or call somebody and talk for a few minutes. These things would not take up a long time and can be scheduled quite easily.

Another reason is that it is too time and money-consuming for two friends that live far away from each other to schedule a face-to-face meeting. In this situation, using letters, e-mail or telephone calls will be a better way. People by this means could communicate with each other conveniently no matter how far they apart. Take one of my friends for example, he communicates with one of his friend in Germany by using emails.

Furthermore, I believe that sometimes people will find it difficult to communicate face-to-face. They need to talk about something that is hard for them to confronting each other. At this time, letters, e-mail or telephone calls are better ways of interaction.

Given the factors I outlined above, we may reach the conclusion that communication by letters, e-mails, or telephone calls is better than face-to-face communication.

Topic 49 **Face-to-face communication vs. emails or phone calls**

Since the beginning of time the most important method of communication has been the face-to-face communication. In fact for a long time, face-to-face communication was the only method used. As time progressed new methods came along with the use of letters, telephone calls, and emails. Even with these improvements in communication, nothing has been able to replace the face-to-face method.

One reason that face-to-face communication is better than newer methods is that it allows one person to see the facial expressions of another. When a person is talking about good news they usually smile and their eyes light up. Or when a person is having a serious conversation, their eyebrows are usually lower and they keep a straight face on while talking. Without these facial expressions it can be tricky to figure out a person's meaning behind what he says.

Another reason why face-to-face communication is important is that you can tell whether the person is telling the truth or not. When people communicate over the phone or through an email it is impossible to tell when a person is lying. But when it comes to personal communication it is not as easy to get away with a lie. Many people in business prefer this face-to-face method because it helps them to figure out if the person speaking is honest enough to go into business with.

When it comes to face-to-face communication there is one more reason why it is better than other methods of communication. When a person is expressing feelings of love or sympathy, no other method of communication will express them perfectly. When a person is showing his/her love for someone, he/she must do it face-to-face so that the other party can see how much he/she mean what he/she says. Also when it comes to expressing sympathy for someone, using any other types of communication is just not enough. By calling someone or emailing him/her to express sympathy, it just shows that you do not have the time or care enough to go over and say it in person.

For the reasons listed above, face-to-face communication will always be better than other types of communication. But while face-to-face communication is better, newer methods cannot be ignored. These methods have helped to carry communication over through long distances around the world; thereby expanding the world we live in and bring everyone closer together. Through the use of letters, telephone calls and emails, a person living in New York can now communicate with his/her loved one as far away as South Africa.

Topic 49 **Face-to-face communication vs. emails or phone calls**

With the rapid growth of high technology, computer, telephone and other communication tools have become more and more important in our daily life, so what people have gradually ignored face-to-face communication.

If I were asked whether face-to-face communication is better than other forms of communications, such as email, phone calls or letters, I would choose email and phone calls. Here I am going to enumerate some reasons to support my choice.

The main reason is that communication by telephone or by e-mail is more convenient. There is no need to make appointment with friends before meetings; all you need is just to remember their phone numbers or email addresses. Wherever you are and whenever it will be, communication is as easy as face-to-face talking. Moreover, it is more efficient for people to communicate.

Another important reason is that the way people connect by email can make more friends. I have many friends on the Internet and we communicate with each other regularly, so I have gained more information and knowledge in many other fields.

Last but not least, indirect communication such as emails and phone calls can avoid direct confrontation and embarrassment. Sometimes we may not feel comfortable to borrow something or ask for a favor from our friends, because we are afraid of being rejected. At this time, an email or a phone call can be more convenient and can avoid embarrassment.

If all these factors are contemplated, the advantages of communication through email or telephone carry more weight than those of face-to-face communication.

Topic 50 Doing same things vs. trying new things

I have to say that keep doing the same thing all the time is boring, and I certainly do not like being bored. In the real world, there are uncountable things for you to do; so, why not try them when you still have the chance?

There will be no future if no one tries new things no more. Human beings would not have gone this far without trying new things. Our ancestors had done so much in doing so: they made tools for hunting, created communication languages and introduced many other techniques that we are still using today. All of these were new to them, and they tried the new instead of doing the old. Without their hard trying, we would still eat raw meat even at this time.

Some people may say, "I do not like to try new things because, sometimes, they could be risky. " I cannot deny that. However, there is nothing that never has a risk. You may get hurt even when you keep staying at the same spot, and when that happens, you are probably going to get more pain. The reason is simple: if you failed in the domain that you are not familiar with, you may not get too depressed because you knew it was new to you, and you can gather some thoughts, and then, try it again; on the other hand, if you did not do well in the area that you are good at, then, there is a great chance that you would lose your confidence because it was not as good as you thought it would be.

Thus, if you come to think of it, trying new things is not as bad as it sounds. Moreover, those risks hidden in the process of trying new things are often worth to take. Once you tried them out and got them right, the rewards you are about to get are often surprisingly good. That try new things, legal and harmless, is always good. Even if you failed or got hurt, as long as you are still ok, you have gained some experiences out of trying them. The whole world out there is for you to explore. Therefore, you should do so to make your life valuable. Concerning the topic, I prefer to try new things and take risks.

Topic 50 **Doing same things vs. trying new things**

When asked about the approaches to life, many people have the idea that change and new experiences bring us a meaningful life. However, others take the view that staying the same and not changing the usual habits is the better way of the life. In fact both approaches have its advantages and disadvantages, which are listed as follows.

Some people believe change and new experiences provide us a meaningful life because when we adapt to the change and new environments, we must face the difficulties and try our bests to overcome them. This process not only builds our personality, but also gives us an exciting and meaningful life. What's more, the change around us improves our spirit of adaptation and independence. They benefit us in competing for survival in the society. Let us suppose we always stay the same and do not change the environment. Then if someday we have to step into another environment, how can we adapt to it?

On the other hand, people who hold an opposite view consider that sticking to the usual habits is the better way to life. They point out that the longer you keep the same habits, the more adaptive you are and you may live comfortably. They point out that usual changes make you acquaint with nothing, and then it is impossible for you to have a happy life. In order to see this point clearly, they give us a good example: If you change your environment every month, you have to always change your habits and customs. Then how can you live happily?

As far as I am concerned, the advantages of change carry more weight than those of staying the same because I need to improve my adaptation. Only in this way, can I survive in the society.

Topic 50 Doing same things vs. trying new things

Without Christopher Columbus's global navigation five hundred years ago, we can never know the existence of the American continent. Without the first brave man who tasted the poisonous "love apples" which are called tomatoes today, we can never have the delicious tomato & pea soup on our dinner table. And to a person, without jumping into the water, he can never become an excellent swimmer. So, when it comes to doing only what you already do well or trying new things and taking risks, I appreciate more the latter one.

While, the idea of doing what you have already been good at is without advantages. Probably, the most reasonable benefit of this behavior is that, one can make sure to be successful and never lose face. Success is important. For example, if you are an employee of a large competitive company, are you reluctant to drop every precious promotion opportunity to show your failure to your department manager? Or will you be tolerant to losing a job because of an unintentionally tiny error? The answer is possibly not. And doing the things one has already done well can also become a protection to a sensitive self-esteem. This may account for why a considerable number of people seldom speak a foreign language to the native speakers.

Nonetheless, pound for pound, I reckon that trying new things has more advantageous. First of all, there is no doubt that this is a sufficient way to perfect one a lot. It is just the failure that points out where he is inadequate and not developing well. And it is also the experience of failure that teaches him where to avoid making the same mistake as before.

Second, a little forward step always leads to a meaningful important discovery. In science, physicists insist on researching to explore the unknown mysterious substance cosmos and chemists seek out new useful materials through the results of millions of thousands of chemistry experiments. To some extent, we can say that stop exploring stop progressing.

Although there may be tremendous risks and masses of difficulties waiting us on the exploring way, we can really not stop our forward step. Given the factors I have outlined, I believe that a person who is full filled with the courage to try something he doesn't do well is more likely to overdo himself and enjoy a more and more colorful world.

Topic 50 Doing same things vs. trying new things

Doing something already done well is really easy for almost everyone, it's reasonable to choose this other than try new things and take risks. But for me, I firmly stick to do something I haven't done before, for these sorts of things can really prove my ability, give me more experiences, and make my life full of fun and excitement.

First, choosing a different thing to do needs a person's courage. When we come to a completely new thing, almost everyone will feel hard to start, which is common but it strengthen our wills and determinations. In fact, the beginning of a task is a real challenge for everyone, and its importance may directly bring about the result. At this very moment, courage is the thing we really need, but it is also the thing we do not always possess. To conquer the difficulties along with the risks will certainly bring you courage and pride that you never have before.

Second, the things you have already done successfully are of less interest and excitement than that of the new thing. Here's a simple example. Getting the right answer of one plus one, compared to working out an untaught new math problem, which means more to you? Definitely it is the latter! Or you may rather stay at a certain level without try to achieve any higher and being outstanding.

Lastly, to the human being, standing at the side of the society's evolution, the whole world needs new things to be invented, new areas to be explored, new ways to be tried out, and all these are the right things to make progress and build a better tomorrow.

I chose to try new things, and I will continue to make my new days in the future.

Topic 51 **Taking risks vs. planning**

Once upon time, a man pleaded a piece of land from a tribe chief. The chief gave the man a pole and told him that if he could insert the pole in a place from which he could come back before the sunset, the land between tribe station and the pole would belong to him. The man was so greedy that he exhausted to death on the way back. From this story we can see that although the man had his goal and action, he had no plan. A good plan is essential for success. It can quantify the task and make it possible for a man to arrange his time effectively.

First, by means of planning a man quantifies his task. He divides his final target into several periodic ones. Thus, he could average the pressure and see his progress during each period. A good plan encourages a man to fulfill his destination positively rather than passively. Actually, all successful people have their careful plans. For example, an excellent student must have a study schedule that include how to learn new knowledge and how to review old contents; an outstanding businessman needs a rational marketing plan that defines the best avenues to reach his target customers and then assigns a reasonable budget to his efforts. If one could execute his periodic target successfully every time, he could easily achieve his ultimate target. More significantly, during this process a man will acquire a lot of qualities that are essential to success.

Secondly, the advantage of good planning is that one can dispose his time and energy more effectively. It occurs very often in life that one should do a lot of things simultaneously. To take care of his children, to work, to spend enough time with his family and friends, only by a careful planning can a man accomplish his several targets in a short time.

Let us come back to the former story. If the man were a coward he would always fear that he could not come back before the sunset. The answer must be that he got much less than what he could have. Therefore success, to some extent, needs risk. But I think a careful plan is more important because it changes success into a routine and it helps a man use his time more effectively.

Topic 51 **Taking risks vs. planning**

According to the words of Salustius "One is a creator of his own fate." Some people believe that success in life always comes unexpectedly and that's why it is only due to taking risks or chances. On the other hand, others are more inclined to planning their own lives. In my opinion, planning is the better approach for one who strives for success in life because it gives him an assurance in his future success and makes it possible for one to use his time more efficiently and to be more cautious regarding the difficulties that may appear on the way to success.

Success in life comes from careful planning and hard-working. To plan means to pursue some aim and to be confident that it will come some time inevitably. In this way, one acquires a bigger faith in his own abilities and become more urgent in pursuing that aim.

Another important priority of planning is that one can predict some of the difficulties that may arise during his work and in this way he can be better prepared for them. For instance if one desires to gain a better assignment within his office he must clarify his aim and plan everything in advance before taking great pains in pursuing it.

Other advantage of planning is that one can dispose of his time in the most appropriate way in order to fulfill everything that is related to his views of success. It occurs very often in life that one should do a lot of things concomitantly - to look after his children, to work, to spend enough time with his dears and relatives, to find time for rest, etc. Thus only careful planning can make it possible for one to complete many tasks in a short time.

Of course, both careful planning and mere taking risks have their strong and weak points but the former is more likely since it gives one more confidence in future success in his work, it helps one to overcome every impediment more easily and use his time in full value.

Topic 51 **Taking risks vs. planning**

Every day, new businesses are created. Some of these businesses will succeed, but many will fall by the wayside. Some ventures may be on shaky ground at the start, but with perseverance and careful planning, they will prevail in the end. Hopefully a careful plan will not lead to a surprise but rather an expected result and success.

There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood, leads on the fortune
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shadows and in miseries.
—By Shakespeare

Admittedly, chance can sometimes help a man to succeed. But on the other hand, not everyone will have such luck. How can a businessman who succeeds by taking risks sustain his dealing with his business when he is suddenly out of luck? Most likely, their company will be out of business if they have not made an all-rounded plan.

Nevertheless, chance favors a prepared mind. The opportunity is equal to all the people. The key to success is not waiting for a chance, but seizing it. Obviously, careful planning will guide a man definitely, from which, he cannot only find a destination and prevent him from aimlessness, but also assist him to grip the chances on his way to success. For instance, an entrepreneur should understand the power of a cautious plan which may help him define his business concepts, estimate costs, predict sales, control risks, and even increase the chances of succeeding. The plan may tell him what he should do and how to do it. Going into business without a plan is just like having an expedition in the extensive ocean without a compass.

In the second place, a comprehensive plan is also a reliable backup. Although the original plan is followed, suffering may come for some unpredictable occasions. In that way, a well-considered plan that mentions all the possibilities can be very helpful.

From what has been discussed above, chances and taking risks may be unavoidable, but success results primarily from careful planning. A comprehensive schedule, similar to a guide in explorations, is a necessity for achievement.

Topic 51 **Careful planning**

Gorge Barton, the famous American general in the Second World War, was well-known for his bold plan and his ability to grasp chances to strike the enemy in an unexpected way. However, few people know that Barton was also very careful with the battle plans, taking into consideration all the details and making preparation for any sort of accidents. I think in a modern society success often comes from taking risks or chances, but careful planning is vital for us to attain our goals.

No matter what good ideas or big ambition we have, we need to make careful plans in which every step is to be considered. Otherwise, these ideas or ambition will remain "something in the air" which may never be realized. In China, a person who likes to take risks and is hasty in making his decisions is often criticized by others as one who is bold and immature. From early childhood, we are encouraged to take careful considerations before doing any thing important.

Confucius, the ancient Chinese scholar, told his disciples that he would think it over for many times before making any decision. However, on the other hand, in today's fast changing world, we should try to find new ways and come up with new ideas in our work. If we are contented with what we have and always follow the same routine everyday, we may face the risk of being surpassed by others.

As an old Chinese saying goes, "a wise man should have a careful mind as well as a bold spirit." In order to achieve success, we should not be afraid of taking risks and try to grasp chances, but at the same time our efforts must be based on careful planning.

Topic 52 What change would make to your hometown?

Teenagers nowadays live in an environment that is exposed to high technology. This includes the prevalent access to the Internet, the use of special gadgets such as the cellular phone, palm top computers, electrical organizers, and the like, all of which makes communicating with each other so much easier. Aside from this, youngsters like to hang out in clubs where they can dance the night away and listen to their favorite music being played by a live band. This is the missing link in my hometown province, Balayan, Batangas.

Though Batangas is just a four-hour drive away from the capital city of the Philippines, which is Manila, it is still considered a far province. With that, the technology and the places where young people like could hang out are very scant. Being a province where the culture is very much tight and conservative, the old natives of the land do not like their children being influenced by what they connote as "urban living." They would still like to have the peacefulness and the early ways of girls being timid, shy and quiet type and boys being courteous and gentlemen in nature. Therefore, any deviation from these norms would appear to them as major acts of disrespect, whereby it would reach a point that elder people disgrace and disown any of their younger relatives who try to lead a life likened to that of city people. I think open-mindedness should solve this problem. It is just a matter of acceptance that it is not really too bad and that it does have some benefits as well.

Take for instance, going to clubs and parties develops camaraderie and meeting people increases ones circle of friends. No man is an island. One will never know that the person he may meet today would help him out in the future. With this, I think a nice club with a live band, nice food and drinks would be a place to be for teenagers to hang out every night. As a compromise, it should not open until the wee hours of the morning, so the elders would not see it as so much as detriment to their children. Putting up Internet cafes would also be good. Having Internet connections helps province-based people to keep abreast with current events in the city or even international news. In this manner, they would not get bored. They would have a lot of topics to surf about in the Internet. Mobile telecommunication companies could also extend their services into to far-off provinces in order for every cellular phone to have a signal wherever a user may be. Loss of signal in certain places hinders teens from going to the provinces since they know they will have a hard time with communication.

Overall, it all boils down to two things—fun and entertainment. A certain place, which is not only limited to my hometown, should develop itself into becoming more appealing to the youth of today by bringing in things that could keep up with their level of thinking, with the way they do things and counteract their very short attention span.

Topic 52 **What change would make to your hometown?**

Everything in the universe is in constant change. And everything needs continual improvement if the ever changing and increasing demands of humankind are to be met. If I were ever given the chance to change one important thing about my hometown, it would be the Internet service. Needless to say that nothing generally revolutionized the way we live as the Internet in the past decade. Thus, an improvement in this vital service would mean an even more, unheard betterment to the people in my hometown.

It is said that information is power. True saying indeed! I can envision how everything in my hometown could improve dramatically if the Internet service in it were made free, fast and staying out there like electricity, telephone or water all the time. One thing, a fast free and reliable Internet service could improve the way people work in my hometown. With this service people in my hometown do not need to commute to a far place to do their job. This in turn would mean less traffic jams, spacious work place, more time for family and recreation and so on.

The way people learn would be another important thing that a fast, free and reliable Internet service could be useful for my hometown. People will have the chance to go through tremendous amount of information resources in a very small amount of time. This assures a more fulfilled life for my hometown people.

Since its advent, Internet touched every part of our life. It in a dazzling way improved the way we do business, learn and communicate. A change in Internet service implies good way of living for every one in my hometown.

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Topic 53 Is money the most important aspect of a job?

These days, someone may hold the opinion that the most important aspect of a job is the money a person earns. It sounds like true, because with a lot of money, one can live a better life materially. Admittedly, no one can deny the important role money plays in his daily life. But, when you take other aspects of a job into consideration, such as the precious skills and experiences one gains from that job, the prospect of the job and the social status, you may doubt: Is money the most important? Isn't this attitude too narrow? As far as I am concerned, I don't agree with the statement, I doubt whether it can bear much analysis.

We live in a big society that is composed of people from all walks of life. Different jobs have different functions in this society. For example, the function of cleaners is to keep the city clean and tidy; the function of soldiers is to maintain the safety and peace of the society. Maybe they earn less money than those businessmen, but they still work heart and soul on their duties. I believe it is the contributions they make to society that makes them work that hard!

Now, let's take a close look at the scientists. Some of them spend their whole lives inventing new things, exploring the mysterious things and innovating new technology. The scientists, such as Edison, Einstein and Madam Curie, will be shining like the stars in everyone's heart! We can say, it is the spirits they have, contributions they have made to all human beings, great findings and inventions they have left to us that makes them giants! Thanks to them, the society is developing faster and faster. Can we say what they do is for the sake of money?

Furthermore, if everyone in this society worked only for money, what can it turn out to be? Severe competitions may make people become cold-blooded, force them to use illegal means in order to make profit, or even commit some crimes. For their own benefits, no one would like to help others in the same industry. And the relationships among people might become estranged. To conclude, I think money cannot be the most important aspect of a job. Money is not everything! As a saying goes: Money can buy a house but cannot buy a family, money can buy blood but cannot buy one's life, money can buy a wife but cannot buy true love." So, don't stress too much on the money one earns. In fact there are other highlights of a job waiting for you to feel, to find.

Topic 53 Is money the most important aspect of a job?

Most people have some sort of bias against money, thinking that everything linked to money, no matter what the thing is, is evil. If money is really evil in itself, it must follow that money should never be a consideration in choosing a job. The validity of this argument, however, is seldom questioned. Only when we notice that money is merely a means of exchange and does not lead to any moral judgment in itself, we can then study the issue impartially.

The crux of the issue here is why we should take any job at all. Surely there are many reasons for taking a job, such as for professional respect, for the passion to serve the society, for some kind of social status—and, for money. In very rare cases do people ever choose their jobs for merely one of these reasons. Most of the times people work because they want to achieve a number of their personal goals. The most important aspect of their jobs will hence vary from person to person. Of course it is perfectly possible that a person may choose a job largely because of the generous pay that the employer offers. Everyone has to get enough money to survive. Hence if a person is currently living in a miserable condition and, out of his desperate desire for money, he accepts a job offer, the most important aspect of his job is most probably the money. And there is nothing morally wrong with that. The demand for money should surely prevail in this case.

However the need for certain minimum level of salary is only one of the considerations that people make when choosing jobs. It is hence also possible that the person is already rather rich even without a job, but he chooses to work to make himself happier. The pleasures of his career life may emerge from his passion for the profession or the social recognition he may get thereby, but no matter why he feels happy after taking the job, in this case money may only play an insignificant role, if any, in his job.

What have now been presented can actually be seen as the two extreme ends of the issue. Most likely is still that a person works both for his basic needs and for the pleasure specifically derived from the career life. Whether money will come out as the single most important determinant is hence dependent on the various possible cases, or more particularly, on the importance of the wages to his living standard. It is therefore rather ridiculous to give a general yes-or-no response to this question and it takes person judicious considerations before he decides to take a job.

Topic 54 Should one judge a person by external appearances?

What do you feel when a handsome gentleman or a beautiful lady passes by? Then how about a fat short person wearing a dirty shirt? You feel differently? Yes, most people do. It's very common for people to judge a person by external appearance, because it's easy and direct, and it's instinctive. Appearance is a very important aspect of a person and reflects one's personalities. Sometimes you can tell the person's characteristics from his appearance. However, in most cases, you cannot tell exactly what the person is like just from the external appearance, and ethically, we should not judge a person just by one glance at his external appearance.

"Beauty and beast" and "Snow white and seven dwarves" are two stories that are almost known by everyone. Although there are fables, there are deep meanings inside them. What you can learn from them is that people that are not so good-looking can be very good people internally. And actually there are tons of examples in reality. Napoleon is a very short guy, but he was one of the most famous people in the history. Theodore Roosevelt, former US president during World War II, is handicapped; but he is one of the most successful presidents in American history. So how can you tell about the people from their external appearance?

Moreover, there are other undeniable facts that show that a beautiful person may be rotten inside. There are many prostitutes on the busy streets. It's obviously that they are very beautiful, but are they really righteous people? A beautiful appearance is a good thing, but a righteous heart is more valuable. Finally, as we can see, it's out of question that we should not judge people just from their external appearance. The most important standard is their internal personality.

Topic 54 **Appearance**

Lincoln, one of the greatest American presidents, was said to be very bad looking. Once when his rival accused him to be a "two sided" person, Lincoln replied by saying to the audience, "If I had another face, would I wear this one?" Now what we remember about Lincoln is his character, his deeds, his contribution to the country, no one would care about what he looked like.

I agree with the title statement because a person's inner quality is much more important than his external appearances. Whether a person looks good or bad cannot be decided by himself. A man's external appearances are born and generally cannot be changed. But everyone can improve his inner quality by his own efforts. By reading books, learning from others and working hard, we can make progress and achieve success. It was said that Napoleon was very short, but he was respected and admired by people as an outstanding military and political leader. It is the dream of every man to have a pretty wife, yet it is also widely acknowledged that a beautiful woman does not necessarily equal a good wife.

Many men would rather choose a woman with a common face than a good-looking one. Because they know that the virtue of a woman is more important than her outer appearance. A great deal of couples who go hand in hand for their life attribute their happy marriage to loving the other's inner quality instead of loving a pretty face. In business, a boss would never judge his employees by their external appearances; instead what he concerns would be their capability, their assiduity, and their performance. A person with bad appearances but good performance will more likely be promoted than another one with good appearances but bad performance.

Above all, if a person has good appearances, he should not rely on them because he will unlikely achieve success if he does not work hard. However, on the other hand, if he looks bad, he should not feel depressed because he can make others respect him through his own efforts.

Topic 55 Should one make an important decision alone?

Decision-making is a common phenomenon each one of us undergoes in our daily life. Its magnitude varies from trivial issues like choice of a daily wardrobe to making a crucial corporate decision involving millions of dollars. A decision may have its implications ranging from a single person to the entire universe. Hence it is very important to making a correct decision. But I have a mixed feeling when it comes to the choice of making a decision collectively or as a single person. I feel that the decision making process cannot have its hard and fast rules but has to be tailor made to suit a situation. Hence a decision may have to be personally made or in consultation with others as demanded by the situation.

I would like to analyze the decision-making methodology in its two ramifications, one involving personal interests and the other for common issues involving business, political or environmental significance.

Every person is different and has the rights to make his own destiny. It is this quality of uniqueness which makes the mankind so special. We are the best judges when it comes to making personal decisions, for no one can understand a person better than himself. There are many things in life such as selection of a life partner, or choosing a career that are specific to the taste and likings of an individual. It is always useful to hear the opinion of our well-wishers regarding the deciding issue. However the individual should take final decision after carefully weighing all options. It not only gives us the self-confidence, but also institutes the responsibility in us to live by our decision.

Things are quite different when it comes to decision making involving business, political or environmental issues. The decision made in these cases has serious consequences than that of the personal issues. It puts at stake the wealth, safety and future of many others directly or indirectly involved in these issues. It is here the concept of teamwork, Special knowledge etc come into picture.

When taking decision on a business activity, it is always better to have a brainstorming session of all the involved persons to discuss about the issue. It gives the best possible decision after carefully analyzing all the possibilities, with the concurrence of the team. Also all the members involved in the decision-making are clear about their individual roles in contributing to the success of the decision.

There are some cases, where expert knowledge and experiences required in taking the decisions. In such cases one can resort to the help of the experts or the consulting agencies for the correct solutions. The decision suggested by the consultants can be expected to be more suitable, since most decisions suggested by the experts/consultants are either by scientific methods or based on a reliable statistical data of the past. Consultants are available in almost all fields such as engineering, finance, law, insurance etc to name a few.

Also when it comes to taking decisions that are of international importance, the governing bodies such as the United Nations Organization insist on a Veto for decision-making. This method of decision-making ensures that the decisions are in the interests of the member countries.

Hence going by the above decisions, one can take the liberty to chose by self when it comes to personal issues. However when it involves decisions beyond the individual, one should always be a part of the decision making team constructively facilitating the decision, which lies in the best interests of everyone involved.

Topic 55 **Decision**

Napoleon once said that an ordinary military commander would perform better than two excellent ones. By this he meant that a military commander should exercise his power independently and make his decisions without the interference from others, which could ensure high efficiency in military operations. Napoleon is a genius and his words might be true in military struggles. However, for most people, it is essential for them to consult other people before they make any important decision.

Young people need to seek advice from elder ones in the matters of their life and careers. Sometimes the opinions of the old people are so valuable that it plays a very important role in helping young people make decisions. Each year, millions of young students attend a national entrance examination for higher education. When deciding on the subjects and schools, the students often receive opinions from their parents, teachers, friends or those who took part in the examination in the previous years. When running the government, officials need to consult experts and the masses before they make any important decisions. "A wise ruler should gather opinions from all sides", this is an epigram held by generations of Chinese rulers in the past. In the seventies and eighties of the last century, some local governments in east China constructed many chemical plants to facilitate the development of the economy, without hearing the opinions of environmental experts.

As a result, the wastes and gases discharged from these plants have brought about serious pollutions to the local environment. As an old Chinese saying is, "three cobblers with their wits combined equals Zhuge Liang, the master mind." A person may benefit a lot from the opinions of experienced people: he can avoid the similar mistakes and learn valuable lessons. The successful people are often those who are able to utilize the opinions of others.

Topic 56 Arts or environment?

In my opinion, a company should give money to protect the environment. Although art is one of the best forms of recreation that can touch the soul with its myriad forms, and can calm emotions, the present situation calls for protecting the environment. We all are aware of the harmful damages that human race has inflicted on earth. It is time for us to rectify these damages before it is too late and humans are completely wiped out from the face of the earth. Only if human exist, will art forms exist, as they are directly proportional to each other.

Humans are considered the most intelligent of all species primarily due to their very developed and complex brain. But they are also the most selfish of all creatures. We have done a lot of damages to the environment due to our selfish reasons to live comfortably and luxuriously. Deforestation has happened on a large scale to build urban and rural dwellings. Forests, once upon a time, occupied about 60% of the earth's surface. But today they are just confined to a few places. Active deforestation has lead to the loss of habitat for a number of species of flora and fauna. This has lead to the extinction of a variety of animals leading to an imbalance in the ecosystem.

The other issue of concern is the depleting ozone layer above Antarctica. This is also a direst result of human interference. In order to make our lives more comfortable, refrigerators and air conditioners using chlorofluorocarbons or CFC's as they are commonly referred to be produced in huge quantities. The damaging effects of these chemicals are visible on the ozone layer. Due to its damage, harmful UV rays of the sun can reach the earth surface causing skin cancers and other ailments.

In view of the above concerns, the organization should promote the protection of our environment by donating funds generously and organizing campaigns. In fact all the industrial organization should come together and put in sincere efforts to undo the harmful actions that we have done. This is only possible by creating mass awareness among the general public .For this the company must help with both its technical and financial support.

In conclusion, I think the company should choose to protect the environment for the above reasons. Art is of no use if mankind dies. Our future is dark if we do not take steps to protect our environment.

Topic 56 Arts or environment?

Frankly speaking, both arts and environment are important to human being. However, if I were the CEO of a company, I would rather give the money to protect the environment than to support the arts. Because environment protection is quite urgent and matters the future of our globe, while arts is a continuous process to improve the quality of life.

First of all, environment protection is very urgent. Global warming is becoming more and more serious. Many species are dying, the ice in South Pole is melting, and many rivers are being contaminated. Now it is time for us to do something to save our earth and our own future.

Secondly, environment protection is very important for all, including human being, plants, animals and the Earth. When I was a little boy, I often played in the river that is located beside my village. The water was so clean that we could just drink it directly. There were also many kinds of fishes in the river. It was such a beautiful place that I often played for a whole day. Now things are totally different, the water became brown in color due to pollution from factories, very few fishes can live there. Those small children can never enjoy the fun that I once did.

Thirdly, the art is a continuous process to improve the quality of life, which is not as urgent as environment protection. In addition, there are many ways by which funds can be raised for arts, such as exhibitions and auctions of artistic works. Environment protection needs money more urgently than arts do.

Although both arts and the environment are important, I prefer to give the money to support environment protection, due to the three reasons mentioned above.

Topic 56 Arts or environment?

Guan zhong, the ancient Chinese politician, once said that people would know rites and courtesy only after their granaries were full. By this he meant that people would first try to improve their living conditions before they could engage in any artistic activities or improve their behaviours. The environment is closely related to people's living conditions. If a company is going to do something for the people, I would recommend it to give the money to protect the environment.

With the rapid economic development in recent years, China is now facing very serious environmental problems. According some news reports, Yellow River, the "Mother River" of the Chinese nation that nurtured generations of Chinese people over the past thousands of years, has been polluted by industrial wastes and has much less stream of water at present than in previous times, which has imposed great problems on the life and work of the people living along the banks. What these people urgently need is not artistic works hanging on the walls for enjoyment but rather clean water for their daily use.

In some areas in China, though people are much wealthier than before, they live in a much worse environment due to their negligence of environmental protection in the process of developing the economy. Several years ago, I went to a small town in Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province, to visit some of the chemical plants there that have business connections with our company. The town was surrounded by green mountains and there was a river running across it. What surprised me was that the chemical plants there had adopted no measures to protect the environment. Due to the chemical wastes discharged without any treatment, the river turned into a blue colour and the mountains looked like men's faces with scars on them. I wondered that even though the local people had earned enough money, would their life be happy in such a polluted environment?

China is still a developing country now. A large proportion of the population is still leading a poor life. Even in those areas where the economy has developed to a high level, the people have to face the environmental problems that sometimes are detrimental to their health. I think we can benefit more from investing money into environmental protection than imputing it in artistic activities.

Topic 57 **Serious movies vs. entertaining movies**

In this busy world filled with hectic activities, it is up to a human being to take some time away for relaxation. Relaxation helps to quell away the tiredness and rejuvenate our spirits. One way of relaxation is watching movies. The ubiquitous movie theatres in each city can witness the fact that watching movies is the main form of entertainment for people. However, how people make the choices on the movie? Well I feel most people have a proclivity towards an entertaining movie may it be on an action, love or a comedy, rather than a serious one.

People's inclination towards entertaining movies can be strengthened by analyzing the factors behind why people watch movies. Most people visit cinema halls only for relaxation and naturally tend to choose a light subject. It is most common for youngsters to use cinema halls as meeting places and they make watching a movie a part of their weekend holiday plan. That is the reason why all the box office hit movies fall in the entertainment category, whether thrill or action. More over, children are always fascinated by entertaining and fun cartoon movies. Children play the deciding factor in pulling their busy parents to the cinema halls, even if their parents have an inclination towards serious subjects.

However, I would like to see beyond public acceptance of a particular movie, whether it a serious movie or an entertaining one. Filmmaking has been functioning as an industry by itself. I would also like to analyze which movie, whether serious or entertaining will help to boost the growth of the movie industry. As discussed, the main reason of success of an entertaining movie is the wide range of audience who can accept the movie and enjoy it. Hence making an entertaining movie imposes a lesser risk on the capital invested in the making of a movie. However film producers hesitate to spend more on a serious subject with the trepidation over the chances of the movie not making a good performance. This limitation of budget on the serious movies can be witnessed by lack of luster in these films.

The fact that the movies handling a lighter subject make a good business does not necessarily go against making movies with no themes or thought provocation. A message or a subject, when it goes hand in hand with entertainment or amusement is well received invariably by people. Also there are many other avenues to address serious problems, such as books, campaigns, and advertisements etc. However I feel that watching movies is the best way to enjoy action and entertainment. It helps to bring out the exact feelings as conceived by the director. Some of our favorite films tend to linger in our memories for ever and just a little thought about the film unleash the entire sequence of actions in the films drawing us back into its virtual world.

Hence there is no doubt that given a choice I would prefer to watch an entertaining movie rather than a serious one. I am unable to discuss much in detail, for I am running out of time and my friends are already waiting for me. We are going to watch 'Lord of the Rings' by Jack Peterson.

Topic 57 **Serious movies vs. entertaining movies**

It makes me sensitively to think of Hollywood place where movies were first made before World War I. In those days, Hollywood movie was like a magnet, drawing ambitious young men and women from all over the world.

Up till now, there is nothing that can substitute the position of movies that is the most efficient way to relax us. I prefer movies designed to make the audience think. As far as I know, most movies are supposed to be made from the source material that mirrors a part of the social events. That means there is another methods to force us to think about what we have done for our country, what is our responsibility in the society and so on. In fact what kind of information we need can be gain from different medias including television, the Internet, radio, newspapers, especially from some movies.

Tracing back to my childhood, I like watching the first work directed by Alfred Hitchcock, *Rebecca*. So young though I was, it did make me sunk into contemplation. Not only did the plot make me a little confused, but also it really told me the truth that whoever is right or wrong, no one can live in the shadowy place and everyone must live his or her own live, enjoy the sunshine belonging to their own.

A movie worthy thinking about should conquer everything, including one's heart, which never fade with time going by, even be possible to change our lives.

Here I can not help siding with the other view, however it does not mean that we should totally ignore it, this is not a matter of making an "either-or" judgment. What we want to clarify here is what is primary and what is secondary.

If permits, a movie primarily designed to make audience think add some amusement and entertainment, just like tasting a cup of cappuccino.

Topic 57 **Serious movies vs. entertaining movies.**

This is a very flexible topic to argue upon. Both sides have their own pros and cons. But I would like to argue on the fact that the movies are to amuse and entertain the audience rather than fomenting their emotions and causing them to think. In the following paragraph, I have supported my argument with some examples.

Think of a person who has been working the entire day. When he returns home, he will be completely exhausted and will start feeling that he leads a very hectic life. At that situation, if he watches a movie that is full of lively pranks and jokes, he will be revitalized like a battery that is being recharged. This is what everyone wants, especially when they are dejected and doomed.

On the other hand, when a person watches a movie that is very serious and emotional, it will only increase his tiredness. He will be having a lot of thoughts in his mind, like, what to do next? What is my first job when I go to work tomorrow? What are my assignments tomorrow? What is my account balance? Among all these numerous things, when he watches a movie that contains serious dialects, he will start thinking about those things. This is not the thing that should have come to his mind.

Moreover, a movie can be made to convey a subject in an entertaining way rather than in serious ways. This will do more good for children too. We would have seen many kids who will be imitating their favorable characters. For example, the American kids are greatly moved by the cartoon character called the "Barney", after seeing which they try to talk in the same accent and style. So a child can be molded through their favorite character. The movies can be made to convey a good moral through their famous stars, which will inculcate a deep emotion in them in the right way. On the contrary, when a serious movie is played to the children, they are left confused and soporific, and they will neglect it even when there is a good moral in it.

Hence, I conclude that, the movies that are filled with amusement and entertainment will be appreciated by most of the people of all categories. After all, movies are a virtual world where impractical things can be put into practicality and ideology.

Topic 58 Can business do anything they want to make a profit?

Nowadays, merchants tend to strive for remaining in existence by all means due to the extensive competition and burdensome pressures. However, I am always amazed when I hear that it is necessary for businessman to do anything possible to make a profit. It may be as highly laudable and exemplary a thing as it is held to be by those who are addicted to money.

Apparently, I strongly object to it due to various factors that weigh heavily against the notion. The foremost reason is that merchants would be rewarded by nothing but distrust and even hatred from the customers if they hardly care about anything but money. It is widely known that nothing can be compared with the good reputation of a company, which attracts more upright and loyal customers. Suppose we are facing the dilemma of which brand of shampoo to purchase. It is of no surprise if you decide to take the one produced by P&G or other reputable large companies. As a result, what assures the buyers most is the credit of the service suppliers?

Another subtle explanation for my point of view rests on the fact that various appalling results would in some cases, be caused by the immoral and even illegal businesses. It is decent to make profits and receive the repayment of diligent work and continuous efforts. Nevertheless, producing unqualified or even deleterious commodities, which possibly lead to detriments of people's health or security, is never the sensible method to operate a company. What impressed me most is the tragedy happened several months ago in some part of China. Hundreds of infants died because of the nonnutritive milk powders produced by some merchantmen without ethics. Therefore, it is never too rigid to denounce the immoral and irresponsible behavior. The third point I would like to mention is that the merchants themselves would not be reassured to enjoy the property acquired in improper ways.

In most cases, it is the essential satisfaction of benefiting the public, rather than the material items, which inspires people profoundly. What a pleasant thing it would be to receive repayment of your diligent work and continuous efforts! On the contrary, few people would go into rapture even if they possess a mass of wealth earned through indecent ways. Thus, only by obeying commercial disciplines could a businessman obtain supreme success and maximum pleasure.

Taking into all the reasons above into account, it is barely too arbitrary to conclude that only by descent and good Intentioned business activities could a company achieve respectable and decent success.

Topic 58 Can business do anything they want to make a profit?

Can businesses do anything they want to make a profit? That is a complex and controversial issue. Some people think that businesses should do anything they can to make a profit, while other people believe that businesses should be honest while making a profit, not only for themselves but also for the community. I agree with the latter point of view and in the following paragraphs I will try to explain my position more clearly.

First of all, I truly believe that one of the foremost important qualities of a successful business is honesty. Businesses should be honest because it can help to expand a client base and maintains a long-lasting partnership. No one wants to conduct business with a dishonest company.

Secondly, not every business is ethical. For example, computer games are a very successful business, but they often impact children's behavior, and increase the cases of violence on the playground. Another example is companies like McDonald's that sell fast food to children. According to the Canadian Pediatric Society, a quarter of the children living in North America are now obese, a rate that tripled between 1981 and 1996. Therefore, some businesses can destroy our health, with only one goal in mind, and that is to increase profit. I believe it is an unacceptable situation and steps must be taken to make drastic changes.

Thirdly, businesses should be beneficial to the community, because the profit they make comes from the community to begin with. A percentage of the profit should be returned to the community. Businesses should support and encourage the construction of playgrounds, schools and parks.

Given the reasons discussed above, the conclusion, which may be intertwined at the beginning of the discussion and thus become more persuasive, may be safely reached that businesses should not only do what they can to make a profit, but also support and develop the community, with integrity and honor.

Topic 58 Can business do anything they want to make a profit?

It is claimed that the only aim of business is to make a profit. Moreover, it is thought that running a business without making benefits makes no sense. Actually, from an economic point of view, the statement "businesses should do anything they can to make a profit" is thoroughly true. However, from a moralistic and legal point of view that statement seems not quite well sustained.

I consider that to make a profit means that a person deals with business to be as flexible as possible. It means to put new technologies in application or to explore new scientific areas. Furthermore, to invest in individual improvement of the employees' professional skills and to be awake of the global market tendencies are things absolutely necessary for the modern management of business.

Unfortunately, business is not a quite fair game. It is well-known that sometimes businesses have their own "dark" sides such as tax evading, illicit trade or disloyal competition. In addition to this, many employers make their employees get overworked without any extra payment.

Another point worth mentioning is that businesses do not care enough about the environment and they frequently pollute it. Laws in most countries prosecute these actions, although some businesses keep breaking it without any punishment.

I consider that businessmen sometimes forget about utter limits in their ambitions to make a profit. Generally speaking, I do agree that businesses should do anything they can to make a profit but do not forget that anything does not mean everything.

If I ran my own business I would do it in a way that would neither ruin my name nor corrupt my conscience.

Topic 59 **What's your hurry?**

Life is short. Haste makes waste. What's your hurry? These three sayings characterize the way I manage my day-to-day chores. I don't want to rush through things; I prefer to take my time.

Life is short. You never know what may happen tomorrow so it is important to enjoy today. Of course, some people will say that's why it is important to cram a lot into a day. But then, how would you possibly have time to enjoy all of those experiences. By doing a few things slowly and doing them well, you can savor the experience.

Haste makes waste. We are not machines. We can't rush through things mechanically. If we do, we might forget something; we might take shortcuts. By taking our time, we can do a chore carefully, completely, and correctly.

What's your hurry? Where's the fire? I don't see any need to rush to the next experience. There's still a lot to see and learn from the chores around you. Taking care of your baby brother for instance can be very rewarding. You could simply keep him near you while you watch TV and write a letter and talk on the phone. Or you could devote your whole attention to him and observe his reactions to his environment. You can observe carefully, if you are trying to do four things at the same time.

To twist a common saying, "Don't just do something, sit there!" Take life easy and savor each minute. Life is shorter than you think.

Topic 59 **Get things done**

People are different in many aspects. Some people are always in a hurry to go places and get things done as fast as they can, while others prefer to take their time and live a life at a slower pace. Either way is good, but I choose the first style due to two reasons: extra time and more chances to do other things.

In the first place, my personality makes me do things fast and go to places in a hurry. I always keep one thing in mind: if I save some time, I could do more things. From my experiences, I used to finish all my homework after classes in order to have more of my own time at home. I will read novels or I will do extra exercise for Math or English. I find it is better to my study, and my life will be more interesting. This is the major reason that I prefer to get things done fast.

In the second place, I have many experiences that let me understand that the faster pace, the better effects. For a long time, I feel secure at a faster pace, since it will leave me a chance to go over my work and correct my mistakes. I think it is useful in many cases especially when writing a test. And even when I am going to see a movie, I prefer to get there earlier for a better seat. There are many examples in daily life that show the advantages of getting things done fast.

Of course, for those who prefer to take their time, they will have some good reasons too. But I like to live life at a faster pace. It is not only because of my personality, but it also because of my experiences.

Topic 60 Are games important to adults?

Some people think that games should play an important role in the life of everyone including adults; others think that games should be left for children. There are many arguments for and against both positions, but in my opinion everyone should have a hobby and playing games is good.

One of the most cited reasons against playing games in adulthood is the lack of time. Most games are very time-consuming, and to play games most adults have to sacrifice time they spend with their family. I have a friend who was fascinated by recreating great historical events especially battles. He spent all his free time on studying old uniforms and rules of conduct. Even on work he searched for information about ancient wars on the Internet. His productivity declined sharply. As soon as his boss found out about his passion, he was fired.

On the other hand, many games are good for entertainment in spare time. For example, it's much better to play in role-playing game, than spend time watching numerous soap operas on TV. Some games are very good for people's health, for example followers of Tolkien spend a lot of time learning how to use swords and bows.

Some games are very good at improving brainpower. For example many experts agree that chess, reversi and other intellectual games enhance thinking and concentration. Also a person who actively play chess stand less chance to get Alzheimer's disease comparing to average people.

Also it is easy to bridge a generation gap by playing games. Games help to bring people together. Many families I know that like to play games are very well-knit families. Parents spend much more time together with children if they have similar interests.

Adults should not spend all their time thinking of and playing games, they should balance time they spend at work and with their families. If they have children, sharing their interest with their children is extremely recommended. In conclusion, I want to say that playing games is a very good hobby for adults.

Topic 60 Are games important to adults?

Playing games has always been thought to be important to the development of well-balanced and creative children; however, what part, if any, it should play in the lives of adults has never been researched that deeply. I believe that playing games is every bit as important for adults as for children. Not only is taking time out to play games with our children and other adults valuable to building interpersonal relationships but is also a wonderful way to release built up tension.

There's nothing my husband enjoys more after a hard day of work than to come home and play a game of Chess with someone. This enables him to unwind from the day's activities and to discuss the highs and lows of the day in a non-threatening, kick back environment. A close friend received one of my most memorable wedding gifts, a Backgammon set. I asked him why in the world he had given us such a gift. He replied that he felt that an important aspect of marriage was for a couple to never quit playing games together. Over the years, as I have come to purchase and play, with other couples & coworkers, many games like: Monopoly, Chutes & Ladders, Mastermind, Dweebs, Geeks, & Weirdos, etc. I can reflect on the integral part they have played in our weekends and our "shut-off the T V. and do something more stimulating" weeks. They have enriched my life and made it more interesting. Sadly, many adults forget that games even exist and have put them away in the cupboards, forgotten until the grandchildren come over.

All too often, adults get so caught up in working to pay the bills and keeping up with the "Joneses" that they neglect to harness the fun in life; the fun that can be the reward of enjoying a relaxing game with another person. It has been said that "man is that he might have joy" but all too often we skate through life without much of it. Playing games allows us to: relax, learn something new and stimulating, interact with people on a different more comfortable level, and to enjoy non-threatening competition. For these reasons, adults should place a higher priority on playing games in their lives.

Topic 60 **Are games important to adults?**

I agree with the statement "Playing games is important for adults." In this challenging world, adults work very hard to earn a better living and thus do not get time to keep their body and mind fit. By playing games, adults not only can remain fit but also can enjoy life. Games can be of two types: physical and mental. The former keeps the body fit, whereas the latter keeps the mind fit.

Physical games include indoor games like table tennis and outdoor games like football and basketball. These games not only increases blood circulation but also burns the excess fat present in our body. These games keep us fresh and thus improve the quality of our life. These games also teach discipline, co-operation, respect for others, build our self-confidence and teach us how to face defeat bravely, both in games and in real life.

Mental games include chess, puzzle, quiz and IQ tests. These games increase our mental ability and thinking power. They teach us how to make decisions, increase our knowledge, improve our way of thinking and our memory, thus keep us mentally alert and allow us to make the right decisions in life.

By looking at the above reasons, I conclude that games, whether they are physical or mental, indoor or outdoors can improves our lifestyle and help us achieve our goals. Therefore, playing games is important for adults.

Topic 60 **Are games important to adults?**

Some people assert that playing games is important for adults. In my opinion the importance of playing games depends on the types of games considered. While some games may benefit to health, mental abilities, working capacity, or help to relax, others may harm the person playing in different ways. I think the games that are important for adults to play include those requiring action, intensive thinking and teamwork. It has been medically proven that physical training is extremely important for adults. It helps not only to maintain fitness, but also enhances the capacity of thinking and working. Therefore participating in sports games, such as basketball, football, tennis and other action games is essential.

Games that require intensive thinking develop logic, attention and unconventional approach. Among this type of games are puzzles, crosswords, and strategy games. Games that involve team work are important to develop abilities to make correct decisions with consideration of opinions of different people, because these skills are often used in everyday situations.

Still there are other types of games that may be harmful. These are mainly computer games, which cause severe eye-strain and exposure to radiation. Moreover, computer games not only harm our health, but also have a negative impact on our working productivity. Many companies have stringent rules against their employees playing games during work-hours.

There is also one category of games that I believe can be both harmful and beneficial. These are games played for money. On one hand, winning such a game the player feels happy, which have an overall positive influence on the players' health and financial situation. On the other hand, losing the game can drive the person playing into disappointment and even into depression, thus harming his health, not to mention the loss of money.

Thus, in my opinion, the importance of adults playing games can be evaluated depending on the level of positive or negative influences that those game may have on the person involved.

Topic 60 Are games important to adults?

The young of most mammals, including humans, likes to play. Scientists claim that with lions, for example, play fighting prepares the cubs for their future life as a hunter and killer. The question is whether games teach humans about life. Many people believe that games accustom the player to life-skills such as perseverance and competitiveness.

However, I disagree with the title statement because I consider games to be mainly for children. In childhood, we do not have responsibility for the world. The child is always eager to grow up - to become a year older or to reach the legal age of an adult. Children find happiness in games by pretending to be an adult in the real world. The problem is that games are optional; they contain too much happiness and too little hardship to ever be real. An adult, by contrast, finds meaning in his life by accepting that there are greater things in the world than his own happiness.

One of the dangers of games is that some people attempt to translate the rules of a game onto reality. The modern example of this problem is television and computer games. People in the West are now growing concerns that children and teenagers occasionally imitate violence that they see on the screen. Death is fun on a computer game; and unstable teenagers who kill people in computer games can forget the value of life. American films are often accused of making violence glamorous.

This is not to say that games did not deceive people before the invention of television and the microchip. Success as a sports-star can lead a player to self-importance. If a football player is made captain of his team and receives praise from the local press, he might be tempted to assume that he is the boss in other areas of his life, such as within friendships. Also, he might be surprised to find that sport is simply not important.

Finally, gambling should also be mentioned as a dangerous game. Although gambling and the acceptance of luck are acceptable features of many cultures, a selfish gambler can neglect his financial duties towards his family. Eventually, gambling can become a drug that destroys life.

To an extent, life for most people is precarious enough to include some degree of winning and losing, and of adventure. Also, an unexpected opportunity or lucky find is one of the joys of life. But sooner or later we have to settle down and face the grind of adult life.

Topic 61 Should parents make decisions for their teenage children?

The issue of whether parents or other adult relatives should make important decisions for their teenage children arouses much controversy among people with different perspectives and backgrounds. Some people believe the statement is legitimate, because children are not mature and have not enough experiences to determine the optimal choice. On the other hand, people claim that no body can control other's life even their parents. People should be responsible for their own behaviors and determine their lives. As far as I am concerned, I would like to refute the former and support the latter. In the following discussing, I would like to address some evidence to substantiate my point of view.

In the first place, the most important reason for me to choose this position is that old teenagers have their own thoughts and ideas. The fact that the thoughts of children are not perfect and logical dose not mean their parents have right to eliminate their decision without considering the children's intentions. In the era of rapid social and technological changes leading to increasing life complexity and psychological displacement, the good decision in parents' time would be out of data.

In the second place, the job of parents is not to make decision for their children, but to help them to choose. In this period of 15 to 18 year-old children, they are always radical. If their parents make decisions instead of themselves, they will not obey these decisions. Parents had better told their kids about their opinions, worries and experiences as friends. Give much more room for their kids to think and decide. Respect and believe their kids will choose the better one and will face the result directly.

In sum, considering the aforementioned reasons I support the statement that older teenagers had better make decisions by themselves. Admittedly, our parents are our best and most early teacher. They would give us more important advices to help us choose the best decision.

Topic 61 Should parents make decisions for their teenage children?

First of all, it is not easy to define if people at the age of 15 to 18 are adults or children because they are physically grown up and intelligent enough to carry out general work like adults do in a company, while a lot of them are under their parents' control. I believe that they should be able to make important decisions by themselves, no matter how hard for them.

Needless to say, the recognition of age and maturity is not universally identical. There were some times that 15 to 18 years old were recognized as adults and supposed to think and act independently. It was usual for women at the age of 15 to get married in my grandmother's generation in Japan. Even in the present days, it is still a common thing in some developing countries. Thus, I guess it depends on whether the community is wealthy enough for 15 to 18 year-old children to be children or not. Women in my grandmother's generation needed to get married as soon as possible and have about 10 children in order to get enough labor forces for their family business and have them taking care of their parents and grandparents. In those days, children must have grown up with prediction of earlier age they had been supposed to become independent.

These days, women in developed countries do not need to have so many children anymore and they can go on to higher education, by comparison with early times. It has enabled mothers to get a job as well as fathers in order to make their family wealthier and keep their children beside them longer. As children are not expected to be important labor forces for their family anymore, it may not really matter if they are mature enough to make important decisions. Then how do children predict themselves to be independent at the age of 15 to 18 in such a situation?

I strongly believe that this phenomenon has made today's adults more immature and immoral. I could not believe that a lot of 20 year-old Japanese people attended the ceremony for Coming of Age Day with their parents this year. Unless adults stop treating young people like children, future adults will become even more immature. They still need parents' and other adults' advice to make important decisions but I cannot agree with the title statement: parents or other adult relatives should make important decisions for their older teenage children. I would say that it is no more than spoiling children.

Topic 62 **What do you want most in a friend?**

A lot of characteristics make a good friend. However, in my opinion, having a friend who is intelligent can do you good in many ways.

An intelligent friend can share your problems and help you solve them properly. You are overwhelmed with stuff? He can show you the order to finish them on schedule. You are having problems with someone? Tell him and he will find out the appropriate way to satisfy you and the other friend of yours. Let's imagine you were stuck in an elevator for instance. You could be very upset and unable to get out of it. The situation could change dramatically if you had an intelligent friend beside. He could calm you down and quickly find the way to rescue you.

An intelligent friend is also a good example for you to learn from. In fact, you can get a lot of interesting and invaluable things from this knowledgeable friend. You can better yourself by learning his unique way of thinking and handling things. My friend is very intelligent, not only in his study, but also in his everyday life. He can solve problems in the way that I can never think of. Having him my close friend for ages, I have learnt a lot of things from him that may help me much in my life. He taught me the way of finding and solving problems, and even changing unchangeable situations in some intelligent ways.

Indeed, having an intelligent friend can give you the motivation to keep on trying to be equal to him. This makes you become competitive, or emulative in some positive ways. You may have a thought: "Why could he do that but couldn't I?" And you will try your best in order not to be inferior to your friend. You then will change your old and conservative way of thinking and doing things, becoming open-minded to grasp new things and develop your true potentials.

All of these fabulous things an intelligent friend brings to you can be a stable basis for a long-lasting friendship. However, friendship requires a thorough and mutual understanding. So, you, yourself, also play an important part to make it last forever, with whoever friends you have.

Topic 62 **What do you want most in a friend?**

Almost every person in the world needs friends. Different people hold different opinions in choosing friends. Some consider intelligence as the most important characteristics in their friends; others regard a sense of humor as the most significant personality. As far as I am concerned, reliability, which means faith, confidence and trust, is of vital importance. The reasons go as follows.

Firstly, based on reliability, friendship can be lasting. On the one hand, when your friends are faithful, you would love to get in close touch with them. For instance, you could reveal your secrets to them without worry about being betrayed, and tell them your pleasure so as to double the joys. On the other hand, when you are loyal to your friends, they would also like to keep relationship between each other. Undoubtedly, you will be frequently invited to friends' get-togethers and discussions, in which your opinions will be fully taken into consideration since your friends respect you and know your suggestion does good not only to yourself but also to them as well. Thus, willing of both your friends and you to continue the formed friendship will lead to your perpetual friendship.

What's more, reliability makes real friendship more solid and deeper. Take borrowing money as example, it is almost completely sure that, probably besides your family, people you ask for money are your most reliable friends. You turn to them because you trust their sincerity to give you help, and, at the same time, they exert themselves to meet your need because they are confident of your attitude to your friendship, to be more specific, your promise to return money. Friendship between those friends and you, thereby, gets further development and finally becomes really invaluable friendship just in coincide with the old saying- a friend in need is a friend indeed.

In conclusion, reliability can be a norm to exam the real friendship and motivate people to deepen their friendship. When I choose my friends, reliability is the foremost factor to be considered. Not only should my friends be reliable to our friendship, but also I should too.

Topic 62 What do you want most in a friend?

What is the most important quality in a friend? Is it intelligent, humorous, or reliable? As far as I am concerned, I think it is reliable. Among countless factors that influence the choice, these are three conspicuous aspects as follows.

To me, reliability is the most important quality of a friend. A friend is person whom we know, like, and trust. We may know and like a person who is intelligent, or who has a sense of humor, but we cannot call him a friend unless he is also faithful and trustworthy. Perhaps we all know the famous novel by Victor Hugo, *Notre-Dame de Paris*, and wish that we had a friend like Quasimodo. Although he is ugly, the man has a kind heart and a very loyal nature. He seems dedicated to anyone who will show him true kindness. Even if someone we know who does not have a sense of humor, or does not intelligent enough, he can still be our friend because he is the one who we can trust.

Another reason is that a friend must be a person whom we can depend on. He is willing to listen to us, give us supports, and lend a helping hand to us when we are in need. "A friend in need is a friend indeed." A friend is a person whom we can trust our feelings and inner thoughts with, and do not fear that he will betray us. It is hard to imagine that anyone will share his thoughts with a person who afterwards will spread the content of their conversation to everyone else in the world.

Of course, intelligent and humorous are also important qualities of a friend. A friend who is mentally acute can give us sound judgment and rationality when we face problems; a friend who is funny can give us an enjoyable time, and add spice to our life. But for me, I still think that the most important quality of a friend is being reliable.

Topic 62 **Friends**

Friends are as precious as priceless treasures sent by angels. Every individual are longing for sincere and congenial friends. Among various virtues that contribute to an ideal friend, I believe that it is honesty that I value most.

The foremost reason for an honest friend is that I can always count on him whenever I am involved in some trouble. As the saying goes? A friend in need is a friend indeed? Come what may, the loyal friend always gives me a feeling of security and warmth. What is more, it is my sincere friend that inspires me and shows me the courage to carry on. Some so-called friend may draw back in the case of a serious adversity while the honest friend would reach out his hands to me, unconditionally and sincerely.

Another subtle explanation is that an honest friend always laudable and exemplary. It is a great honor and fortune to own such a convincingly honorable friend and, definitely, following his step as an honest person is never too excessive a thing to do. Honesty is, most of us believe, the indispensable part of a person's valuable traits/peculiarity. Never can a person achieve many accomplishments nor have a high prestige without the conspicuous sparkling quality: honesty. There are numerous instances closely fit the notion, just like the American president George Washington. His bravery to be honest was acknowledged by the story readers and it was of no accident that he later became one of the greatest American presidents.

In addition, the third reason I would like to mention is that a truthful companion points out my shortcomings and it is definitely a tremendous help for me. Unaware of the innate defects, I am apt to make the same mistake again and again unconsciously. Friends, some of who are more or less sophisticated and artful, are reluctant to rectify my mistakes in fear of irritating or offending me. Things would be completely different if I am fortunate enough to have a truthful friend. By his hearty advice, I am persuaded to go the right way; by his pertinent blame, I am able to be free from making repeated mistakes; by his good intentional warning, I am alert to the conceivable danger.

All in all, it would not be too hasty to determine that honesty is the enormously significant virtue of friends. A genuine friend is, without doubt, always a great helper, a responsible teacher and furthermore, an instructive advisor.

Topic 63 Are difficult experiences valuable lessons for the future?

Some people argue that most experiences in our lives that seemed difficult at the time, can later become valuable experiences. I cannot agree with them more. There are numerous reasons why I hold confidence on this opinion, and I would explore only a few primary ones here.

Difficulties are beneficial to our personal growth. In the course of our life, we are going to face numerous difficulties and obstacles, and each difficulty will help us grow up, and become a valuable lesson for the future. A toddler falls off the ground for many times before he knows how to walk, and a child learns how to swim after he drinks water in the swimming pool. In addition, only after we experienced failures, we know the value of success. We will never appreciate anything that comes so easy. Difficulties can make us feel stronger and be more confident for the future obstacles.

Furthermore, difficulties in our work can help us gain more experience and knowledge. Most of the times we can gain knowledge and experiences faster through experiencing difficulties in our life and trying to find a solutions to the perplexities that we face. There is a famous saying, "no pain, no gain." For example, when we take on a new job that we do not have much experience in, the first few weeks can be extremely painful and we may feel enormous pressure and difficulties. And we will try our best to adjust, to learn and to think, how to do this job better. The more difficulties we feel, the harder we try to acquire the skills and knowledge to overcome it. Learning and this stage is extremely efficient and our problem-solving skills well increase. After we overcome more and more problems, we can become an experienced worker in this field and will be able to take on more challenges. We will never fear that we will face the same kind of problem again. This means that we have accumulated valuable experiences for the future.

In a word, a difficult experience is a gift that life gives us. We should appreciate it and take it as a precious opportunity to gain knowledge and experience about our study, work and life.

Topic 63 Are difficult experiences valuable lessons for the future?

No one in the world can escape some kind of difficulties for perhaps they are given by fate and they will accompany us for a whole life. Success is one of the most important life goals for everyone, but every mature human being has to admit that success will be a blank dream without difficulties.

From childhood, my parents and teachers told me that there is no flat and paved road for me and I have to explore the road by myself. I do not know what are waiting for me in the unknown future, but what I know is that if I withdraw without courage to face difficulties, I will never reach my success. Every time when I met difficulties, I always felt upset and sometimes I felt so hopeless that I think the world is closing the door on me; but looking back afterwards, my life experience always tells me that what I felt at that time was wrong. Life consists of all kinds of difficulties and these difficulties are the most useful lessons given by life.

We bring about most of the difficulties by ourselves. It's a rule that making mistakes will result in difficulties, and by dealing with difficulties we will reduce mistakes. I think that is a process of making progress. At the same time, difficulties can teach us how to face life and help us to gain courage. Once you have courage and deal with all difficulties with a healthy mood, you will really know what life is like and to some extent, you have achieved a kind of success.

All in all, difficult is the best teacher for us.

Topic 63 Are difficult experiences valuable lessons for the future?

Life experiences definitely come in many different forms and shapes. They can be really sweet and really painful just as well. There is an opinion that sooner or later all of the above mentioned experiences would turn into valuable lessons of some kind.

I think it is a little naive and somewhat childish approach. This is the way people want it to be, not the way it actually happens in real life. I am convinced that, unless some supernatural powers interfere, no experiences will start turning into anything of value. It seems to me that some efforts must be applied, because experience is not the sort of things that can come naturally, so to speak. To give an obvious example, if a student flunks his or her examinations one day, and gets into big trouble with the faculty and the dean put together, how likely is this student to do well on the exams next term? It remains to be seen, unless the student in question had given the whole thing some thought and decided to do everything possible not to get in such a jam over again. I suppose that if he hadn't done that, he would simply repeat the whole mess once more.

Quite naturally, things don't work out this way all the time. There are people who do learn from their mistakes. The bad part about this very peculiar kind of learning is that it always hurts, one way or another. If one has the habit of learning only after some first-hand experience, he will most certainly suffer from it. I personally can tell from my own experience that it's way more reasonable to stay on the safe side and avoid unpleasant experiences. Because when you have to deal with some of them you rarely think about all of the good things that can come with it some time in the remote future. What you really think about in such moments is how uncomfortable, upsetting and painful the whole experience is and how much it hurts to go through it.

Still I have to admit that it can do you some good later on. But it's necessary to work on the difficult experiences that happen to you once in a while, if you really want them to turn into valuable lessons in the future. Gain is how we learn, said C.S. Lewis. That's the way things go. But not always, unfortunately. Sometimes people happen to die if the pain is too big. And therefore they don't learn anything anymore.

Topic 64 Self-employed vs. employed

There are many advantages for people to work for themselves and have their own business. For example, you do not need to worry about getting up too late for work; you do not need to worry about the relationship between you and your boss; you may go to work at any time you want, because you are the boss of your own business. You may lead a more spontaneous and free life. In spite of this, personally, I would like to work for someone else.

No matter what kind of business you own, a domestic or international company, or a small one like a snack shop, you have to take care of many things such as a license, rent, your employees, your competitors, product marketing, even the weather if you own an umbrella shop.

That is what I do not like. I do not like a complicated life. I am just a normal female who hasn't much ambition either in my life or in my career. I am used to having a simple life, a regular life with discipline, without much risk. What is most important for me, besides work, is that I can still have free time for things I enjoy doing, and do not need to think about business all the time. For me, being a business owner might have too much risk and stress.

Of course, being an employee, you are subject to discipline, and pay attention to your boss, but that's a part of life, just like for others, paying attention to their own business, earning a lot of money, and having risk are parts of their lives.

In a phrase, I would rather work for someone else. I just want to have my own simple and regular life!

Topic 64 **Self-employed vs. employed**

My friends and I always talk about our jobs. Whether to work for ourselves, own a business or work for an employer is one of the hot topics we discuss. Some prefer to work for themselves or own a business. While others prefer to work for an employer. As far as I am concerned, I would like to work for myself. My arguments for this point are listed as follows.

First of all, perhaps one disadvantage to work for others is that we could not plan our time freely. We have to work from 8 to 5 according to the employer's schedule. No matter what the weather is like and no matter whether it is necessary, we have to go to our office on time. We have no choice but to obey the rules set by the employer. Suppose we work for ourselves, we could decide our own timetable. We could find the best time for us to work and improve the work efficiency.

Another reason for my inclination for working for ourselves is that we earn what we deserve. Our wages would be very clear to us. We know what we should earn. That's fair and we would work harder to get better result. However, when we work for others, the boss decides what we earn. It often occurs that we get less than we could earn.

In addition, working for ourselves, we try our best in our work to reach our goal, thus we would be faster to succeed in life. If we work for others, the enthusiasm to work may not be so high. I heard many enterprisers who work for themselves succeed earlier than people of the same age.

In a word, in spite of the fact that there may be a couple of disadvantages to work for ourselves, I feel that the advantages are more obvious, that is we could plan our time for work more freely, earn the amount of money that we deserve and get early success in life. Taking into account of all these factors, I would choose to work for myself.

Topic 64 **Self-employed vs. employed**

Although the idea of owning a business is an exciting and admirable one, it is not always a realistic option, especially for a new graduate like me. On the contrary, I would like to work for someone else after my graduation. The reasons for my view go as follows.

The most obvious reason is that I can learn plenty of practical business and administrative knowledge as an employee. If I were given the opportunity to work at an outstanding company such as Mckinsey & Company or IBM, I certainly would absorb its first hand management skills accumulated for years. I would also benefit greatly from its various valuable training programs. With the help like that I can avoid many unnecessary trials and failures that may be involved in my own business path.

Another positive aspect of working for someone else lies in the development of my broader social contact network. As I just step into adult society, I am still timid and lack of communication skills. Working for others will offer me opportunities to get access to all kinds of clients, customers, and employers. Undoubtedly, adequate exposure to them will teach me how to communicate with one another, how to deal with socializing problems, and how to establish my own personal social network.

Moreover, working for an employer, to some extent, can build up nice personalities that are essential for my future career. As we all understand, management knowledge itself does not lead to success without a combination of broad social network and nice personality. Working with colleague helps me to cultivate nice dispositions-cooperative, responsible, caring for others, outgoing, etc.

All in all, working for an employer suits my situation perfectly. Therefore, from what has been discussed above, I would rather choose to be an employee and prepare myself in all fields, if possible, for my future self-employed.

Topic 65 Should a city preserve or destroy its historic buildings?

The issue here is whether old, historic buildings in a city should be preserved or replaced by modern buildings. In my opinion, buildings of historical value should definitely be protected rather than destroyed. I base my point of view on following reasons.

Firstly, each historical building is precious property of human being. Like an antic, the value of an old building cannot be measured by money. We will lose those valuable historical buildings permanently if we don't preserve them. Once a historical building is destroyed, we can never restore it; even if it is restored to its original look, the new building is only a fake replica; the historical value will never come back to us.

Secondly, a historic building always represents history and has educational functions. Each one of them can tell us a story. For example, some buildings are evidences of foreign invasion, others are signs of various religions existed in past decades. People nowadays can always obtain historic or cultural information through visiting these old buildings and sites. Although we can learn the past from books, pictures and by visiting museums, nothing can compare with the actual historical buildings themselves, which can bring vivid educational material to us.

Thirdly, historical buildings are a symbol of a city and a valuable tourist resource; therefore a city cannot go without historical buildings. Beijing is represented by the Forbidden City, the Summer Palace, which are all historical relics. It is hard to imagine that someday the City of Beijing decides that all these buildings should be destroyed and modern buildings be built on their sites. Because those historical relics and buildings are too important to the city and can generate profound tourist income. A city will benefit more by protecting its historic buildings than by replacing them with modern buildings.

For all reasons given above, I will strongly suggest a city municipal should preserve the old, historic buildings.

Topic 65 Should a city preserve or destroy its historic buildings?

Whether the city should try to preserve its old, historic building or destroy them? I believe that different people will have different opinions. According to my experiences, I think that we should preserve these old, historic buildings. I like to use following reasons to explain why I think so.

The first and important reason is that every old building represents an important piece of history. Undoubtedly, they can reflect contemporary culture, custom and life style, etc. For example, the former Imperial Palace in China, where ancient emperors have ever stayed, has had a longstanding history as long as over 2,000 years. Through it, we not only can remember many famous historical events, but can also know that ancient people have grasped very advanced architecture techniques and methods.

I believe if we demolish these valuable buildings, we will destroy a significant piece of history. More seriously, we will not be able to rebuild them. What people need is not the duplication or copy. In many old cities, there are some old houses at where there were many important meetings hold. When we visited old sites, we seemed to go back to that turbulent and exciting time - as if we can hear what those important historic characters were talking.

I admit that some old buildings have become a bit dilapidated and unsightly, and have not generated any revenue. But if we can refurbish them, I believe that they could start to attract visitors again. From what has been discussed above, I can safely draw the conclusion that we should preserve these historic buildings.

Topic 65 Should a city preserve or destroy its historic buildings?

Every culture has its special features. Buildings, as symbol of architectural heritage, are an important part of the history of any country or city. Moreover, they could help us find the answers of many questions about the historical development of our society. Therefore, I truly believe that every city-administration should try to preserve the old, historic buildings.

All over the world many buildings are preserved in their authentic appearances. Furthermore, many of them have unique constructions and are really beautiful and impressive. In my opinion, the destruction of such remarkable pieces of architecture and their replacement with modern buildings can be called 'barbarity'. Therefore, a lot of old buildings belonging to the historical heritage of the world are protected by UNESCO.

It is a fact that cities, which have their old, historic buildings, are favorite places for holiday and tourism. The reason is that these cities keep their special atmosphere and could offer us a magnificent journey through their cultural and architectural history.

The only reasonable argument to destroy some historic buildings and replace them with modern ones, is when there is a risk of self-destruction, which could endanger human lives. But again the safety standard can be achieved by renovation or restoration of old buildings.

In conclusion I would say that preserving old, historic buildings could be considered as a sign of our respect and regard to the previous generations. I am aware that it is an expensive initiative. But who can evaluate the worth the historic buildings have, for those who will come after us. And I would dare to ask - who gives us the right to destroy what the centuries have kept for us? And I would answer "Nobody"!

Topic 66 Are classmates a more important influence to a child?

I strongly agree that classmates are more influential to a child's success at school than parents. This I support with the following reasons.

A child spends so much time with his classmates at school. They study together, play together, and write exams together. Psychologists agree that during their first years at school, children are more influenced by their classmates on their emotional and mental growth.

In addition, a child has nothing to hide with his classmates in terms of academic performance. For instance, a child who does a bad job in a math exam will be revealed on his grades; a child who wins the first prize in oral debate contest will be rewarded before the whole group of students. So his classmates know both his good and bad sides. However, it is easier for a child to conceal something to his parents while describing his conduct at school—often limit to those good points.

Finally, classmates are of similar age with a child. They share so many interests in common. So a child is more attracted by his classmates' activities. If he is in a group of children who are interested in creative activities, he will more likely to think of inventing something. So classmates are very helpful in a child's success at school.

From the above discussed, I agree that classmates will influence a child more in his success because they spend more time together, they understand him better than his parents, and they have so much common interests together.

Topic 66 Are classmates a more important influence to a child?

Children's success at school depends on a lot of factors, excellent classmates, qualified teachers, good parenting and so on. Among all the factors, classmates play an important role in determining children's success.

First, classmates are a great help in the academic studies of our children. Children spend most of their time at school with their classmates, sharing learning experiences among each other. Not only are they competitors, but also they are learning pals as well. When someone faces difficulties in the learning process, he can seek immediate help from his classmates especially when teachers are not available at that moment. In some cases when courses relating to language teaching demand that students practice speaking in groups, cooperative classmates will be a great assistance to achieving the goal of effective learning.

Second, children acquire communication skills during their encounter with their classmates. Children who are able to establish good relationships with their classmates are more likely to achieve in their future career. Since a classroom consists of a group of people including teachers and students, they are just like a small society. If children can deal with everything appropriately with their schoolmates at school, they are more likely to keep good terms with their colleagues in the future workplace. A good relation with others is part of their success.

Finally, children have also obtained a great deal of life experience from their classmates. Being of the same age, children are easier to communicate with their generation than with their parents. As a result, they learn more from their counterparts than from their parents.

From those reasons, we can safely conclude that classmates are too important a factor to ignore and they are a more important influence than parents on children's success at school.

Topic 67 **Inexperienced, cheap workers or experienced workers?**

When it comes to whether an employer should hire workers with less experiences and lower pay, or to hire experienced workers with a higher salary, since there are always advantages and disadvantages of the two, and there are always different situations, my personal option is that different strategy should be applied for different situations.

For situations where basic and simple jobs which requires less training, and cutting down cost is vital for the survival of the business, I would prefer to hire someone who has less experience and willing to work under a lower pay. For example, a factory should hire more inexperienced laborers to work on the part of the plant where less skill but more physical strength is needed; and a restaurant owner should hire a cheaper kitchen hand rather than more chefs to cut down the cost of operation.

On the other hand, for situations when more knowledge and skills is crucial for a job, I would tend to hire someone who is more experienced and would rather pay more salary. Training an inexperienced person for an advanced position can cost a great deal of money, and a mistake an inexperienced makes sometimes can bring disaster to a company. Therefore an experienced personnel is a valuable asset for a business. Sometimes the value cannot be measured by money. A company may lost millions of dollars of revenue when some important positions are vacant and it has to look for someone who is qualified or take a lot of time to train a new person.

In conclusion, when we decide whether to hire a inexperienced, cheaper worker or an experienced, but more expensive worker, it is always depend on the nature of the business and the position, the amount of training required, and of course, the employers' personal preferences.

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Topic 67 **Inexperienced, cheap workers or experienced workers?**

To hire an inexperienced worker at a lower salary or an experienced worker at a higher salary, this is an interesting question for an employer. As far as I am concerned, a good employer will choose the latter without hesitation, because he knows an experienced worker deserves what he is paid.

Qualified workers play the most important role in any business. The directors controls the business, the managers operate the business, whereas, it is nobody else but the workers who are expected and responsible to produce qualified products. Without those products the business will be a castle in the air. Thus qualified workers are indispensable for an employer.

What makes a qualified worker? Undoubtedly, experience is one of the most valued merits. Experience means quality and efficiency; both of which guarantee a well-run business. It is true that the employer has to pay more for an experienced worker, but what such a worker brings to the employer is much more than he is paid.

Admittedly, no one is born to be an experienced worker. A rookie is inevitably a rookie at his debut, and he needs opportunity to obtain the required experiences. Hence there must be some employers who are willing to provide them with such opportunities.

In a word, for an employer, it is profitable to hire an experienced worker at a higher salary than to an inexperienced one at a lower salary. However, some wise employer may want to hire inexperienced workers with potential.

Topic 68 **Is daily homework necessary?**

It is commonly known that students could increase their values of knowledge by absorbing all necessary information given by their teachers during the lessons and by practicing and analyzing a broad variety of assignments, known also as homework. I firmly support the necessity to assign as much homework as possible since students could improve and understand given lessons more effectively.

Every year, frustrated and upset students complain about having too much homework assigned by their teachers. It is understandable that unwillingness to do their homework could be resulted due to many temptations attracting young students in every day life. After intensive learning provided at schools, students usually want to relax and enjoy watching interesting movies, playing video games and spending the leisure time with their friends. Hence, doing assigned homework is usually postponed for later time or ignored at all. This tendency of not doing homework could result in poor and negative students' results on later tests and would probably destroy the willingness and important habits to study at home.

As far as I am concerned, daily homework should be assigned within different numbers of exercises according to the overall interest and enthusiasm demonstrated by students during the lessons. An enormous amount of homework should not be given if most students tended to be discomforted by not understanding given lessons. In this case, teachers should focus on providing more accurate and elaborate explanations of their lessons unless the students are showing potential interests for getting further information. Hence, students, who are completely satisfied and fascinated by provided learning materials, could polish and improve the gained knowledge at home by doing their homework enthusiastically and effectively.

Finally, I would like to say that daily homework could give students the opportunity to improve and enhance their knowledge gained during the school time. Also, students' results of daily homework could show many teachers whether their learning materials were well introduced and explained. Moreover, it could be interpreted as an important source of information for teachers to make the crucial decisions of whether to begin new learning objectives or revise previously discussed lessons by assigning more homework.

Topic 68 Is daily homework necessary?

There's much controversy about the necessity of daily homework for students. Some say homework is necessary since only practice makes perfect, while others disagree because they believe a student should have the freedom to study whatever in whatever forms just as he/she likes to.

In my opinion, daily homework is necessary for students. First, a teacher could assign homework as a measure for the students to study. A student needs guidance from a teacher because he/she does not have an overall understanding of the knowledge he is going to study from the teacher. This means, at the beginning, a student could not well plan his/her study, just as a kid who is for the first time in a swimming pool could do nothing but to play with water. A teacher could make a good study plan for him/her, so that he/she could learn efficiently.

Secondly, even when a student has already understand what he/she should do in order to master some skill or knowledge, he/she is still unwilling to do this for the lack of motivation. Hey, do not tell me that you have never been lazy at all when you were young. Some homework could function as a task for the student to perform which is helpful to motivate him/her.

Thirdly, homework is an important form of feedback for a teacher to understand the effectively of his/her teacher. As I have mentioned before, a teacher makes a study plan for the students; but does it really work? Or does it work for all the students? It's not difficult to know this only if the teacher pays some attention to the homework of the students. Then he/she may be able to find if there's some problems in his/her teaching, and make corresponding adjustment of his/her teaching, either for all the students or for a single one. Without some feedback, it is impossible for the teacher to do this. A test is also a good form of feedback, but obviously one or two tests are not enough, and sometimes this kind of feedback just comes to late.

However, This conclusion might be misleading that one may believe all forms of homework are necessary. Actually, only proper amount of homework in proper forms is acceptable; some homework may not only fail to help the students, but on contrary bore them, so much so that they may lose their innate interest to study. "Proper" homework, in my opinion, should vary in its forms; it might be some extensive reading, a paper, or even just a game, as well as other ordinary exercises. And it should leave enough freedom to the students so that they could do things they really like to do with self-motivation, rather than unwillingness. We should always remember that homework is something for us to guide the students, rather than drive them. Only if a teacher keeps this in his/her mind, the homework could be of most help to the students.

Topic 68 **Is daily homework necessary?**

Most students in this world struggle daily with their homework. Many teachers believe that daily homework is the key to education and school success. I agree with this opinion. Here are my reasons.

First, daily homework can reinforce the knowledge students learned at school. A student cannot concentrate every minute, and remember everything that a teacher taught in class. Daily homework is the best way for students to review what he learned during the day, study on the problems that he does not understand, and prepare for the next day's work.

Second, daily homework is the bases of success in exams. This is especially true for those students who are not so bright, and the only way to succeed at school is doing homework each day. Whenever the homework flags, the class behavior dips, the learning is muddled, and the grades take a nosedive. No matter what the ability of a student is, daily homework is the key to students' school success.

Third, daily homework can help students develop good learning habits. Learning is not always an enjoyable experience and students always need to spend hard time on it. Daily homework can form a kind of habit of learning for students. Once a habit is formed, learning is not such a painful thing and a student can find it more and more interesting. Obviously this will greatly benefit to a student.

In conclusion, daily homework is crucial to students' success. Life requires us to keep learning in order to catch on with this fast pacing society. A good learning habit and method that we developed when we are students can benefit us for the rest of our life.

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Topic 69 **What subject will you study?**

If I could study a subject that I have never had the opportunity to study, I would choose computer programming, because computer programming is so vital in today's society.

Firstly, computer programming is important to our daily life. With the advance of technology, we are practically facing an information age; every piece of information today is stored in the information highway, which consists of computers and networks as hardware, operating systems and software. Without software installed in these systems, the computers are like bodies without soul, and will not be able to function at all. Only with programming languages, information can be retrieved and stored into the information highway. Whether we hook up a phone line or television cable, book a ticket, travel to a foreign country, apply for a passport, an operator will immediately check our information from the computer network. If the computer systems are down, we cannot go anywhere or do anything. We can safely say that computer programming languages are ubiquitous in our daily life.

Secondly, computer programming is important to technological success. With the skill of computer programming, scientists can write programs to monitor their scientific research and experiments, to analyze the trend of technological development, and to forecast the future. Computer programs can simulate a scientific experiment in a much cost-effective and timely manner, thus can save scientists a lot of time and money, therefore it can greatly expedite the pace of the development of technology. For example, a civil engineer can use a modeling program to simulate the water flow of an urban area; when there is a storm, he can quickly know which parts of the city have the danger of being under the water and dispatch his crew to that area to prevent the disaster.

Last but not least, computer programming techniques can help us earn higher salaries in our future jobs. Since computer programming is important to our society and daily life, programmers can usually have a higher salary than other professionals. Many people have shifted to computer programming from other careers during the economic boom, and even when the economy is going low at the moment, programmers and computer engineers can still live a better life than others.

From all above, I can safely draw a conclusion that if I have a chance to study, I would not hesitate to choose computer programming.

Topic 69 **What subject will you study?**

If I could study a subject that I have never had opportunity to study, I would choose to study how to use the Internet. There are a lot of advantages that the Internet can bring to us. For example, it can get us informed timely, expose us to a lot of chances of knowing other peoples and their cultures, and help us obtain the materials for our studies conveniently. If I know how to use it, I can take the advantages of it.

The Internet can get me informed timely. There is always a lot of news on the Internet that is broadcasting 24 hours everyday and updating timely. I can read the headlines, the financial news, the sports news, and the weather reports every time when I connect my phone modem with my computer. From reading the news on the Internet, I can know everything happening around me. It is very important for me to deal with my daily life with this information. It gives me a lot of chance to know different people. I can know what they are thinking about and how they are living their lives. The World Wide Web includes every country's information. I can travel internationally on the net without going out of my house. That is helpful since people in the world should understand each other to make sure that we could live together peacefully.

The Internet gives me the convenience of getting almost any useful materials for my study. I can just type a few letters and click the search engine to get them. I can do them in the early morning in my pajama while having my breakfast at the same time. Nothing could be more convenient than the Internet in doing research work like this.

In short, if I could choose one subject to study, I would definitely choose to study the Internet for its timely updating news and its convenience. I would also like to travel to new worlds and meet other different peoples. That will be really helpful for me to live a life successfully.

Topic 69 **What subject will you study?**

There are so many subjects that I wanted to take while I have a student but I never had the opportunity to. The most, I wish I would have taken a course in cultural management. Most likely, one day I will follow my desire and enroll probably in a MA program in cultural management.

Why pursue a cultural management program? Firstly, a program as such is relevant for my future career as an art historian. It would be essential for my intellectual development to learn how to organize effectively an exhibition, a cultural study trip, or any other type of cultural activity.

Moreover, a MA in cultural management would provide me with the theoretical and practical skill I will need in order to contribute substantially to the Romanian cultural development. My country needs cultural managers, but they hardly exist. There are no schools to teach cultural management, and one can hardly find a person to have a proper training in this particular type of management.

On the personal level, I strongly believe that such a course would be of great benefit to me. Like any other management class it will help me organize myself better, and thus gain much time and much confidence in myself.

Overall, a cultural management program would be quite beneficial form my personal and academic development. I know that by studying this field not only I would improve my life, but also I will be able to contribute to the revival of my country's culture development. This is why I would choose to study cultural management.

Topic 70 **Have automobiles improved modern life?**

I support the statement that automobiles have caused serious problems. While automobiles have brought us many conveniences, they surely have brought us many undesirable consequences, of which three can be singled out: traffic congestion, air pollution, and highway accidents.

Automobiles have congested city streets. The problem is more obvious when the masses of motor vehicles enter or leave cities at peak traffic hours. The constantly growing number of automobiles throughout the world has made the congestion problem worse and worse because planners and engineers simply cannot find a solution to keep up with the increasing volume of traffic growth. The widespread use of automobiles for business travel has also led in many cities to a decline in public-transit systems, which result in more and more use of private cars, and exacerbate the congestion problems.

Air pollution is another program caused by the automobile. Automobile exhausts commonly contribute half the atmospheric pollutants in large cities and even more in cities where atmospheric and topographic conditions cause the smog formation. Although many cities require the installation of catalytic converters and other controls on motor vehicles to restrict the emission of pollutants, the concentration of many thousands of motor vehicles in large cities has given the problem a new dimension.

Highway accidents create a distressing toll of fatalities and injuries wherever there is widespread use of automobiles. Each year there are hundreds of thousands of motor vehicle fatalities worldwide and about 50,000 in the United States alone. The social and economic costs of such accidents are enormous. Efforts to improve highway safety have been successful in most countries, but a reduction in the ratio of fatalities and injuries per distance traveled is often offset by increases in numbers of accidents because of the ever-growing use of motor vehicles.

In short, automobile has brought us more bane than boon. We should take public transportation whenever possible, and reduce the number of cars running in urban streets.

Topic 70 **Have automobiles improved modern life?**

Since the first automobile was introduced to our life, we can notice that there are a lot of changes happened around us. As a modern transportation, it not only brings convenience to our daily life, but also enhances the efficiency.

One of advantages of using automobiles is that it can give the users much more convenience compared with other transportations, such as bikes or buss. For me, I like to go to the supermarket once per week and normally buy many foods at one time. Can you imagine that I need to carry a lot of foodstuff and maybe take a crowded bus to reach home? How inconvenient it is! Suppose that I have a car, and then I will feel very easy because what I need to do is to put all my stuff at the back of the car. I can go back with nice music and happy mood for the shopping.

On the other hand, automobiles can save our time and energy. Driving the automobile, we can go wherever we want to go. We can decide the destination and reach there faster than other transportation means. Assuming that a train takes about two hours to reach Suzhou from Shanghai, but a car only needs about one hour. We can use the saved one hour to enjoy the views or do anything that we want. After all, time means a lot to modern people. It can mean money to businessmen, knowledge to school students and profit to companies. By means of cutting time with the help of automobiles, we can increase the efficiency of our society.

Of course, I must admit that automobiles bring a lot of problems such as traffic jam and air pollution. But these outcomes cannot be avoided during the development of a society. I believe we will have a better solution to solve all these problems.

Generally speaking, I would like to say automobiles have improved modern life through providing more convenience to people and increasing efficiency. We should encourage the society to support the automobile industry and develop different kinds of automobiles to meet various needs.

Topic 70 **Have automobiles improved modern life?**

When Henry Ford manufactured the first automobile, he didn't realize how he would affect our life. Now expanding road systems and thousands of automobiles are playing an important role in our society. But every thing has two aspects. Some people think that the automobile has improved modern life. Others think that the automobile has caused serious problems.

The automobile has a very close relation with industrialization. It is a part of industry itself. Industrialization is a symbol of a modern society. Automobiles carry all kinds of goods and people from one place to another. They function as human's blood. Without automobiles our country would return to a completely agricultural society. No one likes to live without modern conveniences such as electricity, cars and so on. It is sure that the automobile brings convenience.

But automobiles also bring some troubles. Each year many people are injured in traffic accidents. Another serious problem is pollution. Thousands running automobiles emit poisonous smokes. Their motors and sirens give out deafening sound. All these are harmful to our environment.

How can we deal with it? Stop using automobiles? It is not realistic. We should design better automobiles. It gives off less gas and runs more quietly. We should build wider roads and obey traffic rules. All problems are cause by human beings. We certainly can resolve them by ourselves.

Topic 70 **Have automobiles improved modern life?**

It is a well-established fact that automobiles have contributed to the modern life in a favorable way. Automobiles improved different aspects of the human life, but, on the other face of the coin, cars have their crucial impacts upon our life. It is our turn to minimize these defects and galvanize other favorable sides. Hereinafter, I will present and analyze this issue and provide a personal perspective.

The automobile is considered amongst the most beneficial inventions that ever existed. These means of transportation provide unprecedented mobility, flexibility, and privacy. Cars have abridged the travel time among distant locations and provided a self-scheduled means of transportation. A car user is not obliged to obey any predetermined departure and arrival schedules, barring engine check and fuel filling.

Moreover, the car represents an elastic means of freight transportation. Automobiles allowed more goods and products to reach remote areas or locations that lie far from public transient system. Also, this rendered products less prices based on less transportation cost as well as more pervasiveness.

Admittedly, services like mail and tourism benefited intimately from the automobiles. Taxi added to the diversity of flexible and on-order mean of transportation. Also, special services like home delivery could have been too slow or even not existing without cars. Adds to the favor that many are interested in racing or rallies that represent car-based sports.

On the other side of the fence, automobiles contributed to the aggravating environmental conflicts. Car exhausts that contain compounds like carbon monoxide dioxide, nitrous and sulphoric ions threaten the public health as well as the environment. Phenomena like acidic rains and green house effect more or less are correlated to automobiles exhausts. Moreover, automobiles are considered expensive mean of transportation, especially with their close relation to roads and asphalt industry.

Another disadvantage is the intruding of some new habits like car captivity. It was found that some persons are biased to car usage even if it is more expensive, slower, or liable for traffic problems. Car captivity is considered intimately related to obesity and heart diseases. Moreover, increasing car ownership introduced traffic conflicts like congestions and delays. Imprudent driving habits leads the way for fatal car accidents, and it is extremely impressive to know that accidents victims exceeds the number of second war casualties.

Ultimately, automobile, like all successful facilities in our life is double-bladed weapon. Alleviating automobiles disadvantages like producing cleaner fuel, unleaded petroleum, natural gas as a fuel, or even electrically driven engines as well as improving the public transportation system should absorb these impairments. We must also anneal the merits by introducing articulate traffic control systems, improving the quality of pavements and other favorable aspects.

Topic 70 **Have automobiles improved modern life?**

Although automobiles have improved our modern life in some way for its speed, convenience, and capacity of carrying freights, we have had to pay the price for it. Now, as more and more automobiles have been putting into use, the problems that the automobile has caused are seemed to be more and more serious accordingly. These problems, in my mind, like the accidents, the air pollution, the damage of the ozone layers should be given more attention than anytime before.

There are a lot of problems that has been caused by the automobile. It kills hundreds of thousands of people and disables many more every year. It drinks up our precious fossil fuels that cannot be replaced. New roads for the automobile also eat up our precious farmlands while many children are starving all around the world. These problems are really serious and disturbing many of us.

The most serious problem caused by the automobile is air pollution. It is said that it emits millions of tons of harmful gas into the air everyday. The dirty air harms our human beings health badly. It can cause a variety of diseases such as plumbism, insomnia, mental disability and even certain kinds of cancer. That is really terrible.

Air pollution caused by the automobile can give rise to even more serious consequences. One thing, it will destroy the ozone layer that protect the lives on the earth from the hurt of the strong and direct ultraviolet rays. Much more ultraviolet can also destroy the fragile ecosystem on the earth. It is just the life circle in which we survive. Another thing is that the air pollution caused by the automobile can lead to the global warming. If the weather is getting warmer and warmer, the icebergs scattered in both of the two poles of the earth will be melted, which will cause the sea level rising and flooding all the cities and villages along the seashores. The lost of the lives and property will be countless. That is really a tremendous disaster.

I do not mean to deny the fact that the automobile has improved our modern life in many ways. It acts a vital role in our social life. It also supports our industries. It is indispensable in our modern life. We cannot imagine how we can live a modern life without the automobile. However, the problems it has caused today, such as the lives and properties lost, the dirty air and the consequences of the pollution, seems to be more dangerous and obvious than anytime. Therefore, it will never over do to emphasize the seriousness of these problems and urge the governments and other responsible organizations to solve them.

Topic 71 A high-paying job vs. quality spare time

Some people may prefer to have a lower-paying job as long as the job asks for shorter working hours so they can have more free time spending with their friends and family. However, I would rather be given a higher-paying job with longer hours, even if I would have little time with my friends and family. I do not much care about the free time nowadays; I really care about money. Besides, all my friends and my family members are usually busy working. Furthermore, if I do not earn a lot of money, I cannot spend my free time with my friends and family happily.

I really care about money because my budget is too tight nowadays. I am so poor a student. The tuition is high, but I have to pay for it. I also have to pay my rentals of room and pay the board. I have to pay the transportation fares, the books, the clothes and a lot of daily supplies. All these seem to be a heavy financial burden to me. So, I have to look for a job that could offer me a higher salary.

My friends and my family members are all very busy all day long. Some of them are busy working; others are busy studying. They are usually having little free time to spend with friends and family, including me. If I were given a shorter hours job and more free time, I could not meet them anyway.

Besides, even if my friends and I have managed to find out some leisure time to spend together, if I have not enough money, where the fun will be? Any meeting or party costs a fortune, even the simplest picnic. If we have no money to spend for our gathering, we have to just sit over there and chat. We will feel boring soon. Knowing this, I am eager for a higher-paying job so that I can get the money ready for the meetings in the future.

For all these reasons, I would like to have a higher-paying job to support myself and earn enough money to meet my busy friends and family sometime later. Although this job cannot offer me more time to spend with my friends and family now, I believe that I will compensate it after I have become some kind of millionaire in the future.

Topic 71 A high-paying job vs. quality spare time

Between a high-paying job with long hours and a lower-paying job with shorter hours, I will definitely choose a high-paying job with long hours, although I might have little time to spend with my family and friends.

Firstly, money can help my dreams come true. I need a lot of money to do many things. I want to buy a huge house with a garden and a swimming pool. I also want to have an expensive car. Maybe my relatives need my financial assistance. Especially, I hope my family can have a kind of comfortable life. My children can go to a famous private university to get excellent education. If I have no money, all of my dreams cannot come true.

In addition, to me, making a lot of money is a sign of success. I think that no one respects a poor man in today's society. From newspaper to television, almost all media focus on wealthy people instead of the poor. I cannot let the others consider me an incompetent man.

Of course, making this choice means that I have to pay a price. Perhaps, I cannot spend too much time with my family and friends. But I never regret my decision because I believe that both my family and my friends can understand me. For my family, I think they should know whom I do this for. For my friends, they will think how success I am and they will be proud of me.

In conclusion, money is so important to me that I must choose a high-paying job regardless of the consequences it will cause.

Topic 72 Does grades encourage students to learn?

When it comes to the issue that whether grades are the purpose of student's education, different people have different ideas. As far as I am concerned, the grade can promote student's attitudes toward learning.

I take this view on account of the following reasons. First of all, grades are the objects that demonstrate students' abilities in specified fields that they learned. Since there are lots of drawbacks of other evaluation methods, examinations or grades are the most efficient and fairest way to describe a student's capabilities. For example, a student who achieves the best grades in all subjects is undoubtedly the best student in his class.

Second to take into account is that grades are possibly the definitive factor whether one student can obtain a decent and well-paid job. Having not many working experiences, students can only prove the proof of their abilities by showing exam records to their employers.

Last but not least, contrasting to the better grades the his classmates make, a confident and self disciplined student will continue making effort on his study. Such kind of a grading system certainly encourages students to learn.

However, just as the English proverb goes, "a coin has two sides." Those who maintain the opposite view are partly reasonable that grades could not demonstrate all the abilities that a student has, such as communication skills and survival skills.

Despite the factor I outlined, we can easily conclude that, generally speaking, grades are very important for student's study, and they surely encourage students to learn.

Topic 72 Does grades encourage students to learn?

A lot of people claim that marks in tests encourage students to learn. I agree with this statement, because examinations are a good way for a student to review what he/she has learned; test scores are a standard measurement for students' learning ability and knowledge level; and the test system can benefit students' future.

First of all, tests are important for students' learning. Attending classes is not enough for students to learn the subjects no matter how carefully they listen to what the teachers say. They need examinations to review the lessons. In most cases, grades or marks are the only means by which teachers measure students' learning ability and learning progress. Grades encourage students to study for examinations, and it is a good system for students to learn.

Secondly, test scores are a standard measurement for students' learning ability and knowledge level. Most people would agree with this, therefore universities all over the world take test results as a standard measurement to give admission to new students, to offer fellowships, and to decide whether to grant a student graduation. High school teachers use test results as a means to evaluate the effects of teaching, and students' learning progress. By test scores, teachers also know each individual student's ability to learn.

Thirdly, test results can stimulate a student to work hard on his courses. The testing mechanism encourages students to work hard in order to achieve a better result; they will devote more time on study, and develop a "never give up" spirit. This will not only benefit their study, but also teach them a truth, that everyone needs constant learning and hard working in order to be useful to this society. Students who have developed such learning habit and never give up nature will not only have good performance at schools, but can also superior to others in other aspects; for example, such natures are important factors even after finishing schools. I believe most students understand the importance of these qualities and impacts on their life; therefore they know how important it is to work hard and try to achieve a better score.

In conclusion, marks can stimulate student to learn, and good marks can give them advantages in going to a good university and finding a good job. Therefore I strongly support the statement that marks can encourage students to learn.

Topic 72 Does grades encourage students to learn?

In many schools, teachers evaluate students by their grades. Many people think that it is unfair and one-sided to evaluate students by grades and will discourage students to learn. I believe, however, grades encourage students to learn. The reasons can be analyzed as follows.

To begin with, using grades as a standard to evaluate students can give students a pressure to learn. No stress, no motivation. In order to pass or get high grades, students must study hard. They must read more books, do their homework carefully. Pressure helps them learn more knowledge. The worries that they will not pass simultaneously force and encourage students to learn.

Grades can encourage students to compete with each other. The modern society is full of competition. Students can learn the concept of competition through grades. At the same time, they can develop the spirit of competition. To compete with others and obtain good results, students must work hard to get high grades. Competing for grades at schools can make students more adaptable to the society.

Grades can also give students confidence and feeling of success. When they get high grades through hard work, students may think that they gained a great achievement. The feeling of success will encourage students to study harder and harder. At the same time, the success achieved at schools encourages students to succeed in society.

From the above analyses, it is not difficult to get the conclusion that grades encourage students to learn. Grades give students the pressure and make them compete with each other so that they must study and work hard to succeed.

Topic 72 Does grades encourage students to learn?

Almost in every modern society, grades play an import role in assessing students' academic ability. There are all kinds of tests to winnow out weak students. Knowledge itself is so complicate and vast, each one of the test usually cannot cover every aspect of it. So I wonder whether grades can really encourage students to learn.

The basic reason why I disapprove of the title statement lies in the belief that grades usually do not have positive impact on student who is strong or weak alike. Take the example of a student who has high grades: if Tom gets good grades in the class, normally he will feel conceited. This situation certainly will not lead him into finding some blind spots or weak points in his study. And he will not realize that may be just his photographic memory helps him a lot or this kind of test suits him well. Let us look at another example: suppose Johnny is so not good at memorization, but he works very hard. Unfortunately, he got poor grades in tests that facilitate memorization. One can foresee what harm will bring to him due to the poor grades. In these cases, grades play a negative role in encouraging students to learn.

Most important of all, the grades are usually a convenient way of assessing a student's academic ability. But it is by no means a scientific one. Teachers cannot determine from the grades whether the student is hardworking (diligent) or out of cram. Given tests to all students regardless of their individual characters and traits, is just like forcing everyone to wear shoes of the same size. The Famous educationist Confucius said two thousands years ago: "teaching students in accordance with their aptitude." Our world is a colorful world, so should our educational system be.

Grades, especially poor grades will frustrate potentially successful students to learn. It will give them a false impression that their intelligence may be inferior to other students. The worst thing about poor grades is that it may have repercussions in an underachiever's heart when all his fellow students and teacher have long forgotten. In fact, the potential talent of a student will be strangled by those poor grades - a real pity to the student and the society.

Last but not the least, there is some advantages in taking grades as a tool to evaluate students' academic performance. As in my humble opinion, they should be combining with other scientific methods to encourage students to gain knowledge but not solely focus their energy on how to achieve high scores. After all, it is the knowledge that it is power, not the grades.

Topic 73 **Has computer made life easier?**

Computers are involved in our world from sorted trash to satellite control, making our life easy, convenient and efficient. Obviously, it's a great revolution of human being. It's odd that some consider that computers make life more complex and stressful. I suppose computers will become a necessity, like food and water to the mankind.

Computers have changed people's life style, in a way that we can concentrate on scientific research rather than wasting time on data analyzing and calculating, for computers are much more efficient in dealing with these strenuous jobs. Many activities could not be run in their present form without computers. Examples are the banking systems, and the weather forecasting systems. How is it possible to deal with data-switching between banks and clients simultaneously and accurately without computers? As we known, weather forecasting requires multiprocessing data from the meteorological satellites and simulating the weather change, which are easy jobs for computers.

Although the knowledge of computer is not easy to acquired, especially at early stage, the IT industry has been making the computer operation system more friendly and at the same time more powerful. Therefore, using computers to handle problems is not the specialties of computer majors only. Even children can use computers to do their homework. We can now benefit a lot from computers in our day-to-day life.

One of the concerns is that computers may cause some troubles when we rely too much on them, such as various computer viruses and the Y2K problem. Nevertheless, computer experts will surely solve these problems and improve the computer technology. In this sense, the computer technology has much potential to develop.

After all, the computer is one of the most important inventions in the twentieth century. It has formed a new era in our life, and it affects culture, industry, science, education and other areas. Computerization is a trend nowadays, and computers are being used in many areas. Computers like any other technology hold the key to increased productivity, which will benefit all of us.

Topic 74 **Is it better to travel with a tour guide?**

Traveling is one of the most widely enjoyed recreations. The tourist business is becoming increasingly important for many countries' economies and provides a great variety of products and services. People are different and so are their preferences when it comes to spending a vacation traveling to interesting and exotic places. One of the first choices one should make when planning a trip is whether it would be individual or with a group led by a tour guide. If it were up to me, I would go to an excursion as a part of a tourist group.

First of all, a common problem of people traveling abroad is the unfamiliar language of the country they are visiting. This is a major inconvenience as it could hamper their communication and prevent them from learning valuable things about the place. That's why I think that a tour guide, who in most cases knows at least two languages, would be needed. This is a professional whose job includes guidance and help. Also tour guides tell tourists about the history of the place they are visiting, information which otherwise could hardly be obtained.

Second, group journeys are supposed to be previously organized. The travel agency makes the full program of the trip: hotel reservations, transportation, food, and sightseeing. Furthermore, many services and museum taxes are cheaper for a whole group. In this way, tourists are much more comfortable, as they save time and money, and are able to enjoy their vacation without worrying about anything.

Third, traveling in a group can provide people the opportunity to get to know with many other tourists who are from different backgrounds but are brought together by their common interest of the place they are visiting. Such group trips are a great chance for making new friendships and eventually learning a lot about different people.

For all these reasons, I prefer to travel in a group with a tour guide, as it would guarantee a more convenient and enjoyable journey.

Topic 74 **Is it better to travel with a tour guide?**

When people are asked to list their hobbies, travel is among the most frequent words quoted. Some would choose to travel by themselves alone, some others prefer to traveling with a few close friends or family members; while still others, including myself, agree that the best way to travel is to join in a group led by a tour guide.

A good tour guide, who has professional knowledge and rich experiences about certain places, would make our journey more efficient and enjoyable. Traveling to new places is an important way to know our world in the perspectives of cultural diversity and geographic peculiarities. However, we often find ourselves confounded and do not know what to do next when we are in a new place. A tour guide may help us to arrange the optimum itineraries and schedules. He leads the group around to show us unique tourist spots that we should not miss. His explanation on certain scenic spots is also useful for us to understand further about the new place.

Besides, a tour guide would ensure the maximal security of the group member. Tourists are always warned against the potential risks and pitfall, since strangers are easily attacked. An experienced tour guide teaches his tourists some tips and skills to guarantee the security. The tour guide is particularly indispensable in any emergencies, as he can make a timely response and right decisions.

A tour guide, besides his training and knowledge, is also a person with a good sense of humor. Far away from our friends and families, tourists often feel lonely sometimes during the journey, especially when on the way to a new destination. A good tour guide are skillful enough to relieve the loneliness by telling jokes and interesting stories, playing magic tricks, and so on, which make the journey joyful and pleasant.

Topic 74 **Is it better to travel with a tour guide?**

Nowadays traveling is becoming more and more popular, as we have more leisure time and more money to spend during our vacations. When it comes to ways of traveling, many people prefer to join groups arranged by travel services and escorted by tour guides, while others may argue independent backpack travel should be better. My viewpoint is both have advantages and disadvantages.

The advantages of traveling with a tour group are obvious. People do not need to worry about accommodation, transportation, sightseeing schedule and restaurants and so on, all of which has been arranged in advance and taken care of by the travel service during the trip. Besides, the tour guides will tell stories behind the places of interest, and help us with unexpected emergencies, such loss of suitcases and health problems. Being relax and educational is group-travel's best feature.

However, it is not flexible for some people. Suppose when you enjoy a place well and wish to stay there a little longer, but you are told you have to come back to the bus in half an hour, just because you have to rush to the next place, which turns out to be not so nice. The arranged meals are expensive and not as tasty as it should be; the booked hotel is too far from the shopping area; you share a room with some strangers who might snore loudly all night. In short, such nuisances of group travel turn down many people who pursue more flexible travel alternatives.

So what about individual travel? The pleasure of freedom and flexibility is well guarded, and there is more chances to explore the place and encounter its people. However, there are a lot of troubles for tourists to arrange tours by themselves, and security is an issue. Moreover, during sightseeing, they might miss a great deal of valuable sites and historical relics.

In conclusion, every coin has its two sides. Only when you are clearly aware of the "two sides" can you come up with best option for your next tour. I personally choose to travel with a group in that it can save me a lot of energy and with the comfort of leading by a tour guide, I can enjoy a place fully.

Topic 74 **Is it better to travel with a tour guide?**

There are basically two ways of traveling: traveling in a group led by a tour guide, or traveling independently. There are advantages and disadvantages for the both. By traveling in a group, you will enjoy the companionship, comfort and safety of group travel, and learn more information about the place from a tour guide; while traveling independently, you can maintain the freedom, flexibility and individualism. Some people say that for most people, the best way to travel is in a group led by a tour guide. I agree with this opinion.

Firstly, you will enjoy the companionship when traveling in a group. Usually a tour group consists of around 20 people. These people travel together, eat together and stay at the same hotel. During the trip, you can always find someone you like to talk with, and you will never feel lonely as when you are traveling alone.

Secondly, you will enjoy the comfort and safety of group travel. When traveling in a group, everything is pre-arranged by the travel service, and you do not have to worry about booking a ticket, finding a hotel, decide what places to visit, and so on. In the meantime, as you are not preoccupied with arranging the trip by yourself, you may find yourself concentrate more on the trip itself and enjoy it more. In addition, it is much safer to travel within a group. What a relief when you know that your personal safety is always taken cared of by others.

Thirdly, you can learn more information about the place from a tour guide, and not worrying about missing an important spot. The tour guide will take you to each spot that should be visited, and give you detailed information about the place you visit. You never have to find information about the places you are going to through the Internet or buy a book from the bookstore. Traveling in a group can save you time and money on information searching.

In conclusion, there are many advantages of traveling in a group. Although for young people, traveling alone is more advantages and stimulating, for most people, traveling in a group is the best choice.

Topic 74 **I prefer traveling alone**

Some people think it is better to travel in a group that is led by a guide. For my experience so far, I am inclined to believe that such a way of traveling has more disadvantages than advantages.

Although it is better not to travel alone and a guide is always welcome, traveling alone is sometimes more desirable. The group structure is, in my opinion, quite relevant for a pleasant vacation. It is important for me to travel with people that have the same interests as I do. Otherwise we might not agree on the spots we want to visit or the restaurants we want to eat at. Usually the most successful trips are together with my friends and not with a heterogeneous group of unknown people. I would rather travel alone, or with just one friend, than with a group whose company I would not enjoy.

On one hand, if for instance, I plan to visit a foreign country, a place that I have never been before, a place where people most likely do not speak my language, I feel it is better to have someone to guide me and to help me with any situations I may encounter. It is safer not to travel alone. It is also pleasant to have a guide that provides background information and interesting facts about the places that I visit.

On another hand, especially if I am to visit a museum, an art gallery, or a historical city I prefer to buy a map and walk by myself rather than with a guide that would impose on me his/her impressions and knowledge. I do prefer to discover on my own, and to choose what I want to see and to decide how much time to spend in one place or another. I think that the success of traveling in a group depends mostly on factors as the organization of the group, the abilities of the guide, and the place of destination.

I enjoy traveling in groups, but only in small ones, and with people that I know. Otherwise I think it is better to travel on my own, to see what I like, where I like, and whenever I like.

Topic 75 **Multiple subjects vs. one subject**

The whole point of my answer is that it is better for universities to require students to specialize in one subject. It is just what the majors are called for, even though there are a couple of the advantages for students to take classes in many subjects.

It is a more sensible decision that universities require students to specialize in one subject. They must have known that the depth of a certain subject is infinite, and both the students' energy and time are limited. Only when a student specializes in one subject, can he focus on it. Thus it ensures the students to become proficient in a subject when they are conferred the degrees. That is just the purpose of education.

It does not mean that students do not have many classes to attend even if they just specialize one subject. There are a lot of sub-subjects or divisions of a main subject. The science of journalism, for example, can include the theories of journalism, the histories of journalism (both domestic and international), the news writing skills, the interview courses and the editorials writing and so on. The students have to study all of these above course in journalism major. It means a lot of work to do even if students just specialize in one subject.

I do not deny that there are a couple of advantages for universities to offer students the option to take many subjects. One thing, the work places require multi-disciplined personnel today. Students who take many subjects may meet that request. Another advantage is that other subjects that students take can help their main subject. Whatever the benefit it will be, however, the other subjects that students take should not interfere with their main targets.

In the whole, if students' time and energy allowed, universities could allow students to take as many subjects as possible. However, I think that possibility is small. So I have to say that it is better for universities to urge students to specialize in one subject. After all, the main subject already needs a lot of work to cope with, considering the depth and width of one subject.

Topic 75 **Multiple subjects vs. one subject**

Some universities require students to choose a variety of subjects; others only require students to specialize in one subject. I deem the first one as the premier choice. Among countless factors, there are three conspicuous aspects as follows.

The main reason that students should take classes in many subjects is that they can make full use of the abundant resources that a university has to offer. A university has plenty of educational and research resources. It is a very good idea to make full use of these valuable assets while studying at the university. The best way to achieve this is to take a variety of subjects as much as possible. Through learning these courses, a student can get access to knowledge and resources in different areas. On the contrary, if a student only specializes in one subject, he will not have a chance to get access to other resources offered by the university.

Another reason is that by choosing many subjects students can broaden their scope of knowledge and make a solid foundation for their future concentrated study. Whatever the student will concentrate on in his senior years in college, it is necessary that he choose a wide range of subjects to build the knowledge foundation. Take the field of Business Management for example, the student has to acquire knowledge in writing, accounting, economics and human resource management before he can successfully start his major concentration study.

The argument I support in the first paragraph is also in a position of advantage because students can be more adaptable in their future career if they choose a variety of subjects during their university study. It is obvious that the development of modern society requires people with inter-disciplinary and comprehensive knowledge. If a student chooses a variety of subjects in his university study, and gained a breath and width of knowledge, he will be more adaptable to the requirement of the society, and be able to easily adjust to many kinds of jobs. This will benefit his future career.

In a word, taking into account of all these factors, we may reach the conclusion that students should take classes in many subjects at a university.

Topic 76 Should children start learning a foreign language early?

Nowadays, some may hold the opinion that children should begin learning a foreign language as soon as they start school, but others have a negative attitude that learning a foreign language early will pose too much pressure on kids and will affect their mother-tongue learning. As far as I am concerned, I agree that bilingual education should start as early as possible. My arguments for this point are listed as follows.

I agree with the statement without reservation since children learn second languages quickly than adults. As we have observed, children can learn languages faster than adults; immigrant children translate for their parents. Child learners speak without a foreign accent, whereas this is impossible for adult learners. Therefore the earlier kids learn a second language, the less difficulties they would meet when they grow up and have to face a foreign language-speaking environment.

Another reason why I agree with the above statement is that I believe that bilingual education can be fun and stimulate children's learning interest. Many parents and teachers know how to teach kids a second language in an interesting way. One of my students told me that, when he was in kindergarten, every day his mum taught him a few native language characters as well as their meaning in English. As time passed, the kid became keen to learn English. Sometimes he gave his mum and dad a quiz by speaking some English words and asking them what the meanings are.

Bilingual education will not affect the mother-tongue study of children. As we are living in an environment of pure native language conversations and traditional culture, it is impossible for us to give up our culture and language. Teachers also are trying to arrange the curriculum in a appropriate way. For instance, they create an English-speaking environment for children in the morning, and a native language-speaking environment in the afternoon.

Bilingual education has become a trend. No matter we like it or not, future educational undertakings will become more international, and exchanges between schools throughout the world will increase. Given this, speaking a common language is important and, to this purpose, bilingual teaching is an inevitable way.

Topic 76 Should children start learning a foreign language early?

Considering the existing educational system, some people argue that learning a foreign language in an early age is unnecessary and it may give the young children too much burden. However, they may neglect that learning a foreign language can be an enjoyable experience for children and it is necessary to catch up the worldwide trend. In my opinion, learning a foreign language, such as English, as soon as they start school has so many advantages. With globalization and communications among different countries, the world is becoming smaller and smaller. Therefore we cannot deny the importance of a second or third foreign language.

In fact, we should begin to learn a foreign language as early as possible. There are three reasons about it.

First, a child has a very passionate interest to study. Everyone should agree with it, for we all have the same experience that a child always asks you about something with full of interests. He or she always try to understand things around him/her and would be eager to seek answers about their questions. On the contrary, when a child grows up, he or she will gradually lose interests on new things.

Second, compared with adults, children have greater abilities to study a foreign language. Many studies indicate that a child can study a language more easily and quickly, meanwhile he or she has a good memory to remember new words, and can distinguish the subtle difference between two words that sound similar.

Third, studying a language is not an easy job, which need a long term and continuous effort. Language is not only a tool, but also part of a culture. If we want to be proficient with a language, we must spend a lot of time studying it.

In a word, children should start learning a foreign language early. As I far as I know, in my country many elementary schools have given English lessons, which will surly beneficial to the future of our country.

Topic 77 Should boys and girls go to separate schools?

Nowadays, some people may hold the opinion that boys and girls should attend separate schools, while others have a negative attitude. As far as I am concerned, I agree that boys and girls should go to separate schools. My arguments for this point are listed as follows.

Single-sex education provides an environment for boys and girls to concentrate on their study. Research shows that a single-sex school environment can eliminate the distraction from members of the opposite sex, and therefore is academically beneficial to students. Girls in an all-female school can establish self-esteem, and avoid the situation faced by young women in co-ed schools such as struggle to survive emotionally. They will be able to focus more on their academic curriculum, sometimes specifically designed, and prepare for their future education and career. The single-sex setting eliminates social distractions and allows for better concentration on academics.

Another reason why I agree with the above statement is that traditional gender stereotypes are often reinforced in single-sex academies. Boys tended to be taught in more regimented, traditional and individualistic fashion and girls in more nurturing, cooperative and open environments. This will develop their virtue and prepare them for their future roles in the society.

Taking into account of all these factors, we may reach the conclusion that boys and girls should attend separate schools. Of course, there are also disadvantages of single-gender education, and simply separating boys and girls does not always improve the quality of education. A lot of efforts should be made to ensure that a single-gender education system be successful implemented.

Topic 77 Should boys and girls go to separate schools?

Should boys and girls attend separate schools? This question is very arguable. Before rendering my opinion, let's consider the advantages for boys and girls to attend separate schools. Since boys and girls are different in many ways, they have different hobbies and the ways to learn new things. If they attend separate schools, the education can be more efficient because the school can teach them differently according to their personalities. But the disadvantages are greater. While boys and girls attend separate schools, there're few chances for them to communicate with opposite sexes, which will become a handicap for them to communicate with each other in their future.

As far as I concerned, boys and girls should not attend separate schools. The first and foremost reason is that people should have experience with the opposite sex when they are at school, because the society consists of both male and female members, and people have to learn how to communicate with the opposite sex.

Moreover, people have to learn from the opposite sex. For example, while females should learn braveness from males, males should learn carefulness from females. In addition, in a family, to learn from the opposite sex becomes more important to keep the family harmonious. In addition, the knowledge of the opposite sex is also important. Without such knowledge, dealing with the opposite sex in a relationship becomes extremely difficult.

Finally, as we can see, it's definitely important for boys and girls to attend schools together, so that they can learn from each other, communicate with each other and they can understand each other well, which is very valuable for their future.

Topic 78 **Teamwork vs. working independently**

Some people like to work independently, while others would prefer to work in a team. Is it more important to be able to work with a group of people in a team or to work independently? Depending on different personal traits and working environments, people will have different answer to this question. I think being able to work in a team is more important for me.

First, the modern society and industry is a complicated system that requires teamwork, communication and cooperation among companies and individuals. Take a computer system for example, it comprises of hardware, operating system and software, which are manufactured separately by different companies. Not one single company can accomplish a computer system without using products and technologies from other companies. Similarly, in a company, communication and teamwork is more and more important among workers because a worker cannot do his/her work properly without interacting with his supervisor and colleagues.

Second, there are many advantages of working in a group than working alone. Teamwork provides a worker with a cooperative, friendly and enjoyable work environment. The team can also be helpful in responding to a worker's questions and problems, therefore increase the work efficiency. Teamwork can also challenge a worker's abilities and he/she can acquire valuable experiences from it.

Third, the ability of working independently does not contradict with the ability to work in a team. For example, in a team environment, I enjoyed being a major contributor to my team. The fact that others depended on my work made me feel like I was doing worthwhile things. For example, I was in charge of the front end for the GUI. This was very valuable experience, because I know how important it is to work in a team.

Inclusion, I think the most important quality in a work environment is the ability to work with others in a team.

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Topic 78 **Teamwork vs. working independently**

There are many ways in which people can complete their works. Some prefer to work with a group of people on a team. Others prefer to work independently. To work with others can inspire their spirit and produce twice the result with half the effort. In my opinion, working on a team is more important.

In business, people who are able to work with a group of people on a team tend to communicate well with others. In order to complete a sophisticated task, individuals must work together, each sharing a part of the whole task, in order to achieve the results. The team must interchange their ideas during each process in the forms of meetings and discussions. Each one tries his/her best to give a better idea to make the process more time-efficient.

In addition, we cannot live in a society independently and we need to communicate with each other, so communication skills are very important to this society. Through teamwork, we can develop and improve this ability.

Although one can complete a work independently with one's innovation and sometimes can accomplish a perfect work with great compliments, many reasons show that throughout teamwork really can achieve more than we may think of. No wonder, in the F1 race, team order is the most important thing that every member in the team must obey.

Topic 79 **Who would you choose to build a statue for?**

If the City Government of my town - Moscow asked me to choose a person whose statue will be built, I would choose no one. And here I can explain my point of view.

In my opinion there are already statues of many famous people who merit a statue. Right in the center of Moscow there is a great statue of Jury Dolgirukiy. He founded the Moscow City in 1447. He is also famous as a great defender of his people. If you look at this statue, you will see a very strong man riding a horse with a spear in his arms and the injured dragon lying on the ground. In my view it symbolizes the meaning of his deeds and people's remembrance and respect to him.

Another statue in Moscow is that of Alexander Pushkin. He was one of the most famous Russian poets. He has made an important contribution to the worlds literature. His poems are realistic. They answered to questions asked so many years ago, and they can still answer today's questions. His statue looks so natural as if he is alive. His statue is standing in the middle of the Pushkin Square. With a book in his arms, he looks very calm and contemplative.

Another monument that I consider impressive is the monument for people who died during the Second World War. I cannot describe it because there are no proper words to express the emotions I feel when looking at this statue. I just feel painful and sad for their death and as people cannot bring them back to life, they can only try to prevent future wars.

In conclusion since there are already enough statues for famous historic figures in Moscow, I would like to say that I prefer to see modern art sculptures in the streets of this historic city. I would allow young modern sculptors to exhibit their works in the streets.

Topic 80 **Describe a custom from your country**

Who took care of you before you are eligible to go to the daycare? That grandparents taking care of their baby grandchildren is a tradition in my country. I would like people from other countries to adopt this tradition.

At first thought, this tradition seems to be unimaginable to people who are accustomed to the "parents-children breeding" model. However, did you notice that swarm of young mothers are roaming in the department stores with their babies during working hours? Young ladies quit their jobs and sacrifice their careers to look after their offspring. How many women can really keep up with their professional work after several years' absence from their positions in such a fast pace society? A babysitter may help you, but do they really care your baby as his grandma does? The answer is No. Grandparents ensure the love, care, health and education of your kids.

On the other hand, senior citizens gain more happiness through this day to day caring of their young grandchildren. Old people are sad about the aging and loss of work. When they spend their time with young kids, when the fun and loveliness filled in their soul, all unhappiness disappears. The moments they spent together with the babies are so sweet they can improve seniors' mental and physical health.

It is undeniable that the relationships of different generations will be tightened. Needless to say, kids will be tied with their grandparents in this process. I was brought up by my grandparents who are in their nineties now. I still call them quite often and buy gifts for them. I feel the strong connection among us.

From above analysis, I highly recommend our custom of grandparents give their hand to cultivate future generation.

Topic 81 Has technology made the world a better place to live?

With the development of technology, there have been a lot of changes to our life. Admittedly, some of these changes are bad, causing many environmental and social problems. However, most of these changes contribute to making our life more convenient, more comfortable and more wonderful.

First of all, due to the improvement of technology, people can enjoy more conveniences than ever. For example, it only takes travelers or businessmen several hours to go to another countries by jet planes, which makes the world seem to be much smaller. With the help of the Internet, people at different corners of the world can communicate with each other at a significantly high speed and low cost. It is technology that has cleared away the barriers that once prevented people from leading a convenient life.

Secondly, technology has made our life as comfortable as we can imagine. Sitting in air-conditioned rooms, people do not have to suffer the extremely cold or hot weather any more. Whatever vegetable or fruit we want to eat, we can always find it in a supermarket regardless of the season. We can also go to work in a place far away from our homes by using automobiles or public transportation tools.

In addition, technology provides us many choices to spend our spare time. Listening to music by using an MD, MP3 or Walkman, surfing the Internet or watching digital movies, all of these entertainments make our life wonderful.

In conclusion, although technology has brought about some problems, such as air pollution caused by increasing number of automobiles, and ethnic problems caused by cloning human beings, the benefits of technology far outweigh its bad influences. So it is safe to say that technology has made the world a better place to live.

Topic 81 Has technology made the world a better place to live?

A great many achievements have been accomplished in recent decades in almost every area of technology, such as in computer science, manufacture, and medicine. But there have always existed two opposite attitudes towards technological development. Some people agree that these new technologies have made the world a better place to live, while others hold the opinion that technology has caused many problems to the world. As far as I am concerned, I agree with the first opinion that our world is becoming better for living with technology progress. Several persuasive reasons go as follow.

Firstly, technology developments have greatly improved people's living conditions, making our life more convenient and efficient. We have elevators taking us to the top of a skyscraper in just a few seconds; we have air conditioners to keep the indoor temperature comfortable; and we even have household robots now to help to take care of the trivial housework.

Secondly, technology developments have also made communications much easier, and thus helped to enhance relationships among people. The wide use of pagers, mobile phones, and wireless Internet has greatly facilitated the way of daily communication. They can bring people so close even though they may actually be thousands of miles apart.

Thirdly, developments in technology can provide better medical access to make people live a healthier and happier life. By taking advantages of the most recent developments in biotechnology, such as genetic engineering, I am convinced that people will have a promising prospect in treating all kinds of human diseases, including AIDS and SARS.

It is true that technological developments have also brought some serious problems. One of them is that some technological developments have done harm to the environment. For example, too much emission of waste gases, mainly carbon dioxide, has increased the global temperature significantly. However, people can reduce and finally eliminate these harmful effects by improving the technology itself or finding a more advanced and reliable technology.

I believe that with the new technologies appropriately adopted for good purposes, our world would be made an even better place to live.

Topic 81 Has technology made the world a better place to live?

Since the end of the last century, when technology started to make a full impact, debates have sprung up among people worldwide as to whether this technology has made the world a better place to live or not. In my perspective, the new developments have indeed improved our lives.

One striking example of how Man's new inventions have helped us to lead a better life is the whole set of time-saving electrical appliances and tools, ranging from washing machines to microwave ovens. No longer do we need to go down to the river to wash our clothes on rocks or to heat our food with wood and charcoal for never-ending hours. Nowadays, our daily chores are merely simple tasks, needing only very little efforts on our part. It is the machines that do all the boring and tiring work.

Consequently, we are left with much more leisure time to spend at our free will. Technology has exerted a great influence on the ways people relax themselves today. It has transformed our previously boring leisure time into long hours of excitement, enjoyment and fun. For instance, nobody can deny that video, computer and PlayStation games have added spice to our lives, especially those of children. The home cinema, recently available on the market, has made many happy families around the world.

Technology has not done good deeds only in those areas. It has gone even further by improving considerably communication among countries. Owing to new technology such as the Internet, fax and mobile phones, barriers among nations have started to disappearing, thus turning the world into a 'global village'. In our modern era, it is even possible to be living in a poor country while studying with the top professors in England via the Web by enrolling in an online degree.

We have therefore seen how technology has made the world a better place to live in some ways. However, just as the English proverb goes, "Every coin has two sides", technology has also had a few negative effects on our society. Thus, the same timesaving devices that save us so much trouble have quickened so much the pace of life. Nowadays everyone is stressed and is always preoccupied. Moreover, overexposure to video games and the television has been proved to be harmful to people's health, creating eye and back problems. In addition, new technology like the Internet has allowed the brewing of new types of crime and criminals such as hackers and viruses.

In today's world, technology is having a deep influence on the way people do things. But the issue of whether this technology has made the world a better place to live in will continue to be a controversial topic.

Topic 81 Has technology made the world a better place to live?

Being modern human beings, people nowadays have enjoyed so much from the highly developed technology. The improvements of technology have changed people's life styles significantly. Admittedly, sometimes, technology worsens the condition. However, compared to its advantages, the bad impacts are so tiny.

In the modern world, we lead a much better life than our ancestors. We no longer need to be on guard all day to prevent us from being attacked by wild animals; we no longer live in rock caves which are dangerous and not comfortable; we can no longer put all of our hope to the God to pray a mild weather which will bring us a harvest. We can utilize technology to increase the quality and quantity of plants. Moreover, modern technology of medical treatment helps us cure the number of terrible diseases that will deprive the life of human.

Besides, technology provides us many unimaginable tools that benefit our life. We can travel from one place to another by plane only in few hours, while it would take our ancestors several months or even years in the ancient time. We use computer and robot to help us with hard and routine works. Computers also improve the efficiency of our work.

However, technology not only brings us gold but also rubbish. Pollution is one of the most terrible problems. The excess use of technology brings disasters to people and the world. The rivers and oceans are not as clear as before; the wild animals are disappearing. In order to save the world and also ourselves, people should limit their demand from nature and use technology in a sustainable way.

All in all, technology itself is neutral thing. Whether it will benefit people or do harm to people depends on the people who use it. Fortunately, most of the time we have utilized technology in the right way, therefore, the technology benefit our life much more than its harm.

Topic 81 Has technology made the world a better place to live?

Standing at the turn of the new century, we observe the twentieth century as a great advance in technology. With those advances, human lives have changed dramatically. In some ways, life is worse, but mostly, it is better. So personally speaking, I am, and probably will always be, one of those who agree with the idea that technology has made the world a better place to live.

First of all, technology has brought with it a more comfortable life. Not only do we use air-conditioners and heating systems during summer and winter, but also do we experience many changes in food preparation methods to prepare delicious food. Due to the development of architectural technology, our living conditions are greatly improved.

Besides, traveling and communication are much more convenient nowadays. We can travel around by airplanes and railway networks. We can talk to each other through telephones. Twenty years ago, it was a dream that we could obtain information as well as shopping via the Internet.

The last but not the least, through the process of technology improvement, people begin to realize the fact that only reconciling with the nature can we maintain a sustainable development. That is why we today pay so much attention to environmental protection. Many factories have achieved economic growth without polluting the environment by utilizing certain new technology.

Instances of the same sort can be multiplied indefinitely. When taking into account all these merits we may safely arrive at the conclusion that advantages of technology outweigh any disadvantages it may bring to our lives. Though I must admit that people sometimes invent some things that threaten the lives of themselves, no one can ignore the additional conveniences and satisfaction offered by technology, and just with such experiences the human being forge ahead swiftly to the future.

Topic 81 Has technology made the world a better place to live?

Many people take the view that technology has made the world a better place to live. As far as I am concerned, I share the common view with them. Because I could pick up examples here and there around us and I would here explore a few of the most important ones.

The main reason is that if we look around, we may find that technology makes for us a better place to live. Take our house for example, without architectural technology, we could only live in the open wild. Thanks for those architects and engineers, we can live in a warm comfort house that protects us not only from the rain and wind, but also from the coldness of the winter, and the hotness of the summer.

Another reason is that we could communicate with our relatives or friends without the need of meeting them face-to-face. Information technology helps us a lot in communication. For instance, telephones and cellular phones help us talk with others no matter where they are; computer networks connecting the whole world offer us another alternative of communication. By email, our messages can reach the destination in just a few seconds.

Furthermore, transportation technology realizes the dream of people who want to travel around the world or to the space. We all can imagine that without car, bus or bicycles, how could most of us manage to get to work everyday?

In a word, technology has changed the world in a better way for us to live in terms of housing, communication, transportation and many other aspects. Taking into account of all factors mentioned above, we might reach the conclusion that technology has made the world a better place to live.

Topic 82 **Can advertising tell about a country?**

Nowadays some may hold the opinion that advertising can tell you a lot about a country. As far as I am concerned, I agree with this statement. My arguments for this point are listed as follows.

One of the primary causes is that advertising is always a reflection of a country's culture and customs. Advertising varies from country to country, depending on the country's particular conventions. For example, a Japanese advertisement may feature a Japanese lady with a traditional kimono, while an American advertisement may feature a western cowboy with a hat and riding a horse. Through advertisements, we can have a general understanding of what people from other countries look like, what they wear during their daily life, what they eat, what kind of transportation they use, and what they do during their spare time. We can always learn different cultures of different countries through these culture specific advertisements.

A further more subtle point we must consider is that we can understand a country by its products. When we see a Toyota or a SONY advertisement on TV, we realize that Japanese people see quality as a vital aspect of their products, and we know that how these people are always trying their best in high technology development, and ensure the best quality in their products. When we have gained a deeper understanding of a product, we can also gain a deeper understanding of that country and people.

What is more, when we become curious about the culture and customs of a country through advertisement, we are willing to spend more time on reading about the country, explore more deeply about it, and even someday travel to a country we like to visit. All these might have started with a small advertisement on TV! Is that amazing?

In short, advertising can really tell you a lot about a country's culture and customs.



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Topic 82 Can advertising tell about a country?

Advertising plays an important role in modern society. Advertisements covering every aspect of social life can tell a lot about a country by the marriage of substantial information and colorful expressive forms. Although many disagree with the title statement, I believe that we can learn a lot about a country's economy, culture and beauty spots simply by advertising.

Advertising offers a great amount of economic information about a country. Take commercial advertisements for example, they unveil many direct and useful economic messages: major commodities, service level, living conditions, and so on. Undoubtedly, politicians, businessmen and citizens will all take advantage of these helpful advertisements.

Advertising also reveals greatly distinctive traditional culture about a country. It can easily be attained by observing advertisements associated to art, literature, custom, and social ritual, which have been deeply rooted in a country's unique history. For example, advertisements for some articles used in a Chinese wedding reflect their way of thinking, an appreciation of harmony, and a peculiar taste for wedding clothes. Advertisements of those kinds can thus show plenty of cultural heritages boasted in a country.

Furthermore, advertising helps people learn more about a country's beautiful scenery. Advertisements about travel serve this purpose perfectly. Information and knowledge about various resorts might be obtained by happening to see a photo advertisement posted on a wall by some travel agency. Advertisements on television, on the contrary, frequently provide us many opportunities to watch all kinds of unusual beautiful places we may never have thought of before.

All the above evidence supports the undeniable fact that advertising can tell a lot about a country. I must admit, however, some advertisements become more or less homogenous around the world due to the tendency of globalization. Some even fail to signify any special characteristics that are essential for a country when they need to do so. But all in all, no one can ignore the abundant and useful information about a country afforded by advertising.

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Topic 83 Is modern technology creating a single world culture?

I strongly agree with the statement that modern technology is creating a single world culture. Modern technology like computers and the Internet is bringing people together, and making the world smaller.

First of all, with the development of modern technologies such as computers, English is becoming the most important language in the world, and the importance of other languages is getting weaker and weaker. Admit or not, the most common language used today on the Internet is English, and this makes English become the one and only most important language in the world. On the other hand, computers can cross the barriers of human language. No matter where people are, and no matter which language people speak, they always use computers the same way, and basically they are using the same kind of software packages, like the Windows Operating Systems and word processing software packages. The computer language is also a universal language. Programmers from different part of the world can work in the Silicon Valley together. Although they might have difficulties in communicating in English, they have no problem at all writing programs with Java, or C++.

Besides, the development of the Internet is unifying people's life style. Internet is being used in almost every corner of the world. People are doing almost everything with the Internet, like getting all sorts of information, shopping online, paying for their bills and checking their balances in the online bank. Over 90 per cent of people in the world use the same kind of Internet browser - the Internet Explorer, and the interfaces of almost every Internet page looks like the same, although they use different language and design. People from all over the world are doing the same thing each day on the Internet, and their living habit is becoming closer and closer with each passing day.

In addition, modern technology has facilitated the communications among people from all over the world, and therefore has resulted a single world culture. For instance, people can chat with a friend or a stranger who lives abroad over the phone, or the Internet, and they can also see and listen to him/her through a camera and a microphone attached to the computer. The ease of communication helps one culture learns from other culture, and brings the world together. Before people can see each other through TV, they used to wear their local costumes; nowadays T-shirt and blue jeans have become a universal custom for people. This is a concrete example that modern development is creating a single world culture.

Based on the points discussed above, we can see why I agree with that modern technology is creating a single world culture.

Topic 83 Is modern technology creating a single world culture?

When we look back to the history of human being in recent 200 years, we will be surprising what a huge change modern technology has brought us. Trains and planes connect people everywhere. Radios and televisions enable us to keep with every news happened around the world. More and more chances of communication influence different cultures deeply.

To discuss the impact that modern technology has given on different cultures, most people would agree that nowhere in history has the issue been more visible that people in different countries are getting more and more alike. Most of the time, you cannot tell which country a person is from only by his/her clothes. Young people all over the world can enjoy McDonald's and other western food the same way as Americans enjoy. A pop music singer can have her fans in every corner of our planet. People around the world share news from newspapers and TV and express concerns on the same topic.

"The world is getting smaller!." How often we hear such words! But that is only part of the truth. Not everything in a country's culture can be changed. Something developed from thousands of years ago and has already been a part of a nation's spirit cannot be wiped off easily. For example, the family concept of our country has never changed. We still prefer a big family that all generations live together. That is the definition of happiness in our value system. We still appreciate the thinking of Confucius and take it as guideline of our daily life. At the same time, many countries make great efforts to preserve their culture heritages. People around the world take more and more pride in their own cultures, and try to cherish them.

Certainly, modern technology make possible for cultures to communicate with each other. But I don't think it is creating a single world culture. Communication brought by modern technology can be an instrument for improving and learning, but not a tool for erasing individualities. And it is the cultural diversity that makes our world more beautiful and interesting.

Topic 84 Has the Internet provided a lot of valuable information?

The Internet...is it a boon or a curse? This is a very debatable topic. We would need to look at the pros and cons of it and then draw conclusions. Even then it would not be possible to totally answer yes or no to the question. It would depend upon individual personalities as well as the situation that we are in. In my opinion, the Internet is definitely a valuable source of information, but as with all forms of technology one must know how to make the best use of it.

Let's step back a few years from now. We were totally dependent on books, the experience of other people or data stored in other forms for getting information of any sort. The problems with those kind of information sources is that it is time consuming, inconvenient and often times even misleading. The concept of weeding out data from old reports and books was a time consuming and painful process and would itself deter people from trying to get new information.

But today with a touch of a button we can get any information available, sitting in the comfort of our homes. We are more knowledgeable and aware of things happening around us. Technology has given us the greatest power at our fingertips...the power of knowledge!

Lets take an example. Suppose someone wants to start off a business venture. He can get all information regarding other companies in the same line of business, he can do a cost benefit analysis, gather corroborating data, make new contacts, and so on, thanks to the internet. He is now well informed. If he has to discuss this with other potential partners he is armed with a wealth of information.

On the other hand the Internet does supply an overload of information. Hence if you give a topic in a search engine such as Google, you will get a number of sites that would cater to the information required. Now if one were unable to decide what information to cull out and what to leave, it would be a painful experience rather than an enjoyment.

So in conclusion, it really depends on how you use a particular technology - used in moderation and in an intelligent manner it could be the greatest tool. Otherwise an enemy that steals time and waylays and deters a person from achieving his ultimate goal.

Topic 84 **The Internet**

Nowadays, no one can deny the importance of the Internet. Sitting in front of a computer, clicking a mouse three times, you can get access to the information highway, which provides you numerous valuable sources of information. Thanks to the Internet, people can quickly sell, advertise and share knowledge, idea, and personal feelings.

Because we are easy to access to so much information, it can create some problems to us. Children are easily suffering from inappropriate information on the Internet, since it is very hard to control information from the Internet. More and more porn pages are quickly emerging and continuously sending emails to children's account. With their curiosity, children click on these links that lead to these pages, and see things that they should not have seen. They do not realize that they are unconsciously affected because their parents cannot examine all the content they view.

Consequently, children are now becoming the number one victims of sex abuse and criminals in America where it is very easy to access bad websites such as porn sites and sex forums. It is the Internet that probably causes problems to children if parents do not pay much attention to them.

Although the Internet offers us large amount of information, its reliability is dubious because many untrue news stories can be posted to it and cause confusions to many people. It is very difficult for us to find out what websites are reliable and what are not. My teacher, for example, is advocating her students to use books to study, research, or write a report instead of using the information on the Internet.

In conclusion, the Internet causes trouble to people, especially young people and children. Although people can get access to up-to-date knowledge and information, problems caused by using information from the Internet are inevitable. Therefore, while the Internet can provide a lot of useful information, its hard cannot be underestimated.

Topic 85 A one-day-visit to your country

If you attend a conference in China, and would like to take a one-day-visit on site seeing and shopping, there are three factors you might consider: this place must have special tourist features which can represent China, and this place must be close to the place where the meeting is held, therefore you do not have to spend too much time on traveling.

If you are in northern part of China, the best place that you should visit is the city of Beijing, although spending one day in Beijing is too short of a period to fully explore the splendors of the city. Nevertheless, for those of you without the luxury of time, make sure you don't miss a few key points of interest—the Summer Palace, the Forbidden Palace, the Forbidden City, and the Great Wall of China.

The Summer Palace is a royal retreat located on the bank of a large lake. Visitors can walk along a waterfront promenade that leads to a concrete ship docked at the far end of the walk. At the concrete ship, you can take a ferry back to the entrance of the palace. Something you may want to do while at the Summer Palace is going into the gift shop, get dressed in traditional Chinese clothing, and pose for a souvenir photograph.

The Forbidden Palace is absolutely breathtaking. There are a series of gates that lead to the main palace grounds. Pay particular attention to the stairwells in the palace courtyards. There are slabs carved with intricate dragon designs, which the emperor was suspended over in a caravan whenever he left the palace grounds. It would be a good idea to get a local guide to lead you around the palace and explain the significance of various buildings.

Finally, don't miss the Great Wall. It's located outside of the city and it takes up most of the day, but it's well worth it. When you ascend the Great Wall, there are two paths—one veering to the left and the one veering to the right. The path on the right is less steep and an easier climb. However, if you take the path to the left, you can see the remains of the original wall, and there is a cable car you can take down to the parking area.

Shopping in Beijing is becoming more convenient by the day. The Silk Market at Xiushui Street is favorites among tourists, experts and locals alike. There you can bargain with the shop owners and buy good quality clothes with a very low price, you can even see plenty of pirated software- ironically, within sight of the US Embassy.

So, there you have it. I encourage anyone to spend at least a few days in Beijing, because there is so much to see.

Topic 86 **A time and a place in the past**

One of the most exciting events of the last century was the end of World War II. By defeating the German army, U. S and British forces stopped the tyrant Hitler in his way to conquer the rest of the world. All over Europe, the day that ended the war resembled a new era. Thus, it would be fascinating to witness how things changed dramatically from war and death to peace and bloom.

The end of the biggest war mankind has ever known also ended the Holocaust. Hitler and his administration decided that they should kill all the Jews in Europe. Thus, under the mask of "working camps" they planned to build special prisons, where they can deliver the Jews in order to murder them in various ways. This evil plan caused the biggest massive murder in the history of mankind. The day the war ended, reflects also the end of this evil murder, which followed by the recreation of the Jewish nation.

After the end of the war, nations started to rebuild themselves; big countries in Europe like Germany, France and England signed peace agreements that influenced the future of the whole region. Without borders between countries and with free marketing system, Europe gradually forgot the sorrow of the deathly war. At that time, Europe countries were famous due to the amazing achievements in sport, art, and fashion. For example, Picasso, one of the world greatest artists, inspired by this era and reflected his feelings in his works. Gradually, the situation of the economy changed, and Europe became one of the best places to live and to invest in.

"History repeats itself is a famous and practical sentence; being a witness to this kind of amazing change is experience that takes place once in a life time, thus this specific segment of history is extremely interesting and important, and if I would have the opportunity to choose time and place in the past - this is what I would choose.

Topic 86 **A time and a place in the past**

The topic makes me recollect my childhood, the happiest time that I had in my hometown. It is a remote village on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau full of imagination and intrigue. My childhood there was cheerful and unforgettable.

It used to be a very small village, surrounded with high mountains; the melted snow water from the top of the mountains formed many clear brooks and went through the village. The crystal water moistened the grass and crops in the village and also provided the village people with all sorts of fish and shrimps. The appearance of the mountainsides varied as the seasons change - yellow in spring, green in summer, red in autumn and white in winter. The top of the mountains was always covered with snow, shining under the sun. When you were in the village, you would feel you were touching the sky and you will feel a sense of holiness around your body.

My childhood friends and I enjoyed our life in the village so much. We liked to swim in the water freely and catch the fish on fine days. We grazed the animals in the grassland after school. The sheeps on the grassland are like stars on a vast velvet green carpet. We played games in the pasture, we sang folk songs on the hill, and we climbed trees in the forests. We were always so happy that we often forgot to go home or go to school. I boast it was the most beautiful place in the world, although full of impoverishment. The villagers were so poor and they barely have enough food at that time, but they were so optimistic. They kept working hard with little return without any hesitation or complain. It was since childhood that I learned how to face hardships and failures in my life.

My childhood days were innocent and worry free. I left my hometown for a better educational opportunity when I grew up, but I always miss that wonderful homeland. I take every opportunity to visit it. The pictures of the place and the life there will always live in my mind.

Topic 86 **A time and a place in the past**

If I were afforded the opportunity to go back to a specific time and place in the past, I would venture back to ancient Greece. During the 5th century B. C, the Greeks were in the process of developing and reforming a wide range of cultural, social, and scientific pursuits that still have a significant impact on the world today.

In the arts, Greece excelled in many fields, particularly dramatic literature. The works of Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes have had a tremendous influence not only on western literature, but also western thought in general. The works of these playwrights are still performed on stages around the world today, and many of them have been adapted to movies. Still, it would be a rare and exciting opportunity to see these plays performed for the first time.

The ancient Greeks also excelled in the social sciences. Perhaps their greatest contribution in this area came in the form of democracy. The Greek words "Demo" and "Crazy" mean "People" and "Rule" respectively. Today, many of the world's great nations have adopted, and to a certain extent, modified the ancient Greek system. Yet, it originated from ancient Greece.

Academic subjects such as Philosophy, Astronomy, Physics and Biology also received a great deal of attention in the ancient Greek world. The philosophical writings of Herbalists, Plato, and Aristotle have had a profound influence on western scholarship for well over two thousand years. The Mathematical theories of Pythagoras and Euclid, combined with theories from other great ancient civilizations, provided a foundation upon which later mathematicians such as Newton and Einstein based their work.

The world of the Ancient Greeks would most certainly be an exciting and stimulating place to go back to. Politics, Drama, Physics, and a number of other subjects were still in their infancy, and all were being fiercely debated and examined. It would undoubtedly be an enriching experience to observe and take part in such a fascinating civilization.

Topic 86 **A time and a place in the past**

Till now, there is only one thing that makes me feel repentant of. My girlfriend died in Japan, and at that time I was doing my TOEFL test. If I could go back to some time and place in the past, I choose to go back to January 19th 2002...

My girlfriend's name was Christina. Her father is a Japanese, and her mother is a Chinese. She looks as beautiful as an angel. During last winter vacation, I started to prepare for the TOEFL test. Of course, I did not spend enough time with her as usual. I only saw her once every two weeks. The night before the TOEFL test, she came to my house. I enjoyed her cooking, and everything looked fine as usual. The next morning, she cooked the breakfast for me.

Before I left, she kissed me and said "Jackey, good luck. I love you!" I replied: "Thanks, honey! I love you, too." The test went fine. After the test, my cell phone rang as I turned it on. It is one of my best friends, Moon. He said "Jackey, Christina went back to Japan. She is very ill. Now she is in the hospital and she is in the dangerous period. You have to come to Japan right now. We will see you in Japan!"

Christina is ill! How come I did not know this! When I finally obtained the visa and arrived at the hospital in Japan, Christina said, "I think your business is more important than me. I do not think you need me any more! Goodbye, forever." She went forever. If I could go back, I will stay with her and spend much more time with her. I could even drop my test for her.

In fact, it is impossible to go back! Christina has died. There is no another Christina for me, but the TOEFL test will still be held four times per year!

Topic 86 **A time and a place in the past**

If I could go back to some time and place in the past, I would choose my childhood and my hometown. There it was full of my child's happy days. Especially nowadays, I live in a metro city full of chaos, traffic and pollution.

I would never forget the clear stream in my hometown. My friends and I used to swim and fish in the water, and play on the grass nearby. Currently I am still looking for such a nice place for my child, but I cannot find it anymore.

I have lost contact with my close friends in my childhood for nearly twenty years. Their appearances are still kept in my memory. Their honesty, naive and helpful characters taught me what is real friendship. Perhaps they were all married and even have children, perhaps they have achieved their childhood dreams one way or the other, and perhaps they are struggling for living just like me. I wish we could get together sometime like our childhood years, free from worries about the future.

I still remember my hometown in New Year times. Every child was dressed well, and got more freedom from their parents than other days in the year. Everyone in my hometown was happily talking about their harvests and their plans in the next year. Needless to say, us children can enjoy lots of delicious foods in such days.

During my childhood days, I lived happily and healthily in a beautiful environment, and I had very close friends. I wish I could go back to enjoy my cherished memories again.

Topic 86 Visiting modern times

As a student in art history, my interest had always been on modern art. If I could travel back in time and space, I would pick Paris at the verge of twentieth century, the place and time of modern art development, without hesitation.

I believe that living during the period of the avant-garde art in Paris would be something quite exciting. I could go to experience the Eiffel Tower's opening, or visit the first Cubist exhibition. I would also be enthusiastic to attend Bergson or Poincare's lectures at College de France, or read articles in the newspapers of the time. I have always curious how people felt when they saw for the first time an automobile or an airplane.

Moreover, I think it would be exciting to see how long distance communication became a reality, and how people perceived the introduction of the Greenwich Universal Time. This was an age in which incredible changes took place in the way people saw the world, in the way they perceived and understood time and space. It was the time when Einstein published his first studies about relativity. It was, as far as I am concerned, a time that it is worth taking a look at. I believe that Paris at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th would be something fascinating.

If I were to return from the past back to our own times, I would be much more confident in my researches about that time, and my contribution to the study of art history would be a quite substantial one. Till now I can only read books and articles about it, and just imagine the wonderful time Paris had been just before the war!

Topic 87 What is an important discovery in the last 100 years?

I think the most important discovery that has been the most beneficial for people in my country is the invention of the Internet. So far as I can tell, the Internet has been beneficial to people around the globe. My view is a commonsense one, based on the fact that the Web is a vast storehouse of information and opinions, which can be of science, literature, politics, sports or even, sex. Anyone with access to a computer and a dialup connection can unlock the door and trawl through its offerings.

The Internet can be used as a broad base of knowledge that contributes to the educational system. Students and teachers benefit from the use of the Internet, as well as administrators and others outside of formal education. Students benefit because the Internet provides a resource to supplemental information for any subject. Educators benefit because the Internet provides a vast knowledge base to prepare for teaching topics. People are not only learning from the Internet, they are contributing and sharing knowledge through networked communities. The Internet is the advancement of education for all its users.

The Internet is changing the way we do business. The Internet can deliver better customer services to people. Using Internet broadcasting, we are able to target the right audience, prepare and present a technical presentation on a popular topic, interact with new customers, and collect hundreds of highly qualified leads. As Internet companies continue to find innovative ways to leverage the capabilities of the Internet for businesses, the more we will learn how to provide optimal solutions for customers. Which in turn, will greatly benefit people.

The Internet today is a way to transfer and share information. On the whole, it is a benefit to individuals of all kinds. We do have problems surrounding the Internet that need to be solved, but as with all new technologies there are debates and opinions. Since the Internet technology is spreading, it will soon become as popular as all other forms of communication. If you have not tried it, do so.

Topic 87 What is an important discovery in the last 100 years?

There are many important discoveries in the last century. Some of them had fundamental influences on the development of my country - China. However, I believe that one of the most important discoveries is the Cross-feeding method of rice discovered by a pioneering crop scientist Mr. Weiming Yuan in the early 1980's.

China has a long history of agriculture. Chinese people have been relying on agriculture for more than 2,000 years. Moreover, China is still basically an agricultural country now and will continue to be it in the next 20 to 30 years, even though its industry is undergoing revolutionary development. One of the most important agriculture products - rice, is essential to the people of China. Since Yuan's discovery has dramatically increased the production of rice in China, we can say that Yuan's discovery is beneficial for the people of China.

More importantly, rice is the major food of people in Southern China, where half of Chinese population lives there. People in the South eat rice everyday. So the consumption of rice is tremendous. As Yuan's cross-feeding rice seeds and raising methods provided 1.5 to 2 times more production of rice, people could effectively relieve the food supply crisis - a crisis that have caused millions of people to die in the 1960's.

When Chinese population exploded in the 1970's and 1980's, the effect of this discovery became much more significant. Yuan's discovery also corresponds to China's current government policy that China takes agriculture as its first industry. This is because China has over 80% of farmers, and it's not realistic for it to become an industrialized country in a short period of time. Thus rice growing is still a crucial part of China's economic.

Overall, since most farmers in China are utilizing Yuan's discovery to increase rice production, and agriculture plays the most important role in China, I can firmly say that Yuan's discovery has been most beneficial to people in my country in the last 100 years.

Topic 88 Has telephone made communication less personal?

Since the beginning of humankind people need to communicate with each other. After the development of languages and thanks to the incredible ability of mankind to advance, nowadays we enjoy the use of many different types of communication. Letters, the Internet, or telephone allows us to communicate freely with the rest of the world.

In spite of above mentioned, I agree with the statement that new types of communications have made contacts between people less personal.

Unfortunately, the technology age we live in forces us to adopt the contemporary way of communication, which is almost impersonal. While hurrying to work more and more, chasing our aims, or focusing only on money making, practically we have forgotten that one of our primary social needs is to communicate face-to-face. To save time we often prefer to send an email or to make a phone call than to have a simple face-to-face talk with our friends or parents, for example.

Furthermore, those types of impersonal communications will sooner or later place us into isolation. Nowadays, we are often afraid to make new acquaintances; we have troubles to express ourselves when we communicate face-to-face; or we experience difficulties to hold an informal conversation. What is more, we find much easier to communicate with other people by email and phone.

Not only do we forget about our simple role as social members but we also do not enjoy it as we did before. Modern technology has made connections between people so impersonal that we are at the threshold of a new single world culture. This fact gives the answer to the question why so many people of our generation are victims of the illness called loneliness.

Although telephones and the Internet have made contacts between people much more easier, our virtual friends will remain virtual and a simple call will not substitute the hours we can spend with our families. Therefore, I truly believe that nothing can replace personal, face-to-face communication between people.

Topic 89 What person in history you would like to meet?

If I were granted an opportunity to travel back in time, the first person I would like to visit is Buddha. I hope to learn from such a wise and benevolent figure on my own. And I want to ask him for advice on the predicament we human beings are in.

Buddha is a symbol of humanity, a symbol of wisdom, leniency, tolerance and virtue. Millions of people over the world respect him. Sometimes it occurs to me rather difficult to understand that why a person of two thousands years ago can affect human spirit so much. If I had the opportunity, I really want to stand beside him, touch him, and perceive his strength.

When I visit him, I would ask him about the idea of tolerance non-violence. What I want to ask him is that how people, in an era full of violence, can restore the trust among each other and learn to negotiate peacefully. I would ask him if we still have any possibility to stop the war in Iraq, to calm the violence in Palestine, to return peace back to Afghan, to cure the terrible nightmare of Sept. 11 catastrophe in New York.

When I visit him, I would also ask him about diversity and co-existence. What would he think of Jesus Christ, Allah, Confucius, whether we have only one path to final happy or we would have different choices? Will Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Communists, Green Peace Warriors and any other groups of people co-exist in this tiny global village? I would ask him about Hitler, Stalin, and Ben Laden, whether he thinks human beings should tolerate them or not? I would also ask him if he could give any advice for ordinary people like me, how to access happy, and how to access peace.

Buddha is Buddha, and he would not disappoint me. I am sure!

Topic 89 What person in history you would like to meet?

There are many famous people in the history of human beings. And I want to meet almost all of them if possible. But if only one choice is available for me, I will choose the great thinker Confucius without hesitation. The reason for my decision goes as follow.

In the first place, from my point of view, Confucius had a great influence on the culture and history from ancient time to present society in China and almost no one could be comparable with him in this respect. At the earliest of human society, Confucius firstly advocated education and civilization and taught Chinese people how to build a civilianized relationship among people. There is no doubt that this idea benefited the development of the Chinese society. It is the result of education that makes Chinese people create abundant culture from one generation to the next. Therefore, Confucius had a significant influence on Chinese history.

In the second place, Confucius encouraged people to respect their parents, treat their friends honestly and have a loyal heart to their emperors. At that time, only when people accepted these ideas could they really understand their own responsibilities for family and the society. Without these Confucius thinking, people may not know what is supposed to be the correct behaviors when they live with family or survive in the society. It is Confucius's idea that gave them a clear guidance. Until now, these ideas still have great effects to the behavior of present people.

Last but not least, Confucius has broad knowledge in many areas, such as literature, astronomy and geography etc. It is this knowledge that helped him complete many famous works. Experts from all over the world have paid great attention on the research of these famous books because many useful ideas in the books are still beneficial to our society. For example, Confucius advocated that humans should live in harmony with nature. In the present society, people destroy forests in some areas, so living environment of human being has been damaged seriously. If we had observed Confucius ideas, this would not have happened.

In conclusion, Confucius is a great and famous thinker in the history of China. He provided us with the basic idea of education and civilization in human society, created the guidance of behavior for families and the society, and left us with abundant spiritual works. Therefore, he is the one who I want to meet most. I really hope that someday time could go back, so that I would meet him in the actual world.

Topic 89 What person in history you would like to meet?

If I could travel back in time to meet a famous person from history, I would like to meet Christopher Columbus. Without a doubt he was one of the greatest people who have ever lived. I choose him not only because he found America in 1492, but also because he had all the qualities that can define a successful person to me: brave, adventure spirit, attic faith, determination and perseverance.

First of all, I am strongly impressed with his daring and adventurous spirit. What he wanted to do, in the eyes of the public at that time, was a risk. Risking his life, in addition to a number of ships and other people's lives. But he had great courage and had success.

Secondly, his attic faith in the scientific theory that the earth was round had also led him to success. Despite the fact that most people still adhered to the belief that the earth was flat and that ships would fall off the edge, if they sailed too far in any direction. Columbus trusted the scientific theory, which was accepted only by few intellectual elites. It was his voyage that proved it.

Another great attribute from Columbus is his strong will and perseverance. If I could meet him, I would ask him how, after having his idea—voyage to India by a daring new route, namely, westward—rejected by the English, French and Portuguese courts, he still found the courage to ask yet another monarch to support him. I would like to hear what Columbus said to the King and Queen of Spain to convince them that this plan would be profitable for them, when they knew that he had been turned down by three other monarchs and any amount of money, supplies, or men with which they provided him could potentially be a total loss. Columbus was so determined that he finally convinced them.

If I could have a chance, meeting Columbus would be my first choice. In my eyes I see Columbus as a man "...more stupendous than those which Heaven has permitted..." no matter what anyone says.

Topic 90 What famous entertainer or athlete you would like to meet?

If I have the opportunity to meet a famous entertainer or athlete, I would like to meet Michael Jordan.

Jordan was neither tall nor strong in his childhood, but he never gave up playing basketball. He has huge success today as a legendary guy in the basketball history, and is a god for all the basketball fans all around the world. I think the reason of his success is because his diligence, courage and his strong inner desire to win. All these are what I admire most of him.

Jordan won six championships of NBA. That was the heydays of Jordan. Six rings! That is every NBA player's dream. Someone spent many years in order to get a ring but failed, like Carl Malone, and King Baylor. Jordan got six! His last ring was won by his exciting shoot, which was once considered the last and perfect moment in his life and a best end for his history of playing basketball.

Jordan's name was linked with "perfect" when people mentioned Jordan. A great deal of courage is needed for one to break off the word "perfect" which he used years to establish, but Jordan did it. He came back again, not as a god, but as a common basketball player. He was no longer young and could not act as what he did when his young. There are even some fans that opposed him to come back; they did not want to see their god beaten by the youth. In the opposite, Jordan did quite well, though not as good as before, but better than what we all imagined. He, a nearly forty-year-old man with two injured knees, led Wizards get much better marks than it did last year. He could still sometimes score more than forty points. What support him is the steadfast belief he had and the strong love of basketball. This gave him the unbelievable strength.

If I saw him, I wanted to ask him how he managed to gain the desire and where does this love come from, maybe Jordan would just give me a smile and say, "I love this game!"

Topic 90 What famous entertainer or athlete you would like to meet?

Everyone dreams to be handsome, rich and happy. Famous actors and actresses, pop stars or athletes are so popular because they realized the dreams many ordinary people have. If I could meet a famous entertainer or athlete, this person will be Julia Roberts.

Julia Roberts is a very talented actress. She can play many characters and each one is new and different. She seems to become the person she is portraying and gives a 100% to the performance. *Pretty Women* is my favorite because it was the first Julia movie that I saw and it was her big break. I still watch the movie to this day and enjoy it. *Steel Magnolias* is 2nd. Julia was in the company of a very talented cast and held her own. It's a classic, something you always enjoy watching.

I loved *Notting Hill* because the movie was full of many emotions. It made you feel happy after seeing it. I enjoy all of her movies. I see them even if the critics dish the movie. If she is in a movie I know her performance will be worth seeing. Her Oscar was very worthy of her as she was of it. Her Oscar was a long time coming. I am sure we can all look forward to many more great films to come and her always Oscar winning performance. Julia Roberts is not only beautiful, but she executes the characters she plays so well, that she can almost bring us to tears almost.

If I had a chance to meet Julia, I would also thank her for always thinking of the poor and the needed. After the disaster in New York and Pennsylvania, her face looked the sincerest of all of the stars. Also, I heard on the news that Julia gave \$2 million as a tribute. Recently, you pleaded at US congress for money on a children's disease. Thank Julia for helping with such a kind heart especially during a time when so many have lost so much! I know that they appreciate your support and thoughtfulness, Julia.

Such is Julia Roberts, a pretty woman and America's sweet heart, and she is the star that I definitely want to meet the most.

Topic 90 What famous entertainer or athlete you would like to meet?

Many people dream to meet a famous entertainer or athlete. If I could meet such a person I would like that it be Bulgarian entertainer Slavi Trifonov, who presents evening show, " Slavi's show" on BTV channel, because of the following.

First of all it would be interesting for me to meet the man, who had very big influence over the audience. Recent sociological researches show that more than two million people (the population of Bulgaria is around seven million people) watch his show every evening. Furthermore you could hear discussions about his show or jokes, which he told during the show, almost everywhere, in a public transportation, on a street or even at work.

The second reason for which I would like to meet Slavi Trifonov is that in my opinion he is very brave man. He does not afraid to ridicule those Bulgarian politicians, who abuse their power for personal purposes, despite of personal threats, which he received several times. For example, a few months ago, he received a threat for making a hidden camera for a member of Bulgarian Parliament who did not want to pay a penalty for parking on an inappropriate place and who also offended a policeman.

Last but not least, I would like to meet Slavi Trifonov, because he took in the past a leading role as one of the organizers of throwing down Gan Videnov's socialist government. Some days after the show "KU-KU" (in which he participated at that time and presented his political jokes and songs) was watched, the students' demonstrations against poverty, unemployment and high inflation rate began. Thanks to that the government resigned and new elections started a few months later.

To sum up, I would like to meet the famous Bulgarian entertainer Slavi Trifonov, because he has a big influence over many Bulgarians, he is very brave and he was the organizer of an important historic event in modern history of my country.

Topic 91 What question you will ask a famous person?

If I had the opportunity to sit down and meet one of my idols or heroes, I could come up with hundreds of questions to find out what they did to get where they are, but in particular I like to have asked Helen Keller, what would she have made of the technology available today to blind and deaf blind individuals?

When Helen Keller was nineteen months old, a serious illness almost took her life. She survived the disease had left her both blind and deaf. Her education contributed to her first teacher, Anne Sullivan. Anne taught Helen to finger spell, and manage to let her understand the meaning of words. Imagine how hard it is for a person both blind and deaf to relate words with real world objects, although she never had a chance to see those objects!

Another teacher Mary Swift Lamson who over the coming year was to try and teach Helen to speak. This was something that Helen desperately wanted and although she learned to understand what somebody else was saying by touching their lips and throat, her efforts to speak herself proved to be unsuccessful. However, Helen moved on to the Cambridge School for Young Ladies and later entered Radcliff College, becoming the first deaf blind person to have ever enrolled at an institution of higher learning.

After World War Two, Helen spent years traveling the world fundraising for the American Foundation for the Overseas Blind. They visited Japan, Australia, South America, Europe and Africa. Her hard work and achievements was widely recognized throughout the world, and she was acknowledged as "the Miracle Worker."

If Helen Keller were born today her life would undoubtedly have been completely different. Her life long dream was to be able to talk, something that she was never really able to master. Today the teaching methods exist that would have helped Helen to realize this dream. What would Helen have made of the technology available today to blind and deaf blind individuals? Technology of today has enabled blind and deaf blind people, like Helen, to communicate directly, and independently, with anybody in the world.

Topic 92 **Dynamic weather**

The weather is an essential factor for one's comfort. I strongly believe it is important to live in a place where the climate is just for you. As far as I am concerned, I have lived all my life in a four-season climate and I cannot imagine myself stay, at least not for a long period of time, in a place where the weather is the same all year long.

There are several reasons for which I prefer the weather to be diverse. Firstly, if not only the climate but also the geography is also diverse, life can be much more exciting than in a place where the climate and the relief are all the same. One of the advantages that I encountered is the fact that I do not have to travel to distant locations to enjoy either winter, or summer. I just have to be patient for several months and I can go skiing in the mountains, or on the contrary, swimming by the sea. Also I had the chance to spend one Christmas in Florida, and I felt so strange. Christmas seemed so unnatural and sad without the joy that snow brings. Without snow Christmas, looks fake, or at that is how it looked to me.

Also spring and autumn are so beautiful that I can hardly imagine how a year will be without them. My good mood depends on the changing of the seasons. Once the spring is all over the country, I just can wait for the summer. Diverse climate makes my life, in a way, much more dynamic. I love to observe how nature changes the trees. They have flowers in spring; they are green in summer, colorful in autumn, and white in winter. Isn't that wonderful?

The alternation of seasons is quite important for me. My life as a whole is guided by the shifts in the yearlong climate. I think life in a changing weather is much more dynamic and exciting. I would not choose, for nothing in the world, to live in the same climate all year long. My life can be full of joy only if the nature around me is permanently changing.

Topic 92 **One-season or four-season climate**

There is no denying the fact that whether to choose a place that have the same weather all year long, or a place where the weather changes several times a year is a popular topic which is much talked about. Although it seems that normally we cannot tell which one outweigh the other between these two kinds of places, they deserve some close examination.

If three criteria were taken into account, I would prefer living in areas where the weather changes several times a year. There are no less than three advantages in this as rendered below.

First, varied weather or climate broadens the range of our pastimes. For example, we can go swimming in summer and go skiing in winter. If the place we live in has only hot weather all year long, like Singapore, most of us can never have a chance to go skiing.

Secondly, the change of climate gives us opportunities to wear many kinds of clothes. Some say it is a waste of money to buy clothes depending on seasons. However, wearing various clothes, looking at others' fashion, and feeling the change of seasons is very interesting for me.

Thirdly, changing of seasons is good for our health. When winter comes our body's metabolism slows down, and when summer comes it speeds up, so that our body can maintain a good rhythm. Also snows in the winter can kill a lot of bacteria and bad insects, so that in spring our chance of being infected with a disease such as flu is decreased and we can enjoy nice atmosphere and sceneries.

For these reasons, I prefer to live in areas that have several changes of weather. Only these three reasons can make a person draw the conclusion that living in areas that have season changes is better.

Topic 92 **One-season or four-season climate**

The South of Spain or the South of Antarctica? The Northern United States or the Northern Maldives? Where we live - the climate that surrounds us - has a tremendous effect on how we live our lives. In many cases, our emotional well-being depends on the climate we live in. Even more important than the general climate is the change in climate. I strongly believe that a four-season climate is better for us psychologically and physically. For this reason, I prefer to live somewhere where the weather changes several times a year.

There are great psychological benefits of living in a varied climate. Take my hometown, Cleveland, Ohio, for example. Winter in Cleveland can be quite depressing. The sky is often gray and snow and wet rain dominates the weather forecast. It's not all bad, though. This is a great time to do snow skiing, sled riding and enjoy a cold weekend afternoon in front of the fire. While the outside elements can sometimes bring you down, most Clevelanders would tell you they prefer a snowy winter and a white Christmas. It's what makes the holiday season more special. Even more is the excitement when we see the first glimpse of springtime-the daffodils start to spring up and the days become warmer. This time often coincides with Easter. What would Easter be without a soggy egg-hunt in the back yard? Then, of course, there are the progressions from spring to summer and summer to winter. The long summer days do something for our spirits-late nights on the porch watching the fire flies at dusk make us all feel a little bit younger. The warm days and cool nights of autumn are not far behind, either. Those Indian Summers, as we call them, are reminders of how the seasons have whisked by us in a fury.

In addition to the psychological effects of weather change, we also experience a great physical benefit. Winter weather brings many outdoor sports in Cleveland like ice skating, cross-country skiing, downhill skiing and much more. The first signs of spring get us out the door hitting the pavement to shed our winter weight gain. And summer? What a beautiful time in northeast Ohio as we venture to the metro parks for long walks, to Lake Erie for a dip in warm waters, to the garden where we tend to our flowers and foliage. Autumn serves as a reminder that those warm days are slipping away. What better physical benefit than raking leaves, mowing the lawn for the last few times before winter and preparing the house for the cold weather?

Some people prefer places like Florida where it's hot and hotter. I suppose it means a smaller wardrobe and a more predictable lifestyle. For me, nothing beats the traditional four seasons I experienced growing up. It has shaped the way I view each holiday respectively. It has carried many fond memories of an active youth. Now that I live in a country with very little weather changes, I long for a White Christmas, a wet Easter, a hot yet breezy 4th of July, and a crisp yellow and orange Halloween.

Topic 93 What are important qualities of a good roommate?

At first glance it seems very difficult for us to define what are the important qualities of a good roommate. However, after serious considerations we can see that under most circumstances, a good roommate should at least have the following three qualities.

First of all, a good roommate should be open and willing to communicate. There are always issues regarding rent, bills, food and household duties, guests, privacy, noises, sharing and borrowing, to name a few, and interests and hobbies of roommates are not always the identical. There will always be conflicts among roommates. When problems or conflicts arise, roommates must openly discuss the issue and reach a solution to the problem. In addition, a successful roommate relationship requires good communication. Take time to talk frequently to each other; chatting with each other helps keep up the basic relationship that can provide the underpinning for a harmonious relationship. Therefore open and willing to communicate is the first important quality of a good roommate.

Secondly, an important quality of a good roommate is considerate and understanding. A good roommate understands what you need; He is a good friend and a good listener, and offer you help when you need it. Of course, you should not depend on your roommate to satisfy all your social needs. Make other friends and get involved in activities is also important, and could leave more private time for your roommate.

The third important quality of a good roommate is that he should be a hard worker, and have the desire to do better. As we know, roommates will always influence each other in some ways. As an old Chinese proverb, one who mixes with vermilion will turn red; one who touches pitch shall be defiled therewith. So like choosing a friend, it is very important to choose a roommate who has good qualities.

Of course, some roommates eat and socialize separately and barely get to know each other. They never become friends. Still, if your roommate possesses the above-mentioned qualities, your residential life will be peaceful and enjoyable.

Topic 93 **What are important qualities of a good roommate?**

Each of us, when attending a university, might live with one or more roommates. During that period of campus years, we spend a lot of time with them. Thus, the relationship with a roommate affects not only our life but also our study results. I would prefer to have a roommate who is friendly and helpful.

A roommate is a person who lives closest to us during university time. Every day we meet and talk to him. Therefore, it is very important that he is friendly. Imagine, after some stressful hours in your class or library, you come back to your dorm room where your roommate is in. He gives you nice smile and ask you how things are going. I am sure that you will feel relieved of all strains and this circumstance brings you the feeling of being home.

Being helpful is also an essential characteristic of a good roommate. I would say that, most of the students who live in university hostels are far from their home. That means, if some accidents such as being ill or injured happen, you cannot rely on your parents or close relatives. In this scenario, the roommate is very helpful. He could call an ambulance or drive you to the hospital.

Let me conclude by saying that, in our life, we may encounter many difficulties or stress, but we should make our own lives more meaningful by being friendly and helpful to other people. In this sense, being a good roommate is also being a good person.

Topic 94 Does dancing play an important role in a culture?

There are various elements in a country's culture, such as music, drama and dancing. These activities fulfill people's daily life and make the culture to become unique and colorful. Among these activities, dancing plays a very important role in a culture. I assert the statement due to three reasons as follows.

Firstly, dancing is one of the ways for people to communicate. Before human being can use language to communicate with each other, body language such as gesture is a good way to express what they want to say. Gradually, dancing has become a very important way for people to show their feelings. For example, dancing in celebrations can express feelings such as happiness, love or grief.

Secondly, dancing also reflects the diversity of a nation. There are different kinds of dances in different cultures. For instance, Flamenco is a famous dance in Spain, and it reflects the culture of Spain and the characteristics of the Spanish people. In many cultures, dancing has even become an integral part of their culture. Understanding the dancing of a country helps people to understand the culture of that country.

Thirdly, dancing can help create a lot of wonderful music. Dancing and music cannot be separated. When people dance, they usually need appropriate music to company. Tchaikovsky is one of the greatest composers in the world, and his famous work "Swan Lake" is created for the ballet. We almost can say that the ballet dancing gave Tchaikovsky inspirations to write the music.

Of course, other activities are all important for a culture. However, I especially mention dancing because the valid reasons I have present above.

Topic 94 Does dancing play an important role in a culture?

I cannot imagine that there is a person who would disagree with the statement that dancing plays an important role in a culture. Every culture, that I have known, has its own specific dance. In addition, dancing has not only an important role in a culture but it also is an inseparable part of it.

Since the beginning of humankind dances have played an important role in every culture because while dancing people can express different moods and feelings, or they can practice various religious and cultural rituals. In the modern society, dancing still remains the most significant part of the cultural life of all primitive tribes such as Bushmen in Africa, Aborigines in Australia or Indians in North America.

If we take a deeper look at the cultural life of modern society we will see that dancing have played an extremely important role for many generations of people. Dancing has marked people as the Jazz generation, the Rock-and-roll generation, the Disco generation, the Techno generation, or the Rap generation. Actually, every Dancing generation has been characterized by specific moral and ethic rules, and cultural traditions have been changing to a certain extend.

Anthropologists give a definition to the word 'culture' as common ideas, traditions, religion and customs that are shared by a particular group of people or a particular society. As dancing have always been means for people to show their belongings to a certain society, it has become an important part of the culture of any community or nation. In conclusion I would say that if people manage to protect their national dancing from oblivion, I am sure that they will keep the spirit of their predecessors alive for good.

Topic 94 Does dancing play an important role in a culture?

Dancing is an important art form, and also plays an important role in a culture. Some dance spontaneously happens at celebrations as an expression of emotion or some happen in a more structured manner at ceremonies.

Dancing plays an important role in ceremonial events in many cultures. For example, during the Pukumani ceremony the dances performed reflect the relationship to the deceased. In Lebanon, the classical belly dancing still plays an important part at weddings, representing the transition from virgin bride to sensual woman, and is also popular in nightclubs. On the other hand, residents of the Greenland believe that the dancing and drum can be used as a tool to dissolve conflicts between people.

As we may see from the above examples, dancing is an integral part of many cultures. Of course, dancing does not have the same functions in our modern life, but many people in our society still find dancing an enjoyable form of entertainment and art. Young people go to disco with their friends to release their energies, and they find dancing a good way to relax and make friends. Older people dance together as a social event and a good means of exercise.

In addition, many people go to theatres to enjoy performances of ballet and modern dances. Enjoying those beautiful dancing, music and costumes in a dance performance, can give us a wonderful experience, and help us develop appreciation of art, and enrich our after work life.

In conclusion, no one can deny that dancing plays an important role in a culture.

Topic 95 Should government spend money exploring outer space?

The word "Space adventure" has captured a large number of people's heart. Many men have been attracted by the unknown world and have desired to live in space at some future time. The universe is the last and infinite un-explored region for human beings. However, space researches do not accomplish only by yearning. These researches cost hugely. Another way to express this is that spending money always has its opportunity cost. In other words, money spent on some venture could have been used for financing some other alternative venture. Some people believe that money spent on space research benefits all of humanity. Other people believe that there are better opportunities for spending this fund.

This first group of people claims that space researches have helped all of humanity's lives extremely. They point out that researches on space have informed us about much environmental damage which we have caused to our planet. Similarly, they declare that the present satellite system is due to the researches done in the past in space. There are also numerous new materials and inventions that can be traced directly to space researches. These people hope to spend more money on researches, visit all the planets, and build space colonies.

On the other hand, there are people who assert that money spent on space is a complete waste because it does not have sufficiently direct benefit to all the humanity. For instance, there is a sizable portion of the humanity does not have any access to food, education, sanitation, health care and especially peace.

Personally, I find that I cannot align myself completely with either group. I have some reservations about both positions. No one can deny that weather satellites and communication satellites are useful investments. But unrealistic researches like exploring Mars or Venus does not have any good bearing on most peoples' development at the present. Some scientists may be interested in the composition of those planets, but the opportunity cost is extraordinary. In my opinion, it may cause lack of social infrastructures, if states inject immense funds into space researches in the limited budget.

Topic 95 Should government spend money exploring outer space?

Managing the government spending properly has always been a concern for all countries in the world. Some nations spend a lot of money on outer space explorations, while others focus on providing the basic needs for their people. As far as I am concerned, I believe that governments should spend more money on social benefits, education and health care rather than wasting money in other aspects.

Of course, exploring the outer space and traveling to planets such as the Moon are surely very important to the human society. It increases our knowledge and understanding about the space and the universe as a whole. However, this should be a secondary matter for the governments. Spending too much money would be a waste of money. Governments' top priority should always be satisfying the basic needs of their people.

All countries in the world ought to provide enough financial resources for schools. If there is no investment from the government, children will not be well educated and they may not have an opportunity to go to a university. Therefore, it is important to ensure that everyone will be able to pursue and fulfill his or her own educational goals. Universities should have the latest collection of books and up-to-date sources of information. All schools should build new classrooms and other facilities.

Another point that we must consider is making sure that the government will have enough spending for social benefits and the health care. We should construct more hospitals and rehabilitation centers both in the cities and in the countryside. We ought to generate more money to guarantee the life of old people and disabled people. The government should also provide free health and medical care for all the population. They have the responsibility to assist the poor people who do not have basic resources to survive. The state government should also help unemployed and underemployed individuals. The society itself will benefit from the expenditures of the government toward social benefits. Furthermore, it will promote the economic growth and the development of all the countries.

In conclusion, governments should spend less money on explorations of the outer space because it is less urgent. Instead, state governments have to concentrate their attention on social benefits as well as education for future generations. Financing social programs is no doubt their primary duty.

Topic 96 **The best way of reducing stress**

They say that "Life is a big headache on a long noisy road." This statement truly explains life nowadays. Life in the twenty first century is full of stress. From dawn to dusk, everyone has to go through a rigorous schedule. Even children are not exempt from this rush. Everyday there are deadlines to meet, reports to write, bills to pay, meetings to attend, papers to submit, etc.,. Life is a never-ending race to most people. The everyday grind builds up stress and fatigue. Stress Reduction has become a priority with individuals as well as organizations. People have different ways of escaping the stress and difficulties of modern life. In my opinion the best ways of reducing stress are meditation, exercise and reading books.

Meditation is an effective way to overcome stress. Meditation not only soothes the mind from tension but also regulates heartbeat and blood pressures. It helps an individual in attaining inner peace and equilibrium. Meditation helps in tapping a person's inner potential and opens his mind to the universal spirit.

Exercise is another way to reduce stress. Exercising not only promotes health but also improves thinking. When a person exercises the muscles in the body get a workout that in turn burn fat. The burning of fat releases stored energy and the person has an exhilarating feeling. This feeling helps the person to overcome stress. Thus Exercise is very useful tool in stress reduction.

Reading also has a beneficial effect on individuals in stress. Reading a great book is very therapeutic to a person with stress. Reading helps the mind to look at other things and reduces the focus on the person's difficulties. Elegant poetry and beautiful prose can soothe a person's mind and help him reduce stress in his life.

In conclusion, Meditation, Exercise and reading are the best ways to reduce stress.

Topic 97 **Teachers' pay**

Education is one of the holiest occupations in my view. I disagree with that teachers should be paid according to how much their students learn. Although teachers are important for students, the most important part for learning knowledge is students themselves.

Different teachers has different style, so it is hard to evaluate how well each teacher teaches according to how much students learn. As nobody would have the same character, teachers also have their own teaching styles such as humorous, gentle, strict, to name a few. Maybe some students like humorous teachers, while others prefer a gentle one. But probably the students of a strict teacher could give good results in their study, even though these teachers teach the same thing. We could not say that the strict teacher should be paid higher than the gentle teacher, since we know that the students have learned more because they were afraid.

On the other hand, how much or how well students learn depends on students themselves. In a school, it is easy to see that some students are with high marks, while some others have lower marks. A teacher is a person who direct students how to learn. Students should do much more works. The more attention students pay, the more knowledge they learn. The hard-workers probably get higher scores. Students' learning results depend on individual students' intellectual abilities and the time and energy that they put into learning. Sometimes it has nothing to do what how well the teachers taught. In addition, knowledge that students learn not only comes from the teachers, but also from many sources. Family influence, extracurricular reading and out-class teaching are some of the sources that can provide students with knowledge.

In sum, although teachers are important in students' education and learning, there are many other factors that decide how well students' learn. So it is unfair that teachers are paid according to how much their students learn.

Topic 98 What would you choose to represent your country?

If I can send one thing to represent my own country - China to an international exhibition, I would choose a book that has graphical illustrations besides each context.

The main reason is that paper was invented by one of our ancestors and it is essential to our everyday life. Were it not for the paper, many documents would not have been passed down for centuries. In addition, with the written language being used, many famous people and great things about my country can be recorded in this book. For example, it can explain the educative theories of Confucius, one of the greatest educators in our country.

On the other hand, with the universal language of graph, people around the world can understand more easily with the help of the vivid presentation. In this way, even a young child who does not read will learn what I want to tell them.

In a word, people attending the exhibition will know that Chinese people discovered paper, and Confucius was one of the greatest educators in China. Besides, this book also reminds us how clever our ancestors are and what we need to do to keep up. With these wisdoms, we can invent more convenient equipments or make important discoveries to better our lives for the future.

In conclusion, if I have the opportunity to introduce one thing to people in the world, I would bring a book that documents all the traditional inventions and people of my own country. In that way, the world will understand more about my country.

Topic 99 **Would you rather choose your own roommate?**

Some students do not prefer to have the university choose their roommate. However, as far as I am concerned, this is part of the university experience. Therefore, I would rather have the university assign a roommate to share a room with me. I base my views on the following reasons.

First of all, even though the university will assign, it is actually not totally a matter of chance. For instance, we all filled out information sheets. The school knows what we are majoring in, what our interests are, and our study habits and our goals. I think they are probably very good at matching roommates using this information. Besides, if a mistake is made, I can change my room assignment next semester.

Secondly, it is a lot of work to choose your own roommate. For example, if I did want to choose my own roommate, I would first pick some candidates from the list supplied by the university. Then I would write to them and they would write back. Through our letters, we would find out if we shared common interests, such as sports or movies. Because of my investigation, I would probably get someone compatible with me. However, it takes time and labor to go through, though. Besides, the process of finding similar interests is not all that different from what the university does.

Finally, trying to predict whom I am going to get along with is not a science. I might choose someone who sounds just like me and still find that the two of us just do not get along as roommates.

Besides, I think it would be boring to room with somebody who is just the same as me. I would rather be with someone who has different interests and likes to do different things. Maybe I would even get a roommate from another culture.

In conclusion, having the university choose a student to share a room is a far better choice for me. Assigning roommate in body may suit some students. However, I think it is always important to meet new people when we enter a university. Besides, another reason I am going to the university is to be exposed to a lot of new experiences. These new things would allow me mature in character.

Topic 100 **Computer technology or basic needs?**

Some people think that governments should spend as much money as possible on developing computer technology or buying computers, while others think that governments should spend money on the basic needs of their people. As far as I am concerned, this money should be spent on some more basic needs, such as protecting the environment and improving public services.

In the first place, pollution of the environment has become the biggest problem in today's society. People will not find clean water to drink if they do not do some work to keep the water clean. There would be no fresh air if every one in the city drives a car to work. More and more wild animals are facing the danger of extinction because of the shortage of habitats. There would be no more wild animals if people continue to destroy forests. Therefore, there are more basic things that governments should do such as keeping the water clean, keeping the air fresh, and keeping the forests intact.

In the second place, there are many problems with the public transportation system in big cities. The buses during the rush hour are overcrowded; some people cannot get to work on time because they spent too much time on the buses or trains. Consequently, government should spend more money to improve public transportation systems, which will benefit the people and the business in their cities.

From what I have discussed above, everyone can see that there are more things a government should do than buying computers, such as protecting the environment and improving public services. Therefore, I think governments should spend more money on the basic needs of the people instead of spending a lot of money developing computer technology or buying computers.

Topic 100 Computer technology or basic needs?

Many people believe that governments should spend as much money as possible on developing or buying computer technologies, while others think that governments should spend money on more basic needs. While both spending on computer technologies and on basic needs of the society are important, I think that government should concentrate on the latter. Computer technologies are not very good investments from the point of view of society as a whole, while investments in essentials have a much higher rate of return.

Investment in areas related to computer software, networks and hardware are not very profitable and will not improve life of ordinary citizens. Several years ago many people believed that by investing in computer-related fields we can improve performance across the board, but the reality has not been what we have thought about. Most of Internet companies and dot-coms went bankrupt. Although huge money was poured into those companies, many of them cannot stay in business anymore. The promise of improved performance has never come true.

Even in the United States, the most powerful and prosperous country in the world, there are still more than 20 million people who live below the poverty line. More than third of the earth population live on less than one dollar a day - the official threshold of poverty declared by United Nations. We can greatly improve the life of those people by investing in public education, organizing loan agencies or other projects that can help to alleviate poverty. What's more, computers can actually make this problem worse, because with the application of computer technology, more and more people are losing their jobs - thus making most of the world's uneducated population obsolete and without means to sustain themselves.

Analysts expect that in several decades more than third of the population on the Earth will not have access to clean water. This can result in famine, deteriorate public health and other disasters. Some argue that we might have wars for the access to clean water. To prevent this scenario we need to invest a large amount of money in projects that will help to save clean water on our planet.

In conclusion I want to say, that investments in computers will not solve a single problem of our society. Computers will not prevent famines, which are so usual today, or help poor people. On the contrary, computers can make poor blue-collar workers out of work and money to support their families. So governments around the world should spend all available money on basic necessities of our society, not on some dream projects.

Topic 101 **Doing work by hand vs. by machine**

In general, there are two ways of making products, one is by hand and the other is by machine. It is undeniable that products can be manufactured easily and efficiently by machine. But for me, I prefer hand-made items for their features of individualism and flexibility.

First of all, hand-made products are more unique and personal. Take birthday cards as an example, instead of same pictures on the printed cards available in the market, well-chosen images such as our own photos printed on a self-made card can surely distinguish the card from others. Owing to its uniqueness, the self-designed card will be of greater value for the person who receives it.

What's more, garments made by hand are fitter than machine made ones. Although men's suits and lady's dresses can easily be found in shops that sell machine-made clothes, many people go for tailor-made clothing simply because tailors can make those clothes precisely according to individual customer's measurement and styles. Obviously, the fitness of clothing is what those people care about most.

Finally, producing items by hand is more flexible. It releases people from being confined by modes that are necessary for machine-made manufacturing. For example, in hand-made pottery making, people can create new designs at any time. While in machine manufacturing, however, modes have to be made in advance, and afterward all finished products are based on the same modes and have completely the same looks. If a different look is needed, people must reproduce the modes first. Moreover, there are still some items that cannot be produced by machine because there are no matched modes.

In conclusion, it is easy to get the conclusion that doing work by hand is more flexible than by machine in most cases, so I prefer products that are made by hand.

Topic 102 **Should students evaluate their teachers?**

I am always amazed when I hear people saying that students have no rights to evaluate their teachers, and that if they do so, they should be regarded as dishonest. Even one did not know from concrete examples that schools should ask students to voice what they think of their teachers, one can deduce it from general principals.

It is true that a young man, one of the students, may be conceited, ill-mannered, presumptuous or fatuous, but no one will have the ability to make sure that all teachers are not behaving like this. When a student has some fault, it is the teacher's duty to tell him what he should do; on the other hand, when a teacher does wrong, others, including his students, are bound to let him know.

It is as if, sometimes, that what many teachers have done are devoid of any mistake, however, the way they taught still deserve improvements. In schools, students try to develop abilities and skills, and prepare for their careers in the future. It is true that what they get from schools may be perfectly adapted to the society during a certain period of time, but the world is not still; it is changing all the time. What is learned today may become outdated tomorrow. As a result, teachers, who are bound to make improvements of what they teach according to the reflections of the society, should be evaluated by their students.

Furthermore, giving students the right to evaluate their teachers help create the air of freedom in schools. This is especially important to inspire students' thought, and to encourage them to think. If students are not allowed to voice what they think of their teacher, they will have to do what the teachers tell them exactly, only to become robots that can do nothing other than following instructions.

Taking into account of all these factors, we may reach the conclusion that it is significantly necessary to ask students to express what they think of their teachers, and this does good to the students, to the teachers, and to the society as a whole.

Topic 103 **What characteristic makes people successful?**

In my point of view, a sense of humor is as important as, if not more important than, other characteristics that a person can have to be successful in life. This I support with the following reasons.

Firstly, humor helps us to maintain a correct sense of values. It is because that we are always reminded that tragedy is not really far from comedy, and then we never get a lop-sided view of things. A small example could get some light on this point. Once I failed an assignment again, and I told myself that God was on vacation these days. I did not feel frustrated, and I succeeded the third time. So, if we can see the funny side, we never make the mistake of taking ourselves too seriously. It is helpful for us to keep self-confident.

In addition, the sense of humor is associated with happiness, and happiness will influence people around us. Those who bring happiness to others probably have a good relationship with people surrounding them, which is essential to a successful life. We all have the experience that we are inclined to talk and cooperate with humorous people. We may treat such experience as an enjoyment instead of a rigid work.

However, to be a successful people is a tough thing. We need intelligence, honesty, determination, a sense of humor and so on. Without intelligence, we could not find the keys to solve all the intricate problems. Without honesty, no one would trust us and we could achieve nothing alone. Without determination we would easily bend for difficulty.

Even so, I still think of humor as the most important part. A sense of humor supports an active attitude towards life. And it is such attitude that encourages intelligence, honest and other characteristics in you. To sum up, a sense of humor is the most important characteristic. If happiness is one of the great goals of life, then it is the sense of humor that provides the key.

Topic 103 What characteristic makes people successful?

Many people believe that one can be successful if he /she is committed, honest, faithful or intelligence. But, the foundation of each of these qualities lies in believing the power the person has, and working accordingly to achieve the goal. There are many people, who are honest, beautiful, good and soft spoken, intelligent and even faithful, but only some are successful in achieving their goals. While all of these characteristics are equally important and act as the medium for success, the most important is the power to cope with circumstances and keep our spirit goes on in the most difficult situations.

It is well said that we cannot direct the wind but we can adjust the sail. Similarly, on the way to our destination, we will come across a lot of obstacles, but we need to find the way to come across that situation. This is where success lies. No matter how low we fall, what matters is how high we bounce back.

Success can be measured by what we have and how much power we are using to achieve our goals. For example, while in playing games, it is sure that one team will win and another will lose, but the spirit is not just in winning but also in learning new techniques and improving team sprit and cooperation skills. A winner team cannot always be successful, but the successful team is the one that has improved a lot with respect to its earlier performances.

Though the person is honest, intelligent, faithful and committed, it is not sure that he will be successful. The most important character rather than these is efficiency,, which is to understand the environment and the need, and to implement best of the best ideas and actions. No matter how smaller step it can be, but it can bring great changes. As Shiva Khera once said, "Winners do not do different things but they do things differently", which better explains the meaning of being successful.

Success is not just winning, but also is how much we are satisfied with whatever we are doing. So, all qualities like honesty, intelligence, and faithfulness are directly proportional to success.

The definition of success for each of us may vary. Some may think the reason for success is honesty while others may think it is the commitment. But, in my opinion, where there is will there is power, so each of us should know our strength, and work accordingly to be successful. And we should measure our success not with others but with what we have and what we have achieved.

Topic 104 **Contributions of artists vs. scientists**

Science and art are two main streams of knowledge accumulated from ancient times by human beings. They have their own characteristics and provide to the society their contributions, which benefit the world in which we live. Some people think that the contributions of scientists are higher than that of the artists. Before I give my opinion, I want to see the two sides first.

Science is defined mostly as the knowledge related to the natural world. I think most of its domains are involved in material things, such as food, housing, clothing, transport, etc. It is usually easy for people to feel the existence and progress of science, because it is usually taking place around us they are apparent. In the past and present, science has changed our life a great deal, and I believe in future, it will continue to improve the world we live in.

Art is more related to our spiritual world. It has a long history, too. It has developed coincided with science. Art helps us to appreciate the beauty that exists in life. Many people admit that art can nourish their minds and refine their spiritual world. In this respect, art is a good complement to science.

I can hardly tell which one has more weight in terms of the contributions to the society. They are both indispensable in this world. The history of human has proven this. So I do not think it is wise and safe to say that one of them is more important than the other. As far as I am concerned, I think they both weigh profoundly with regard to the contributions to the society.

Topic 104 **Contributions of artists vs. scientists**

Social benefit, I think, can be defined as the profit that people who live in the society can share and appreciate. When we compare the contributions of artists and scientists, it is quite difficult to outweigh one of which. However, it is because we tend to easily find the contributions of scientists to our daily life that I am on the side of those who contribute to the society in a tangible way. Now I would like to illustrate some examples that support my opinion.

First of all, all the appliances such as televisions, personal computers and microwaves ovens that we use in our daily life are contributed by the scientists' efforts and aspirations. Nowadays, we can barely survive without those products that always help with our daily tasks. Most of those are the great invention that is developed in the past 50 years. Almost all people in the society can share those contributions. Scientists' contributions are more than just inventing those appliances. Thanks to their tremendous perspiration, our mental and physical health is ensured and protected in many ways. Newly developed technologies help physicians to practice operations. A number of medicines relieve and alleviate our illnesses. Those improvements in the medical field can easily make people to admire scientists' contributions.

On the other hand, artists' contributions are sometimes difficult to appreciate. There are a variety of buildings with artistic forms that are designed by artists. However ordinary people cannot truly appreciate those great works. In view of social benefits, those contributions are less important to people in the society. Therefore, artists' contributions to the society are unfortunately less attractive for me.

With the illustrations above, I definitely believe that scientists contribute more to our society. Although life without artists' works is dull and meaningless, we cannot survive with the contributions of scientists for sure.

Topic 105 **University housing vs. apartment**

In dorms, students can learn to improve their communication skills and to live with others harmoniously. Roommates must adjust their eating and sleeping habits regarding to each other's needs. Each one must adjust his free time in such way that he does not bother others while they are studying. The environment of dorms is likely the environment of formal offices where everyone must find solution to various problems and cooperate with others. Consequently, by adapting to conditions of living in dorms, students can actually prepare themselves for their future jobs. The environment of a dormitory is friendly and understanding, because it consists of students who have same goals and interests. For example, if one failed to understand his lecture, he can ask others for help. Furthermore, students can find that it is easier to find topics to chat or conduct activities together because they have so much in common.

Apartments have quietly different surroundings. Students usually have fewer neighbors and roommates so that they have less distraction. Thus, students can concentrate better on their schoolwork. As a result, their grades could be better. Moreover, living in apartments maintains students' privacy. One has his secrets that he does not want anyone to know and sometimes needs to spend his time alone to think about his problem. Another advantage is that people who live around apartments are diverse. Thus, students learn to contact with ordinary peoples and are not confined to the academic community. Therefore, students are offered a wide variety of experiences that will be useful in the future.

If I were in a situation to choose whether I would live in a dorm or have a separate apartment, I would choose to live in a separate apartment. It could be argued that living in an apartment limit the contact of a student with his fellow students. This argument goes on to assert that such students are deprived from social environments and therefore remain aloof and introvert. However, it is a fact that students can make enough friends even if they live outside of the university. Especially, in the cases that student live with their friends.

Furthermore, students can visit each other as often as they need to. They can maintain a good relationship with their fellow students in a way that does not affect their school performance. Alternatively, students who live in academic dormitories are constantly surrounded with familiar people so they cannot avoid excessive socializing even if they don't want to. As a result, they do not have enough time for studying and they get low grades.

Topic 105 University housing vs. apartment

I think it's better for college students to live on-campus during their first two years in college, and then move into an apartment off-campus during their last two years. Freshmen and sophomores need the convenience of campus life, while juniors and seniors need the independence of off-campus life. Students' needs change during four years, so should their housing too.

Living on-campus makes it easier to get oriented to the way things going on campus. You get the whole university experience. Plus, you interact more with other students. This includes not only with your roommates, but also everyone in your dormitory. The older students in the dormitory can be of a big help to the new students. Keeping up with studies during your first year is hard enough. You shouldn't have to worry about finding your way around and figuring out the university bureaucracy.

Living in the dormitory also makes a student feel more like a member of the university community. There are more opportunities of becoming involved in university activities and networking with student leaders and university administration.

Living off-campus, however, is a definite advantage for senior students. Finding an apartment, dealing with leases and the landlord's regulations, cooking meals, and planning budgets are all good preparations for life after graduation. This kind of independence helps senior students grow into adulthood.

Off-campus housing also gives students a better perspective on what's going on in the society. Students meet different people in the society than on campus. Getting to know their neighbors who are not students can enrich students' understanding to the society and help them adapt to life after graduation.

In conclusion, I think a combination of two years on-campus and two years off-campus is a winning combination for most students.

Topic 105 **University housing vs. apartment**

Accommodation is one of the basic needs of people in today's society. The choice of living in dormitories on campus or finding an apartment off campus depends upon the student's preferences.

A student living in an apartment may seem to hold this view that he can share his room with other people who would reduce a great burden on paying off a huge amount of rent. While living in a dormitory one cannot have this type of advantage. On the other hand, a student who prefers to live in a dormitory may hold his view that one does not have to worry about getting up early and to rush for a bus or any other means of transport to attend one's class.

The strong view presented by a student living in an apartment is that he does not have to abide by the rules, e.g. the main terms and regulations for a student living in a dormitory. Whereas, a student who chooses to live in a dormitory may strongly condemn this view: he express his view stating that a student living in an apartment also has to follow the rules of maintaining the room properly, such as to clean the rooms and make it neat and tidy, wash the bathroom properly etc.

A student in a dormitory holds this view that everything has been provided to them. All the facilities are provided at a university dormitory; while living in an apartment one may not gain this advantage. On the contrary, a student living in an apartment hold the view that a dormitory student is restricted to certain things such as they are not allowed to go out of the university beyond given times. While living in an apartment, there won't be such problems, and one is free of time restrictions.

In my view, I prefer living in an apartment because I hold my opinion that if I do not have enough money to afford a living in dormitory, then certainly I would live in an apartment where I can share my rent with other people. Every thing has its advantages and disadvantages, and it is up to a student to decide what he chooses and how to make use of his choice.

Topic 106 **Means of transportation**

Advances in science have thrown before us a number of options for covering distances, either long or short.

The type of transport to be used for covering distances depends upon a range of factors like distance between the starting point and the destination, time and money constraint for traveling, availability of different mode of transports, time taken for travel, safety considerations and the number of persons traveling.

To cover a distance of 40 miles, for instance, the options I can think of are on foot, by bicycle, by motorcycle, by car, or by bus. The longest time taken for traveling this far will be on foot while the shortest time will be by car or motorcycle, but again since the number of persons traveling is one which is me, a car will not be a feasible option as it will be underutilized and will prove to be costly because of high fuel consumption and initial cost.

A bicycle will be cheaper in terms of initial cost and there is no fuel consumption. But it will take much longer time to travel, and it may cause physical fatigue. Therefore, this option is ruled out. A bus will prove to be a cheaper mode but the flexibility is limited regarding timing of arrival and departure. A motorcycle will be economical but will not be safe to drive on highways.

Therefore considering all modes of transportation available and taking into account various factors mentioned above, I will prefer to take a bus as it will be safe and economical, although it is less flexibility in terms of departure and arrival times.

Topic 106 Means of transportation

The 40 miles distance is not very long for me. There are three kinds of transportation tools I could use to travel 40 miles from my home. They are driving a car, taking a train, and riding a bike.

It seems very difficult to prefer one to another because all of them have their advantages and disadvantages to the extent that it is hard to distinguish. Yet that does not mean they are of the same to me. To be frank, I would prefer riding a bike. I like it because riding a bike is one of the best physical exercises. During my early high school years, I used public transportation to go to school, therefore I often got sick. Ever since I started riding a bike to school, I had never been sick again. Bike riding makes me strong.

Bike riding is also a flexible means of travel. I do not need to worry about the bus or train schedule. I do not need to care about the parking problem; I can leave my bike almost anywhere. In addition, I can go to some places where automobiles and trains cannot reach, such as rural areas. Once I rode a bike in France. Along the wine road, we biked from Strasbourg to Colmar, stopped at each small village every 2-3 miles, tasted the fresh homemade wine, and enjoyed the medieval architectures in those villages. It was absolutely a romantic trip!

Although driving a car or taking a train is faster than riding a bike, and save your concerns about the weather, they have a lot of disadvantages. Driving a car can cause parking and environmental problems, and taking a train is limited by the train schedule. Both of these means are expensive. One needs to pay for the gasoline or train tickets. No wonder, I prefer riding a bike!

Topic 107 Should higher education be available to all?

Some people hold the opinion that university education should be available to all students, while others believe that higher education should be available only to good students. I deem the first one as the premier choice.

The main reason is that providing all students with the opportunity to obtain higher education is highly beneficial to the development of modern society. More and more people will be able to obtain knowledge and become professionals if higher education is available to all students. Since there are not only a lot of excellent professors who have significant experiences of teaching and research but also plenty of advanced facilities such as laboratories and libraries at the universities, students have much better opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills. If everyone in a society is highly educated, there will be no doubt that the society will be able to develop at a great speed.

The second reason is that it is obviously not fair to a lot of students if a university education is available only to some students. I am convinced that everyone in the world should have the same right to acquire knowledge no matter what his intellectual ability or financial status is. There is no reason for people to judge students merely based on their academic performances and decide if they should be granted with higher education. It is only fair that everyone has the right to obtain a university education.

Last but not least, people are able to obtain better jobs since universities can better prepare students for their future careers. At universities, there are a lot of opportunities for students to participate in co-op programs. By participating in co-op programs, students cannot only learn how to write resumes but also practice their interviewing skills. All these skills gained at universities will be highly conducive for students to quickly obtain job offers after graduating from universities.

To sum up, taking into account of all these factors, we may safely reach the conclusion that higher education should be available to every student.

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Topic 107 Should higher education be available to all?

While higher education should be available to all students, I am sorry to say I strongly believe that the higher education of better quality should be available only to better students because this is a simple resource management issue although it would hurt many people's feeling.

It is given that colleges and universities cannot possibly be built equally with the same quality of facility, faculty, curriculum, etc., which resulted in different school reputation. Therefore, certain schools must be more competitive than others. Then the question is who should be selected to attend the better schools.

In California universities, there used to be a quota system ensuring students' race distribution does not deviate too much from that of the entire state. However, students in different ethnic groups do score very differently in the standard SAT and ACT exams. As a result, the minimum admission scores were quite different for different ethnic groups. The local newspapers called it reverse race discrimination and California state government reportedly cancelled the quota system few years ago.

As a matter of fact, Germany has been administering an exam at the end of primary school for years to divide their students into two categories. One for higher education and the other for vocational training. A system like this would make sure that limited educational resources are used in the most effective ways.

As for China, late Chairman Mao did make all the universities in China open to public, which lasted as long as 10 years! The result? These students were criticized as having college student's title, using high-school textbooks and staying at primary school level. Not only the society refused to recognize them as college students, even the government called them college trainee instead of college student!

Again, it would hurt some people's feeling, but the policy is strongly supported by early genetic research. My education psychology textbook described tracking investigation on twins from the same egg, but growing up in different families for whatever reasons. If all babies were born equal in their future physical and mental abilities, there would be much less correlation between the twins than that between the twin and his/her sibling in the foster family. Unfortunately, statistics is science from God. The conclusion in the textbook is that the babies' future physical and mental abilities are 75% related to genes and 25% to the post-born environment and personal effort.

The truth is obviously there, but to be politically correct is something I admit very necessary. This is why every country is sending better students to better schools, but keeping the issue low-key.

Topic 108 **The best way of learning**

When it comes to the issue of understand of life, some people suggest that the best way to learn about life is getting others' opinions, while other people maintain that the best way of learning is through person experience. In my point of view, the latter opinion carries more weight.

In the first place, learning from previous successful experiences is beneficial for people. For instance, a student who is preparing for an important exam can think of the past exams that he did very well, and he can review more effectively if he learns from these exam experiences. Moreover, the student can acquire the lesson from life that people who work effectively can be successful.

In the second place, learning from past failures can help people to understand the meaning of life. An example is that, losing money because of unwise investments is part of many businessmen's experiences. When a businessman is planning to invest a big amount of money, he can look back at his experiences of the past and avoid pitfalls that may cause him to lose money again. As a result, he probably will seek advices from professional people and plan his investment more carefully this time. Learning from those failures can surely help people learn how to make wise decisions in life, and people can understand that avoiding mistakes is the keys to succeed in life.

In conclusion, although learning from one's personal experience may have a few drawbacks, its advantages far outweigh its disadvantages. Both good and bad experiences can help people understand life better.

Topic 108 **The best way of learning**

As life is rigorous and challenging for most of people (excluding children who have a silver spoon in their mouths right after they were born), everyone needs to take advices from others or accumulate experiences to face the life. However, people have different ways to learn about life. Some tend to learn by listening to advices of family and friends. Meanwhile, others prefer to learn through personal experiences. In this essay, I will discuss the advantages of these two different ways.

Some people like to understand life by listening to advices of people around them. This offers a good chance to gain knowledge and experiences from others who have already experienced hardships and tasted the bitterness of life. This method is much convenient and faster than the other one because there are a lot of experiences in life that have already been experienced by other people. Other people's opinions and advices simply offer us a shortcut to success.

On the other hand, young people, however, prefer to learn about life through their personal experiences. However, to acquire these experiences, one has to pay a price. One must have to experience a lot of failures before he/she can savor the sweetness of success. It may also take a long time for someone to stand up from his failures. In addition, it requires a lot of time for people to accumulate these valuable experiences.

Comparing and contracting these two approaches, I personally prefer the way that of listening to the advice of family and friends. This is the best and easiest way for young people like me to start a real life.

Topic 109 **Follow the customs of the new country**

Nowadays it is quite common for people to move to other countries either for work or for study. When they move, some of them decide to follow the customs of the new country, while others prefer to keep their own customs. If I were forced to choose one of the two positions, my choice would be the former.

To illustrate my point, let us first take a look on why some people dislike the idea of following the new customs. First, people who have a strong religious background that are different from that of the new country tend to stick to their own religious beliefs. Second, older people are usually accustomed to their own life styles, and it is very hard for them to change their ways of life and accept new ideas and cultures. Thirdly, some values and phenomena in western countries contradict eastern values, such as the use of drugs, alcohol and certain behaviors of young people. So when people move from a traditional eastern country to a western one, they find it very hard to accept the new customs.

Although I must admit that it is not always necessary to change our own customs, I believe that the advantages of adapting to a new culture are apparent. In the first place, by following the customs of the new country, we can learn more about the country and understand its people more quickly, and can become a real member of the country. To share the same custom means that having more things in common with local people, and it can pull people together. Furthermore, we have to adapt to customs of the new country, if they are written into the law. Take the country of Singapore for example, for many decades the law had banned the consumption of chewing gums. A young man from the United States violated the law and was served with their caning punishment.

In addition, people who stick to their way of life may sometimes feel lonely and isolated. They tend to complain about the life in the new country and most of them eventually return to their home countries.

In conclusion, I believe that the advantages of following the customs of the new country are obvious because you can easily learn about the new country and quickly adjust to the new life. What is more, you can live more comfortably and avoid troubles and misunderstandings in a foreign country if you think and behave the way other people do.

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Topic 110 **Being alone vs. with friends**

There are many lovely things in our lives such as the fresh air on a winter day, the beauty of the country in autumn, learning of love and the growing of a friendship. Everyone has friends or desires friends in the pursuit of sharing emotions. Thus many people enjoy spending most of their time with friends, like me, while others prefer to remain alone.

There is no doubt one needs time for oneself. When I retreat to my dorm at the end of the workday there is no one to tell me what to do. I often write little secrets in my dairy, enjoy soothing music without being disturbed or read philosophy books. Being alone provides a time to reflect and ponder one's future life course, with a greater clarity and purpose. Accompanied by many friends from the dorm I would have no chance to relish such retreats.

On the other hand, spending time with friends is stimulating and provides a mental break from ones daily routine. Since I am a sociable and open person, I invariably feel happy and relaxed when I do things with my close friends. We can take part in all kinds of after-school activities such as playing volleyball, swimming or climbing. Some profound, or stimulating ideas often appear in my mind when I am with such friends while being alone often no such inspiration manifests.

When I come with friends I can always exchange views with them about study, society or love thereby obtaining some interesting information or knowledge. A group of people provides a means of testing one's ideas and learning from one another. When I confront serious problems and I am unsure of which course of action to pursue a close friend provides a means of reassurance that I am not alone in my way of thinking or chosen course of action.

Being with friends can be fun and aid one in overcoming the trying periods in life. Being happy in life means doing the things you enjoy and having someone to share the feeling with you. Being with friends most of time is an enjoyable aspect of life for me as it is a source of inspiration, satisfaction and ongoing education.

Topic 110 **Being alone vs. with friends**

Some people like to spend most of their time with their friends. Other people, however, just want to be alone in their spare time. As far as I am concerned, I belong to the latter kind of people.

In the first place, I feel comfortable if I am alone. This is not because I do not like friends, but because of my personal character, quiet and a bit shy. When I am with my friends, I always feel embarrassed since I am always a listener. Trying to find topics makes me very tired. On the contrary, staying alone does not bother me. I do not need to discuss with others about what I want to do. Go shopping, go to a movie, go swimming, just do it. The most important thing is, I do not feel lonely when I am alone.

In the second place, I need to have more time to learn new knowledge. I am working in the field of computer programming. As we know, the development of the computer technology is amazingly fast. If a person has not been working in this field for more than five years, he would find that he has to study from scratch when he decides to pick up his old job. So it goes without saying that I have to update my computer knowledge frequently in order to keep up with my career. Based on this, I do not have much spare time to fool around with friends.

In conclusion, I prefer to spend most of my time alone not only because I am not good at getting along with friends, but also because I have to spend most of time in studying new technology.

Topic 110 **Life without friends?**

There are people in this world that prefer to live on their own, to stay as far as possible for the company of other people, to enjoy the silence and comfort of being alone, without anyone to bother them. For my part, I cannot imagine my life to be like that. I really think that friends are very important in my life and I like to spend as much time as possible with my friends. It is hard for me to enjoy the splendors of life without having anyone to share my feelings with. I have too often been away from home, from my friends and family.

I have seen wonderful places and things that could make me incredibly happy. However, the true happiness came only at the time when I could share my experiences with my friends. Everywhere I go I need to find at least one person that in the end I can call a friend. Going to a concert, to a movie or enjoying a party, it is inconceivable not to go with a friend. I do not recall ever going to a concert on my own. And I missed several occasions to go to events that I really wanted to attend just because my friends were unable to make it, and I could not go without them.

Moreover, friends can help each other. It is good to know that somewhere there is at least one person whom you can depend on when you are in need. I also enjoy helping my friends. Doing something good for someone is a really rewarding experience. While with my friends, we can also have discussions and share opinions on our future plans, our ideas, our thoughts, and our problems.

Although there are arguments on the part of leading a life on your own, and not depending on other people, I strongly believe that friends, family, people around you are important part of our life. Life is so wonderful because the people around you.

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Topic 111 Spend time with one or two friends, or many friends?

I cannot imagine a person who hasn't enjoyed the company of a friend. Friends are very precious and therefore, we constantly love and cherish them. Spending time with friends has always been regarded as a wonderful thing to do with no doubt. However, one might choose to spend time either with one or two close friends or a number of friends.

Certainly, there is a difference between the enjoyment gained by spending time with our few close friends and the delight obtained by hanging out with many friends. When we are spending time with our close friends, we can feel a special closeness and bond with them. With the company of intimate friends, we can be more open and true to ourselves. Although with few people around the scope of our activities is limited, it is compensated by the satisfaction that we gained from the warm atmosphere.

If a person doesn't like the joy attained from the company of just few close friends and wants to extend his activities with more friends, he can choose to spend time with many friends. When a group of friends gather together they can engage in many group activities such as playing games and sports, and travel to new places. This enjoyment doesn't necessarily require close relations among the group members. Being sociable and outgoing is good enough to create a pleasant ambiance for everyone.

I'd rather choose to spend my time with one or two close friends than being with a number of friends. With my close friends around we don't really have to do anything in particular together. For us the significance lies in the fact that we are together, sharing our time. As the saying goes, "I can spend hours without uttering a single word with my friend and I'd have the best conversation ever.."

Topic 112 **How should children spend their time?**

In our rapidly changing world people begin to understand more and more that nothing is so valuable but knowledge. Education has become an important part of people's life. Due to this some people think that children should begin their formal education at a very early age and should spend most of their time on school studies. But others believe that young children should spend most of their time playing. To my mind these two views should be balanced so as not to go to the extremes.

The first point of view that children should start early on their studies make me assume that it can be harmful and damaging for a child's physical development and personality. As a teacher I have seen the result of beginning education too early. Children are deprived of the enjoyment of their childhood years and their intrinsic desire to play. Some children cannot concentrate on their study and keep playing at school. Besides, the children who are not allowed to play and are forced to study can begin to detest the education process and the teachers. So, to force children to study at an early age can spoil the whole picture.

When facing the question of early education it is also important to note that children who begin to study at an early age are often overloaded by studying material and homework, which they are not ready to cope with. Besides some parents neglect their children and do not pay enough attention to the children's problems at school thinking that they are still young.

The second opinion that children should play instead of study also has disadvantages. In this case children are not well prepared for their school life at all. They have no idea what he is going to do at school. In addition, research shows that early education can benefit children's brain development and prepare them better for the futures school education. The most important time for early education could be missed if parents do not send their children to school at an appropriate age.

In conclusion I would like to point out that that early education and play should be well balanced so that their enjoyment of childhood that is once in a lifetime would not be deprived. It is quite important for governments to design and implement an appropriate primary education system so that young children can have chances to both learn and play at school.

Topic 112 **How should children spend their time?**

To play or to study, almost every child will face such a problem. For sure, most children would like to choose to play because playing is their nature. But parents would think it is better for them to study. Which way is better? Personally, I think children should play more in the early years, and gradually it is better for them to spend more time on books once they have reached their school age.

When we think of school study, we think of textbooks and exams. That is to say, children have to do a lot of homework to practice what they learn at school. They have to memorize a lot of knowledge in order to get good scores in exams. To those small children who are too young to go to school, learning may become a torture. And consequently their learning will not be efficient, and they even would hate learning.

On the other hand, playing is also a learning process. Needless to say, children are much creative than most of us grow-ups. Part of the reasons is that they still have a blank and original mind. They just use their own eyes to watch the world, and use their ways to explore the world. While playing together with other kids, they can practically learn many things, such as how to cooperate with others, and to help others. While playing with pets, they will know how to take care of them, and learn to take care of other people as well. While playing with toys, out of curiosity, they will ask all kinds of questions. When parents can explain to them, the information may motivate them to learn more knowledge through playing.

During the childhood, it is better to play with other kids or with toys, since they can get basic ideas about friendship, people and the world. Playing is a necessary phrase for children to be mentally and physically healthy. When children reach school age, it is better for them to go to school, and gradually start learning knowledge that is useful for their future.

Topic 113 A new university in the community

It is said that a new university will be established in our community. Some people think it is better for the community to have a university. But others do not think so. As far I am concerned, I think both sides have their own reasons. Let us get down to the arguments first before we take a side.

People who hold the opinion of supporting the government's plan may have their views as follows. For one thing, a university around here may provide people with more chances to pursue advanced education. People living near here can go to the university library at their leisure time. There they can use the various resources of education, such as the book collection, and the computers. In addition, they can take some part-time continuing education course to improve their skills at work, or pursue a higher degree. The other advantage of establishing a university here is that it may bring the community an academic atmosphere. With so many educated people around town, the community makes you feel so peaceful and in harmony.

People who take the opposite side may present some disadvantages of building a university near the community. Firstly, they feel that a university may occupy larger amount of land and use a lot of money which can be used for some other purposes: such as a shopping mall which can make people's life more convenient, or a factory which can employ a lot of people. The benefits that can be brought by those facilities are more obvious and tangible. Secondly, they think that the students at the university are young people who may sometimes cause troubles such as drinking, speeding or having wild parties, which could probably destroy the quite atmosphere of the community.

All above seems reasonable from their own respective. Personally I support the idea to establish a university in the community because it can really give us more chance to improve ourselves.

Topic 114 Who influence more, family or friends?

Young adults may be influenced by many aspects in forming their characters and outlooks on the world. Some people believe that family is the most important influence on young adults. Others think that friends are the most important influence on them. Both views base on respective beliefs.

It is true that friends may exert great influence on young adults. They may study together in the same school and share similar experiences. They have much in common and may share their innermost secrets that they never let their parents know. Young people are easier to make friends with each other and communicate without bothering about the so-called generation gap, which is nevertheless a common problem existing between young adults and their families.

However, it's also generally accepted that parents are the first teachers in the growing process of their children. Parents teach their children how to utter the first word in their life, help them to step out their first pace, witness their first love and give important suggestions when children need them. On the other hand, children follow their parents' examples and even adore them when they are growing from little children to young adults. They are usually ready to turn to their parents who have more life experience than them for advice when they are faced with important decisions. Therefore, parents who witness most of the whole growing process of the young adults till they are mature enough are more important influence on them than their friends.

Although young adults may reap a lot from their communication with their friends of similar ages, the most important influence to their life is always their families.

Topic 115 **Making plans for free time**

In my opinion it is always better to plan our free time because although it is considered leisure time but some people might need it to get certain things done that could not have been finished if they were left to be done another time.

Probably for most grown-ups free time is only during their weekends which is usually for one or two days only. It is actually a very short period of time if you have lots of things to be done. For this reason planning for leisure time is very important because there are lots of things that needs to be done and not all of theses things are for fun.

For adults, leisure time is not only about waking up late, spending the whole day in bed or in front of the television and reading some magazines. In fact if it is well planned, free time can be used to meet our friends, go to a restaurant, go to the cinema, go shopping or even read a nice book. Others may use it to do more important things such as taking up a new hobby or studying if they are students. Consequently their time needs to be organized very well in order to accomplish all the things they need to do compared to the short time they have.

On the other hand, if we do not keep a list or a schedule of the things that we should do, we may only finish a thing or two but time will never be enough for us to accomplish all the tasks we have. It seems to me that leisure time should not be left without planning because it is really important to many people.

Topic 115 Making plans for free time

In an era when the pace of people's life becomes more frantic and hasty than ever before, there is a growing concern among the general public about the way to arrange their own leisure time, carefully planning or no planning at all. As far as I am concerned, the former one should be wiser.

First of all, in the modern time that people are hustling around all the day and have so little free time, a meticulous plan should be provided in order not to make full use of it. Unlike the ones leading their lives in the last centenary or in the rural areas, contemporary people, especially those in major cities, have been bothered by the pressures from their bosses, colleges, and even the family members. Consequently, the free time for such people is shorter than ever. As a survey held in some large cities shows, many young people my age have to work form 9 am to 10 pm, Monday to Saturday, and only have some spare time on Sundays. Just as an old saying goes, how time flies! If there were no careful plans, people's free time would elapse without any value.

In the second place, people would have enjoyed themselves more if they have thorough plans on how to allocate their private time. It is obvious that if the leisure time were well organized, even a short break would make people relaxed and ready for their next round of struggles on their jobs. What's more, according to a health report, people would benefit more if they conduct various activities during weekends and holidays. A careful plan will make sure that people can accomplish what they want to do during their free time.

All in all, in such a time that people have less time to spend than ever, a careful plan is of vital importance for people to relax and fully rest. After all, efficiency is the most crucial factor in this crazy time.

Topic 115 **Making plans for free time**

Some people prefer to plan activities for their free time very carefully. Others choose not to make any plans at all for their free time. In my opinion, I prefer to plan my free time carefully, since I can do more things, and I can enjoy myself more.

First I will go over the advantages of not to making any plans for my free time. When I do not make plans, I do not feel restricted by a preset routine, and my activities can be more spontaneous. In addition, when I have no plans of my own, it is easier to adapt to what my friends and family members may be doing. For instance, if I find out that a friend wishes to go to the beach, I can adjust myself to his or her plans with perfect freedom.

However, there are more advantages to planning activities for my leisure time very carefully. By making a careful plan I can do more things, because I am more organized and I do not waste time. Moreover, with a plan I can enjoy myself more. If I have planned ahead I am fully prepared for the activities I wish to engage in, and I have nothing to worry about.

Personally, I feel that the advantages of planning activities for my free time very carefully are greater than the advantages of not making any plans at all. From these reasons discussed above, I prefer to plan activities for my leisure time very carefully.

Topic 116 Which methods of learning are best for you?

All of us have different learning styles. Some people are more visually oriented, and they are better able to absorb information if they read about it or see it presented in graphics or charts. Many people find that even if they are instructed about a given topic, they will not understand the information unless they put it to use by themselves. Still others need to process the information by analyzing it and discussing with others. I believe that we benefit most from different ways informational input.

I like to read about a topic and consult other visual learning tools such as video presentations, diagrams or charts. This is the type of informational input that is most suitable to me. I also like to keep notes on a topic so that I can refer to them later. While this form of learning works best for me, I find that it helps if the information is presented in a number of other ways as well.

Information can be absorbed better if we not only read about it, but also hear someone talk about the topic. This can personalize a topic and also help to clear up confusing points. Being able to ask someone questions when something cannot easily be understood can really help with the learning process.

Some people find that they cannot absorb knowledge until they are actually able to put it to use. While I find this is helpful, it is not the most important learning tool for me in most cases. In some instances, though, it can really make general concepts and ideas more understandable. For example, when reading about how to surf the Internet, it is difficult to grasp some of the ideas and instructions that are offered. Once you actually try it a few times, it becomes easier.

I learn best if I am able to hear a teacher or speaker discuss an issue, follow along by viewing diagrams and charts and also reading supporting material, and then, in some cases, putting that information to use by actually conducting activities or exercises related to the material.

Topic 116 Which methods of learning are best for you?

People have different ways to learn knowledge. Some people learn by doing things; other people learn by reading books; others learn by listening to people talk about things. As far as I am concerned, the first method - learning by doing is suitable for me. The reasons are as follows.

In the first place, I normally have a better understanding on the things that I learned by doing them. Ten years ago, after graduated from a university, I began working for an electronic company, which manufactures color televisions. During the first several months, I just sat in my office to read the mechanisms of color television from books. Those theories seemed to be so abstract to me that I can only understand 30% of them. So I decided to go to the production floor to learn about them. After taking part in the procedure of manufacture, I was surprised that getting hold of those theories was no longer difficult to me. I was able to assemble and repair televisions shortly afterwards.

In the second place, I can remember well when I learn things by doing them. People always have such an experience: they can memorize something when picking up a book and forget it when putting down the book. Knowledge cannot become yours by reading until you practice it. Knowledge learned from books is RAM, e.g. erasable memory; while knowledge learned by doing things is written in our ROM, e.g. inerasable memory.

In conclusion, I prefer learning by doing things not only because this method can help me understand things easily, but also because it can help me memorize things longer.

Topic 117 **Different friends or similar friends?**

Some people like friends who are different from them, while others like friends who are similar. If I have to make a choice, I prefer similar friends.

Admittedly, the idea of having different friends is not without advantages. On one hand, contacting with different friends gives one a broader outlook to life. Different friends can enrich our experiences by their conducts and thoughts that are different from ours. In addition, they can help a person enjoy a variety of interests.

Nonetheless, I believe that similar friends have more advantages. We can feel confident and strong when we have a group of friends who share the same opinions. A person with a purpose in life - such as an artist or a politician - may feel a special need to surround himself with people who can assist and encourage him in his work.

In addition, similar friends mean the same way of thinking and doing things; therefore they are generally more compatible and easy to get along with. I can think of no better illustration of the idea than the example of my roommate and I who both like studying quietly and dislike loud music, so we can enjoy a quiet environment together and concentrate on our assignments. We both go to bed early so none of us would be bothered while sleeping. Furthermore, it is convenient for similar friends to communicate and enjoy their leisure time together. My roommate and I frequently have fun together because we have the same hobby - playing chess.

For the reasons given above, I would have to declare myself as one of those prefer similar friends to different friends.

Topic 118 New experiences vs. usual habits

If one has never experienced the storm, how could one enjoy the beauty of the rainbow? If one has never experienced the unknown, how could one enjoy the joys that life has to offer? Therefore I always welcome new experiences in my life.

Some people like their lives to stay the same, and they do not change their usual habits. So all their life, they do not have many new experiences. They live only one lifestyle. No matter what happens in the world, they just keep their life the same way. They will not try a new job with a higher salary. For years and years they just stay with their old jobs, and live in the same town or even in the same house forever. Although some of them may want to lead a better life, they are not willing to change. They just fear changes.

We all only have one life, in other words, life is limited for every one of us, so why not take advantage of our life as much as we could? The only way to experience more is to change our usual habits and lifestyles and to try new things. For example, I have always dreamed of traveling to different parts of the world to experience different cultures and customs, to meet different people, and to enjoy different views and scenic spots. I would even live in a foreign country for a few years. Then I would really feel that I have lived a wonderful life.

Some people may say that you would have confronted much more trouble and difficulties brought by the changes in life. Yes, but life should consist of sweetness and bitterness, tears and laughter, that's the way life should be! If I haven't tasted the bitterness, then how can I appreciate the sweetness? Different experiences may help me develop a profound insight into life itself, and then I could really get to understand the real happiness of life, and really appreciate the life that I have!

In a word, I always look forward to new experiences in life, so that I could enjoy my life fully.

Topic 119 **Do clothes make a man?**

Would a frenzy people become cool, after he wears a lab white cloth? Would a child become mature, after he dresses a tie? And would a prisoner become a hero, after he takes off his prisoner's suit? At this point, I consider that the crucial factor of a person's behavior is not relied on what he (she) is wearing. Instead, the character of a person determines which type of people he (she) belongs to.

First and foremost, although clothes play an important role in people's daily life, they are not the determining factor of their characters. As we can see, the appreciation of one's personality largely depends on his (her) behaviors, including the way he (she) talks, and the way he (she) does things. After all, the primary function of clothes is to keep us warm, and to prevent us from being naked like animals. As a proverb goes, "A beggar would not be someone; even if he wears a gold hat."

Secondly, as far as clothing is concerned, there are many people wearing the same clothes, but they can behave differently. Take uniforms for example, we could not deny that some doctors are impatient when they treat their patients, while others are very nice. Some soldiers are nice to their prisoners, while others treat their prisoners badly or even abuse them. So it is quite wrong to conclude that all policemen are helpful, and all government officials are trustworthy, only because they wear the government uniforms. After all, the uniforms are only used to distinguish one job from another.

Due to the above mentioned reasons, I can safely conclude that people would not behavior differently despite they wear different clothes.

Topic 119 **Do clothes make a man?**

I do strongly support the statement that people behave differently when they wear different clothes. In other words, different clothes influence the way people behave.

Some small examples may give some light to the point. I usually find that those who wear suits and tie behave invariably the same in general. They probably look self-confident, genteel and intelligent, although most of them do not really have these characteristics. So, what I want to emphasize here is that clothes work as a symbol today and people wear them would act like what the clothes impersonate without being aware of it. We all have the experience that when we wear a T-shirt and jeans we feel vigorous and act like a 16-year-old boy.

On the other hand, we tend to wear clothes that are appropriate for the environment. When people go for a job interview, men will usually wear nice suits and tie, while women will usually wear fine lady's garments. Because people understand that "clothes make a man", and nice clothes can increase their chances of getting that job.

To take this idea further, with the help of different clothes, we can behave a way that is different from what we usual look like. For example, when a serious person who has a frustrating job takes a picnic outdoors, he will dress casually in order to remind himself that he needs to relax for this occasion. Another interesting example is that we can sometimes see from movies that a serious woman who has a formal job in an office wearing a sexy underwear and dance like a stripper at night in order to seduce her husband.

So, as we can see, people really behave differently when they wear different clothes. So why not slip into casual clothes and give yourself a break right now?

Topic 120 **Are quick decisions always wrong?**

I agree with the statements that the decisions that people make quickly are always wrong. Those quick decisions that people make are like bids in a gambling. Even if they have a chance to win, they are still losers theoretically.

People should never make quick decisions without fully considering the factors that are influencing their decisions and the consequences of different decisions.

When people make hasty decisions, they rarely care anything about the situation. Situation is a very important factor in making a right decision. Different decisions lead to different results, so it is very important to make a decision carefully. People who make quick decisions do not have time to look around and carefully analyze the consequences resulted by different decisions.

Secondly, there is a popular belief that people should decide quickly in order to catch opportunities. Unfortunately, that notion is completely wrong. If you made a quick decision without thinking carefully, how could you be able to catch the opportunities? "Chance favors the prepared mind," as a famous saying goes. Only when you have fully prepared, can you really grab a good opportunity when time come. Otherwise the chance that you take hastily may result in a failure.

Thirdly, even if you can quickly analyze the situation based on the facts that are provided to you at the time that you make a decision, since you do not have enough time to verify the validity of those information, the information could be wrong, which could leads to wrong decisions. Even the president of the United States can make this kind of mistake. Mr. Bush made a decision to start the War on Iraq based on the false information that his subordinates provided to him, which claims that Iraq has dangerous biochemical weapons. Maybe someday history will prove that the decision to start the War was wrong.

Life is not a lottery. Life is a stock market. Only when you make careful decisions based on thorough analysis, can you win. If you make quick decisions, chances are that these decisions will happen to be wrong, and you may lose everything down to your underwear.

Topic 120 **Pride and Prejudice**

My point of departure for this essay will be the famous novel by Jane Austen, "Pride and Prejudice", in which two opposite minds meet and at first sight judge each other's characters. Of course they consequently fall in love, but their instant firm beliefs in their own ability to place other people in categories is both frightening and entertaining.

Many great works of literature are based on the unpreventable conflicts that arise when different encounters between people end with hostility and dislike. Political, religious and everyday life problems occur out of the blue as a result of the stubbornness of the human mind. In the hectic postmodern world it seems often to be considered a quality to deliver your judgment without hesitation; such various areas as job-interviews, match-making and socializing in a metropolis all inspire an ability to know your goal and to reach it without hesitation and long-term reflection. The commercial industry, the media and the distinct focus on appearance in our society additionally encourages a consequence in judging other people, that might prevent a full understanding of other people's characters.

On the other hand, as much as it may be considered a good quality to be trustful and patient, it might be a significant survival tool in the modern life. Personally I believe that every person contains a true value, a personality that may someday enrich my way of thinking, and therefore I try to be careful in my immediate judgments. However, in order to navigate in a stressful everyday life that offers many encounters, it is necessary to make a natural selection - an perhaps nature has installed this in our minds under the label "personal judgment".

To summarize, I believe that both attitudes and ways of thinking are understandable, however superficial and harsh an early judgment might seem. In not giving other people time and space to prove their worth, life loses a lot of its potential. Limitless trust, however, can lead to disappointment that could have been prevented.

Topic 121 **Can we trust first impressions?**

In our daily life, we will always hear a wealth of such cases as a guy who has fallen into love with a girl at the first sight, one of your friends who impresses your mother deeply on his first visit to your house and then is treated exceptionally well by your hard-to-be-pleased mother, and even the applicant who attracts to the human resources manager immediately during the first interview is easily employed, to name just a few. All of the above-mentioned cases tell us that many people in the world trust the first impressions of a person, his character, his conduct and his eloquence, etc., all of which he displays at their first meet. But is all that he displays, or all that you understand through what he displays correct, or it is just a blur image that needs to be proved in the later days?

Before we get the question to be treated, let's think of the most probable (not absolutely) results of the cases mentioned in the first paragraph:

The guy who has just experienced the above-said romance has to say goodbye to his newly-met girlfriend because later on he finds out that she is not as good as she looks; the friend of yours who has just won your hard-to-be-pleased mother's trust is criticized by your mother because of his great incoherency in his manners, and even the newly-employed employee is dismissed because he is not telling the truth in his resume. Till now, do you still think the first impressions are dependable?

Psychologically, we have a very perfect image of a person in our head, of course, which varies from one to another owing to individuals' specific experiences, education and family background, and his or her own opinion. When a person who we meet confirms with the image in our head, we will, to a great extent, overestimate or even exaggerate his merits, while omit his shortcomings, maybe due to human nature and psychological reasons.

Thus we can ourselves lead to the answer to the question above that the first impressions of a person are generally incorrect. In a word, to judge a person needs time and the first-sight impression is unreliable.

Topic 121 **Are first impressions trustworthy?**

In our social life, we may meet different people in different occasions. Some of them we may meet once; others may be staying with us for a long time, such as our classmates, or our colleagues. Some people trust their first impressions because they believe these judgments are generally correct. While other people do not judge a person quickly because they think first impressions are often wrong. Before I give my opinion, I want analyze the two opinions first.

For those who trust first impressions, they may argue as follows. For one thing, before two people first meet, they have no ideas about what the other person is like, and then they may have no inclination to cater to each other by behaving differently. At those circumstances, it is a little bit easy to get to know the person's real character because they may behave naturally. In addition, some mysterious factors such as instinct may involve in the first impression which usually is proved to be the right one with no reasonable account, as is especially occurred in many married couple's first meeting.

The other group of people who do not believe in first impression also have their reasons. First, people's characters are different and complex. It is very hard to get to know them at the first meeting. If you want to know a person, you have to spend lot of time to talk to them, and observe their behaviors at different occasions, and all these cannot be accomplished just in a few hours. Second, many people do not behave naturally when they meet strangers, so the first meeting will not be a good chance to know a person.

We can see that both the two sides have their reasons. But I prefer not to judge people in our first meetings. Because to me, I'm not very good at judging people and my first impressions are usually unreliable.

Topic 122 Unleash your desires!

It is quite normal for people who live in the modern society to feel the necessity to acquire new things or achieve a certain status that they do not possess. This behavior is due to human nature and continuous changes in the society, especially the emergence of novel products that most people find attractive.

The process by which people develop new products is mainly by looking at what people need. When there is a need, there is a market. Although this could seem an acceptance of desire as a normal human behavior, I think desire is far better than what it is being think of, since this is the driving force for people to invent new products and discover ways to improve our life.

It is normal for people to attract to what they do not have, and it contributes to human's own process of development. History cannot evolve if human do not have desire. Everyone wants to achieve a better status in the society, and after the desired status is achieved, a new desire appears and this becomes a never-ending process. The famous story by Alexander Pushkin, *The Fisherman and the Goldfish*, depicted this human nature insightfully.

The desire of human being to lead a better life and use new products has pushed the technological advancement of our society. For instance, in 1980s, people desired to use personal computers to do word processing and desktop publishing. The necessity quickly converted to personal computer products that can accomplish that task. Afterwards, people were not satisfied with computers doing work processing only. They need more powerful functions to process images, generate 3-D animations and play multi-media games. Today, the computers available in the markets are hundreds times faster than those of the 1980s, and we got bigger and much higher resolution screens. Obviously, it has been human desire and necessity that pushed the development of computer technology.

It is true that people never content with what they already have. Due to this dissatisfaction, this society is fast evolving. Perhaps we may use words such as "wish" and "dream" to replace "desire". There will be more and more new products and services that are more comfortable and easier to use, in order to satisfy people's dreams. So, unleash your desires! Our wishes and dreams can make our life better.

Topic 122 **Should people satisfy with what they have?**

In contemporary society, there are new things coming up almost every day. Some people have to face such a fact that you can never buy a real new product, because the new one always appears after you have bought one. As a result, some of them are never satisfied with what have and they want to get something newer or something different. To some extent, it is a good way to keep up with the ceaselessly changing world. However, in my opinion, it is not always good not to satisfy what you already have.

For one thing, with the development of science and technology as well as the globalization, more and more brand new things are produced every day, along with a variety of new findings, new lifestyles, and new types of services. If we ignore all the new things and always stay what we are, the only result may be that we will be obsolete in the society. In some degree, if we all stick with old things, there will be no new inventions and advancement of the world. The continuous needs in people's spirits can really push our society forward. Human beings live in a modern society after all, and we should have the desire to be in pursuit of a new life.

However, on the other hand, if we sought after material satisfactions without considering our financial reality, we could find ourselves in trouble. As we know, new products are manufactured and updated almost every day, so there is little possibility that you can always obtain the newest products. Moreover, every time a new comes into markets, the price is always much higher than older products. If you do not have a strong financial background to support your desire, how could you be able to afford them? For example, some people borrow money from their credit card for new and fancy products without considering their affordability. In the end they get into financial crisis.

The purpose that we look for new and different things is to live better and happier. If your desires only get you into worries and troubles, it will be a better choice to learn to give up and be satisfied. In a word, living in a modern society, we must in pursuit of our life with a flexible attitude.

Topic 122 **Should people satisfy with what they have?**

Many of the world's religions share a belief that when a person is able to look at and confess his or her problems that person can begin to travel the on road to emotional recovery. A problem cannot be solved until it is clearly recognized. I agree with the above statement because I believe that dissatisfaction and suffering forces people to change.

History presents many examples of dissatisfaction and change. The history of China in this century might be seen as one of dissatisfaction and progress. Sun Yet San was discontented with the decaying imperial order, and so he created the "Revolution." Mao was dissatisfied with the course of events so he intensified the revolution; finally, Deng pushed the Chinese economy towards a free-market economy. Hence, China progressed towards its newfound "superpower" status.

In a not dissimilar way, during the eighteenth century many Americans became annoyed with the British regime and they start to fight for the freedom and independence. Hence the most powerful country in the world - the United States was created.

On a personal level, dissatisfaction can lead to changes within friendship and marriage. Perhaps it might even be said that true love cannot remain static. Matrimony and friendship are explorations of the higher emotions: they are pilgrimages towards the city of true values. If husband and wife are prepared to confront and discuss their problems, a blue period can give way to many years of happiness. Sometimes, for instance, a spouse may not recognize that the source of marital unhappiness is that the other partner has developed a need to have children. Whatever else may be said, most people would agree that children change the lives of their parents.

The best method of utilizing dissatisfaction is to change things before they get out of hand. An intelligent man will constantly monitor his emotions; an intelligent politician will understand the mood of his people. Some people might suggest that the transition to independence for Canada and Australia was much smoother than that of the United States because Britain allowed those two dominions to evolve with time. To take the idea further, a good parent or an astute politician will even anticipate potential dissatisfactions and therefore take precautions.

I agree with the above statement because, I believe that we are can grow up through dissatisfaction. Without the ability to recognize our discontent, we could collapse into illness. Suffering sharpens our senses.

Topic 123 **Non-fictions vs. fictions**

How could anyone suggest that people should only read about real events, real people, and established facts? For one thing, that means people would not be reading half of all the great books that have ever been written, not to mention the plays, short stories and poetries. For another, it would mean that people's imaginations would not develop and would remain uninspired throughout their lives.

Reading stories as a child helps develop our creativity since fictions teach us a lot about how to convert words into mental images. Fictions open our world up, exposing us to other times and different ways of living. Reading histories of those times would serve the same purpose, but histories are probably not as sharply and vivid as fictions. Reading an essay about poverty in Victorian England is not the same thing as reading Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*. The image of a small boy being suffered in cold, poverty and hard labor are more horrifying than simply reading the statement, "Children were sold into labor". Reading fictions makes a more lasting impression in our minds and emotions about the past.

Besides, storytelling is an emotional need for human beings. From earliest times, humans have taught their children about life, not by telling them facts and figures, but by telling them stories. Some of these stories show what people are like (human nature), and help us experience a wide range of feelings. Some tell us how we should act. Telling a child that it's wrong to lie will make little impression, but telling him the story of a little boy whose nose grows longer every time he tells a lie will make a much stronger impression.

Fiction is too important to our culture, our minds, and our emotions. How could we ever give it up!

Topic 124 **Social science vs. natural science**

The chances of receiving education are considered the most fundamental right of human beings in the 21st century. Naturally, the argument about what the students should acquire at schools has attracted many attentions from people of various walks of life. In considering the obligatory courses required at schools, people have different ideas. Some would hold the view that it is more important for students to study science and mathematics than it is for them to study history and literature.

I agree with this point of view completely. Although both social and natural science courses play an important role in the whole education system, natural science seems to have a greater impact on human progress. Our society is developing at a high speed quite unprecedented before. One cannot deny the fact that all of these results came directly from scientific discoveries. An example is that during the period of industrial revolution, it is science and mathematics that brought many inventions and discoveries such as assembly lines, mending machines and electric appliances which has freed the most of people from manual labors once and for all.

The above reason I pointed out does not mean that literature and history cannot improve people's lives but they have few advantages to people's material life especially to those poor people who are still struggling for the essential needs of shelters and foods. Literature and history cannot be put into practice to some extent. Research and development of science and mathematics on the contrary can be applied to our real life and improve our living standard. Take medical science for example, the new findings of treatments of certain diseases can save lives of many people. There still exist some fatal diseases that threaten people's lives. All this will depend on the development of medical science.

In short, all courses involving literature and history, science and mathematics are necessary and important to students. However, according to the reasons I discussed above, I want to make the judgment that science and mathematics course are more useful.

Topic 125 **Should art and music be compulsory subjects?**

I totally agree with the statement that all students should be required to study art and music in secondary schools. It comes as a direct interpretation of the apothegm 'All work and no fun, makes Jack a dull boy'. The education of art and music is necessary to provide for that spice in life. The stress of life can be easily alleviated by the use of art or music, something that interests and titillates the individual. In secondary schools, students are like wet mud; they can be molded with the shapes one likes. Art and music are activities that bring out a softer, mature and a complete person. Without them, life tends to become dull and burdensome.

Students tend to get bored of pedantic learning, and need a break from regular classroom education in the forms of art and music. Providing good facilities to capable students enhances their talents in art and music. Moreover students can develop their inter-personal skills when participating in extra co-curricular activities such as instrument, vocal and painting groups. The sense of honor will encourage them to improve their results on science courses.

Art and music are an integral part of a complete human being. They are one of the essential ingredients of life. So in order to develop students with full personalities, secondary schools should impart art and music knowledge to its students. On the other hand students should not be forced to take up some form of art or music. It should be entirely optional for students to choose whatever forms of art or music that interest them.

It is art and music that differentiate humans from animals. The serenity and tranquility that music and arts provide only human can enjoy.

Topic 125 **Should art and music be compulsory subjects?**

Life cannot be full without understanding and appreciating the greatest culture inheritances from our earlier generations such as arts and music. Secondary school prepares us to enter into college and adult life. Therefore all students should be required to study art and music in secondary schools.

Arts are a part of our life. From antique cave drawings to African tribal crafts, from Indian totem poles to modern buildings, arts are everywhere. Not to mention those art exhibitions in art galleries and museums, which attract hundreds of millions of people to visit them each year. Even our home equipments are made with a touch of art. Arts are ubiquitous.

Music is also an important cultural heritage of human being and remains a part of our present. It is common sense that music can relax our body and soul. For example, by listening to classical music that are played by traditional instruments, while gaining knowledge about the history and stories behind these music, students can really improve their knowledge, cultivate their spirits and broaden their views.

Studying arts and music in high school also allow students to take a break between those mentally demanding courses such as math and physics. These arts and music course can even help students improve their results in math and physics, because a good relaxation can help students concentrate more later on.

I am high school student myself and I believe that all students should be required to take arts and music courses during their secondary school years. It is not necessary for students to learn arts in order to become artists; but it is definitely necessary for students to learn to appreciate arts.

Topic 125 Should art and music be compulsory subjects?

Art and music are the advanced products of civilizations. They have been developed through thousands of years and accompanied by the progress of science and knowledge. In this sense, some people think that all students should be required to study art and music in secondary school. In my opinion, I totally agree the statement for a number of reasons.

As is so often pointed out that art and music can broaden people's view of the world. The world that we live in is not only a material world, but also a spiritual world. The art and music that belong to the latter can benefit our souls and form our personalities. For instance, a piece of music often can bring us different feelings such as calm, happy, sad or sorrow. I would always like to listen to Tchaikovsky's *Pathetique* when I am in a bad mood; I always feel much better and ready to face challenges again after I hear it. I believe most of us have this kind of experience. Art and music education in high school can enrich students' life, even though they will not make them as a career at a later time.

In addition, the love for art and music can become a good hobby for a person who has this kind of education when he/she is young. Many people have various hobbies that make their life meaningful and they may seldom feel bored during their spare time. Appreciating art and music is a great hobby. Many students acquire the hobby of appreciating art or listening to music after they took courses in art and music in high school.

Last but not least, for some students art and music can help with their career pursuit, because they can get inspirations from art and music to achieve in other fields. For example, the profession of architecture has a strong relationship with art and music. "Buildings are frozen music." We can see that many buildings that were designed by architects were influence by some form of art. On the other hand, Albert Einstein, the Nobel Prize winner and the famous scientist, was also an excellent violinist and he admitted that music could refresh his mind and lead to more effective thinking. Moreover, some students pursue a career in art and music due to their art education in high school. They become artists or singers after they graduate.

Maybe we are not aware of it at first, but from the above arguments we could see that art and music education are very important for high school students. It will surely benefit their school life and life after

Topic 126 **Can young people teach older people?**

Living at the start of the new millennium, in the most advanced technological era in history, one is confronted with a plethora of knowledge and information which itself continues to become outdated by the moment. While young people possess an ability to learn new concepts and absorb information faster and easier many now products or ideas could be taught to old people if they possessed the desire to learn.

The computer, for old people, has emerged as the first barrier and stigma. With a computer, one can work without paper and pencil, obtain useful searches on the Internet or make online purchases from ones home. However, many older people are not able to do these things since using a computer initially demands a modicum of knowledge and skill. If one has time, there are rewards, however, to teaching our grandparents how to use a computer in order that they could discover the many benefits and pleasure of using a computer.

In addition to new technological products, ideas or concepts that have helped shape young people can be conveyed to old people. Many old people maintain that health, for example, suggests an absence of disease. Yet many of us have realized that the notion of being healthy contains emotional, social and physical health rather than simply living without illness. Such scientific notions could be learned by old people from their children because young people may acquire such new ideas quickly. Why not learn something new from youngsters in order to adjust to a modern lifestyle and become healthier?

There is no doubt that there are many things we should learn from older people such as aspects of traditional culture or some valuable, life-teaching experience. But in modern society it is the young who, at the forefront of the era, possess updated knowledge, positioning old people to learn from those younger.

Topic 126 Can young people teach older people?

Who says only old people can teach young people? We admit that older people have much more experiences than our young people, and it is true that they can give us much guidance when we encounter problems or unsolvable difficulties. However, with the rapid development of the modern society, young people can also teach the older people a lot. They can update knowledge about new technologies for the elders, share attitudes towards life with them and bring freshness into their lives.

Since living in a very fast developing society, we need to make contact with many new technologies everyday. In other words, we need to learn everyday to keep up with the latest development. For example, computers are now very popular, but we seldom see the elders use computers. If they can learn how to use them from young people, they will definitely be beneficial from it because computers have brought a lot of changes to our lives and bring us new experiences. Young people are known for their quick understanding and acceptance new things, so that I think they can teach the older about new technologies used in our daily life.

The attitudes of young people are totally different from old people. Mostly they are more positive and energetic than old people. They have a different angle to judge things. Sometimes the elders are passive towards life because they went through a lot of frustrations. On the contrary, young people are full of energy towards the life, and they are always optimistic. They proudly say because they are young, they can try millions of times. In some degree, young people's attitudes may influence old people.

Young people also can share with old people what they like, which may result a change of old people. As we know, most young people like popular music. I have a friend who likes Japanese music very well; everyday she plays this music at home. Her grandmother often asks her to stop the music and asks her why she likes it. My friend tells her grandmother about the history of Japanese music and shows her a lot of examples. Gradually her grandmother likes Japanese music as well, which made us so surprised. Now if we go to their house, we can see my friend and her grandmother listening Japanese music together and share the feelings as well. You must be surprised like me when you know the story, but it did happen.

So, no matter what age group you belong to, we must believe that everyone has something to share with others and to teach others. Old people can give the youngsters' lessons and guidance, on the other hand, young people also can teach the elders new things and different ways towards life.

Topic 126 **Can young people teach older people?**

To my ear this statement sounds false and a little too fare-fetched. It is truth universally acknowledged that the old people have volumes of experience, while the young have the energy and lots of creative power. Therefore I think that it's not suitable to take sides in this situation. Because in my view there is no way to determine who is better - the old or the young.

Obviously, each of these groups has its own positives and negatives. I suppose they should co-operate and be helpful to one another rather than try to rival. The exchange should be done for their own mutual benefits. Even though the old people possess a great deal of experience, it is sometimes not enough for surviving in the changing modern world. That's why they often get stuck with their dated information, without being able to break free from their own prejudice.

In many cases the old people are used to their old ways and, I imagine, it must be really hard for them to get adjusted to the new environment. But one should always remember that, like it or not, only the fittest survive. Therefore, if the old people don't want to become extinct as dinosaurs did, they should rather learn some ways from the young. The thing is that the young people are way more flexible to all of the little changes happening in their everyday life. It is easier for them to get up-to-date and to face the fact that some old ways are no longer valid. For them it is not a difficult thing to come to terms with. I guess that this is something that could be of some use for the elder people as well. If they have lots of experience to give, the young can teach them lots of flexibility in return.

In fact, I personally think that there are many things that the young can teach older people and flexibility is just one of them. But the problem is sometimes that the old are very unlikely to be willing to accept this kind of searching with their arms wide open. Most of the times they are conservative and prefer to stick to their old ways.

Topic 126 Can young people teach older people?

An English proverb goes, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks." With all due respect to this folk wisdom, I have to admit that it sounds somewhat dated to me. At the same time I agree that almost every saying has a grain of truth to it, and this one is no exception. Nor is another one? There is no fool like an old fool. As it can easily be seen, the two sayings contradict each other, which may seem terribly confusing. Nevertheless I would like to pursue the subject at some length and try to find out which one is in the right.

It goes without saying that the old dog has quite a lot of experience. During its lifetime it has learnt a lot of different tricks that now make it feel happy and content with itself. I believe it deserves all kind of respect and admiration, since it has done a pretty good job. But one should always remember that the kind of tricks it has been doing up to now are old-fashioned and not up-to-date anymore. There now exists a marvelous opportunity to do all of them over again in a better, more sophisticated way. It is not surprising that a young dog would be way more dexterous in performing those tricks.

Moreover, it can create some innovative, brand-new ways that an old dog has never even dreamed about. Therefore I suppose that the old dog should appreciate this never-ending source of energy and ideas, and maybe even pick up some of them. If the old dogs don't want to be considered off-the-shelf, they should rather be flexible and get with the times. "You are never too old to learn" shrewdly reminds them another popular saying. But still there is no way for the mature dogs to humbly imitate their own puppies. It is advisable for them to share the accumulated knowledge with the young, to be more helpful and willing to co-operate.

At the same time, all of this will be accepted more easily if the old dogs don't try to impose their experience on the young. Then the latter would undoubtedly greet their teachings with their arms wide open. Both the old and the young should never forget that they are living in the same world that belongs equally to the first group as to the second. Even though the modern world is changing all the time, there still are ways to get adjusted to it for both.

All metaphors aside, I guess that the young and the old must be very loyal to each other. They should exchange their experience and whatever else they have to give to each other. To get back to where I started? Nor the first nor the second saying is totally correct. As usual, the truth is somewhere in the middle.

Topic 127 **Reading fiction vs. watching movies**

Watching movies is a much better option compared to reading fiction. So I disagree that reading fiction is more enjoyable than watching movies. In fact movies provide a first hand experience with real emotions. Also movies can be watched with the company of others, thus making for healthy relationships.

Movies are generally much better received compared to novels or short stories. They tend to be much more exciting and surely provide real-time first hand experience. Reading fiction, more often than not, gives only vicarious pleasure.

Also movies are a much better option for real emotions. The scenes, physiognomy of characters and background music all add up to a great experience. Howsoever good a piece of fiction is, it leaves much to be desired. The way movies exhibit a wide gamut of emotions and experiences are difficult to find in fiction books.

Another major reason for movies being more enjoyable is that one can watch movies in company of others. No such sharing is possible in reading fiction. There is nothing like enjoying a movie with the person you love, or your family members, it provides the warmth to make for a pleasurable experience.

In conclusion, I derive much greater fun, joy and excitement from watching movies, than by reading fiction. According to me, movies will always hold the upper hand.

Topic 128 **Physical exercise vs. academic study**

I am surely of the opinion that physical exercise should be a required part of every school day. Even a small session of exercise, but a regular one, can go a long way to give a balanced body. The rest of the school day can take care of academic studies. The common saying 'All work and no play makes John a dull child' holds water here. Also a balanced body allows one to have a balanced mind on top of it. A small part of the day devoted to exercise can take a long way in preventing future health risks. Moreover in the age of fast-food getting rid of the couch potato image is essential for today's young generation.

It can easily be reasoned that students have better concentration if they exercise regularly. The mind runs fresh only if the body supports it. Students always need a break from the daily tedious lectures, and exercise can provide it in the best way.

Another important reason to have daily physical exercise is its long-term benefits. Researchers have shown that daily dose of exercise can greatly reduce the risks of many diseases, especially heart problems. Physical exercise can act as a handy weapon against the rising obesity at school students.

For maintaining good health, one always needs to do physical exercise daily. So why not do it in the discipline of the school? An entire day of academic studies can make life dull for students, and exercise can act as a pleasant escapade.

Topic 129 **Business research vs. agricultural research**

There are two kinds of opinions concerning the plan to develop a research center in our country. One is to develop a business research center and the other, a agriculture research center. Taking consideration of the current situation in China, I strongly recommend the former because it will help to solve the urgent problems in our country.

First of all, a business research center will help to develop the economy. At present, the global economy is slowing down and there is no evidence indicating that the recovery will come any time soon. Our biggest trading partners such as the United States and Japan fall into economic plight. As result, the exportations to those countries and direct investment from them are decreasing. The most important task is how to keep the economy growing healthily. The center will help to complete this task by exploring new business opportunities to increase exporting and helping enterprises adjust themselves.

Secondly, a business research center will help to solve the problem of unemployment. With the reform of state owned enterprises, more and more workers employed by those enterprises lost their jobs. Our economic reform and adjustment is going through a vital stage. A business research center will help the enterprise figure out how to solve this problem and the unemployed people will have a chance to get jobs in new business fields.

Finally, it will help to solve China's rural problems. China has a big population, and nearly 70 percent of its population is farmers, namely, 700million farmers in China. Now the rural problem is focused on farmers who have been released from arable lands with the development of new technology can get their jobs. A business research center will help to develop rural economy in the industrial and service fields that can absorb the enormous number of farmers.

Based on the reasons I present above. I believe a business center will play a strong role at present than a agriculture research center does. As result, I support the plan to develop a business research center in our country.

Topic 129 **Business research vs. agricultural research**

It is a well-established fact that science from the very beginning has aimed to serve the community. This has been in the form of taming the nature forces, alleviating some arduous problems, or improving the mundane life in one form or another. My country is a developing one, and is suffering from some economic problems. While agriculture has been the most pervasive hustle since the first Egyptian stepped into the Nile valley, nevertheless, I prefer the business center to be developed and hereinafter I will present and analyze this perspective.

Agriculture is responsible for providing the community with food and supporting some industries. For my country, there is no persistent conflict in providing food. Moreover, no conflict exists regarding the necessary water supply. Not denying that researches in agriculture will produce new generations of crops that consume less water, produce more nourishment, resist diseases, or require fewer pesticides. However, in my perspective, we must provide more jobs to increase the income of families and hence supply them with adequate fund that will motivate the economy wheel. This attitude will result in more purchases and hence the necessity for increasing the agricultural production will arise. But first we must begin with research center that supports the economy.

To support the economy, provide more jobs, and increase the annual income per capita, we must focus on the most lucrative activities. Agriculture is considered within the least profitable activities. While business fortifies all aspects of the economy, business research will improve sales of marketing centers, provide the industry with new ideas based on the requirements of the customers. Moreover, business will assert the economic side of management systems of factories and governmental facilities.

Ultimately, universities should provide the community with more researches and scientific potential in the field that exclusively support the welfare of the community. Keeping this in mind, business centers will be the right choice.

Topic 129 **Business research vs. agricultural research**

Since the announcement of the University's plan to develop a new research center in our country, many people have showed their concern for the project and expressed their views of type of center it should be. It is now clear that the diversified views have converged to two: a business research center or an agriculture research center. Now that we have to make a decision, I think we should choose the latter without hesitation.

As everybody knows, our country is an agricultural country whose fanning produce is not enough to feed its own people. We have no way out but to develop our agriculture because agriculture is the foundation of our national economy and because it would be a disaster to the whole world if we rely on foreign food to feed the biggest population in the world.

To develop our agriculture, we cannot just call on the peasants to work harder because they have being working the hardest from generation to generation. What we should do is to raise their educational level and provide them with better seeds, more fertilizers, advanced machinery and equipment, and up-to-date technical advice. In short, we have to rely on science and technology to develop our agriculture.

Some people would say that this couldn't be a convincing reason because science and technology are needed not only in agriculture but also in all other fields. My view is that our situation in agriculture is the most serious and the challenges are the greatest. Ours is a big country with widely different climates and soil conditions. If we are to assist the peasants, we have to study all types of crops and all the fanning conditions in this land. With a research center, these problems can be studied and solved systematically. But so far, no agriculture research center worthy of the name has been set up while there is already a business center in the southern part of the country.

Because of the above reasons, I strongly recommend that we develop a research center for agriculture purpose and I also strongly recommend this center be well funded. If we take this step and succeed in this endeavor, our agricultural produce will be greatly increased and our whole national economy will have a solid foundation.

Topic 130 Should children spend much time on sports?

Currently some young children spend a great amount of their time in practicing sports. Most parents feel quite happy because sports are good for their kids' development and team work spirit, however they are quite worried about some negative effects such as practicing sports occupies too much time, distracts their attentions on schoolwork and loses certain interests on other activities. In my opinion, everything has its good side and bad side. The important thing is to handle it properly.

Admittedly, practicing sports can help children's physical development, which makes them grow faster and stronger than before. As we know, during children's development periods, especially from 10 to 16 years old, sports are really helpful for children to develop. Sports can create a strong body that reduces the possibility of contracting some diseases easily. Definitely we believe that children benefit from sports.

Another good thing is that sports teach us to learn how to cooperate with other members in a team. Most sports are team work. If we want to play them well, we must master some skills to care about what our team members are thinking and how to adapt each other to achieve a common goal. Sports are not an individual activity, it needs corporation and mutual understanding. This is not easy to master. Of course, for parents they are delightful to see their children to get this skill from sports.

On the other hand, practicing sports seem to occupy too much of children's spare time to concentrate their schoolwork. As a student, one's major task is to study hard and try to learn as much as possible, which needs students to devote much time on study or their spare time. If children devote themselves in practicing sports, it is not denying that they cannot concentrate them on schoolwork at the same time. The consequence of practicing sports too much leads children to distract themselves, which influences their future.

Actually, besides sports, there are still many kinds of activities, such as drawing, collecting, good for their developments. If a child is too concentrated on sports, it is inevitable that he will lack of chances to explore other activities and lose some happiness when engaged in different experiences.

Overall, on one hand, we should encourage our children to participate in sports activities; on the other hand, we must also remind them not to be too engaged because they should put study at the first place during their school time. There is a limit of doing everything.

Topic 130 **Sports - success all the way**

Sports, a great nourishment for body and mind. When we talk about sports, we are not just talking about somebody putting extra amount of exertion into a physical activity, and at the end of the act, being totally consumed and over till the next time. Sports is much more to it, analyzing the true benefits of sports, we could find that a certain amount of time to sports every day not only keeps a person physically fit, but also mentally at the edge. This is the reason why every form of medicine today, whether be it Alopathy, Homoeopathy or even the alternative ways, all suggest to adapt a routine exercise and the best way to exercise the human body is Sports.

As talking about young children, putting a whole lot of time into Sports is concerned, there is a philosophy behind everything, there is a need to the human body and the human mind. A wise statement says 'excess of anything is dangerous'. Studying this statement we could put forward an example, the most useful thing to human life or rather the element that brings life is 'water', even if water is taken in excess, it could have dangerous circumstances. No matter what examples we put forward, excess of anything turns out to be dangerous. Now as to performing sports in proportion is concerned, this proportion varies from person to person, so no set limit could be applied to two individuals, it is the task of an individual himself to find out what exactly his limits are, and that he doesn't end up hurting him or herself.

In the capitalist world of today as there are giant multi national organizations sponsoring individuals or teams, who happen to have some sort of promising ability. So it could be taken for granted, that an entity, if happens to polish his sports skills, could see great success in life, this success would not only mean that he will lead a healthy life style, but would as well be prosperous and rich.

Thus striking the right balance, into the time given into sports and other activities would surely mean success, but after all is said, one word should always stay in a sports persons mind that is 'Balance'.

Topic 131 **Money and success**

The notion of success holds different meanings for different people and groups. Such meanings have changed and evolved over time. Actually, many propose that possessing an abundance of money implies success. However, this view is rendered obsolete in the minds of those individuals who hold that one's success cannot be measured strictly by money.

Material possession has been traditionally accepted as the measurement of one's success or social status. When we initially refer to someone, we routinely mention how much money he owns and thereby believe this individual to be quite successful if he is wealthy. In addition to this perpetuated concept, owning a lot of money is typically related to one's work ability and thus some people may simply consider money as a prime measurement of one's success.

However, this view has changed recently since many people have come to recognize that money in many cases cannot bring about happiness, health and success. A more precise, contemporaneous definition of success means doing the things one perceives are valuable to themselves and beneficial for others. The winner of the Nobel Prize for peace may think he is has achieved success although he is rewarded little financial benefit. A person who loves animals and makes an effort to save animals that are on a path of extinction may think he has gained success although he may have expended all of his money on his career.

Another individual may define success as being able to make artistic masterpieces that can be accepted by public. As a composer, success is having his work praised by adoring fans and who help cause the work to be bought the world over. Similarly, holding an exhibition in a famous art gallery may connote success for a painter.

People adhere to various concepts defining success. Money surely cannot be the only measurement of success. Acquiring true happiness in life and attaining success means having the freedom and capability of doing that which you enjoy and believing it to be valuable.

Topic 131 **Money and success**

Since people's criteria for success differ, there is much debate over whether only those who make a lot of money are successful. As far as I am concerned, in today's society that stresses on individual achievement, money provides the best evaluation of one's accomplishment.

To begin with, as a standardized measurement used for comparing values, money is objective rather than subjective, so it is considered an authentic reflection of one's achievement. As different people hold different understandings of success, assessing the amount of one's earnings has become universally accepted as a rule to measure one's success. Each year, Fortune Magazine publishes a special issue to rank the top 100 most successful people throughout the world according to their yearly income, because there are no other methods to rely on.

In addition, the amount of money one makes is the consequence of one's hard work and talent. To deny the accomplishment wealth brings is equal to deny the sources from which it springs. In the past, I only believed in spiritual values and then leapt rashly to the conclusion that the best thing in life involves no money at all. It is my uncle who showed me the significance of money and changed my opinion. He told me he respected money and made it a goal to strive for in his way towards success. Because he would have to pay a price for it in terms of time, thought and energy. Gradually, I came to realize it is the mental and physical labor he devotes in the process of making money that paves his way for self-accomplishment, and thus deserves appreciation and respect.

Finally, money is the most powerful possession in one's lifetime. As everyone knows, success is the ability to do whatever one wants to and to be satisfied with oneself. There is hardly anything that can be done without a certain amount of money. Indeed, with money, one can meet his or her material demand in life, such as taking effective medicines, living in magnificent houses, eating various delicious food, and so on. Also, with money, one can do a lot of meaningful things to benefit others, such as donations to poor people. All these will not only satisfy one's need for personal fulfillment, but also add grandness to one's success.

In conclusion, money serves as a measurement of one's achievement. But we should keep in mind that only those who obtain money by hardworking and use it to benefit the society are really successful.

Topic 132 **What new product would you develop?**

I live in a place where the environment is being degraded alarmingly and the desert is expanding rapidly. Subsequently, the people around here are suffering a lot from this vicious environmental vicissitude. So to change the current situation is a great challenge for the people living here. I believe to invent an electronic plant grower is significant to curb the environmental degradation.

Firstly, weather condition is too severe to grow any plants here. It is not efficient for us to afforest in such a vast area either. Furthermore, if the plants could not get the basic supplies like water, amicable weather conditions, it is almost impossible for plants to survive. The invention of electronic plant grower could be scientific enough, when it plants grass or trees, it will automatically put solid ice and other trace elements which could enhance the viability of plants. Thus, the newly planted plants could easily survive in it.

Secondly, the electronic plant grower could do a lot of onerous works in the field and tolerate unfavorable weather. It can extend to the most remote place to work where there are no residents at all, but could build up effective protection barrier to mitigate sandstorm. Furthermore, the electronic plant growers consume no water, which is precious resource in the desert. They can work day and night and take full time of planting season to plant as much as plants.

Thirdly, to afforest in such a vast and tough area, it needs numerous manpower for planting in short season and taking care of the plants. As an advanced robot, the invented electronic plant growers could reduce the pressure of manpower and keep the live human away from the life limit area.

To rehabilitate the environment is important more than anything else here, but the environmental rehabilitation could not do without some high-tech duplicate of human being like electronic plant grower. So I expect its birth with great hope.

Topic 132 **What new product would you develop?**

In most countries, people have to spend a lot of time learning a second language while at school. However, there're hundreds of different languages in the world, no one can learn them all. One of the most famous philosophers, Marx could speak more than ten different languages, which is already extraordinary for human beings. The difference between languages is a great handicap of communication between people from countries all over the world. A group of people planned to make a global language and ask everybody to learn, but finally the plan failed. Now there is a great need for an invention that can solve this problem.

If I could invent something new, I would develop an electronic translator. Unlike electronic dictionary, which can just translate a word into different languages, it can also translate a whole paragraph even a whole book into different languages. What's more, it can even translate the language you speak orally into other languages. For example, when you speak "Hello" in English, it will say "Nihau" in Chinese automatically when you switch it to Chinese.

It's obvious that this kind of invention is needed, and when it's invented, I believe it will spread out to everywhere in the world immediately. Then people will not have to waste a lot of time to learn foreign languages, and the communication between people from different countries will become much easier. Moreover, it will enhance the speed of globalization, which benefits everybody in the world.

For it to be invented, there's still a long way to go. But the science and technology is developing and more and more new things have been invented. In the future, the electronic translator will be invented, and it will bring people more convenience.

Topic 132 **What new product would you develop?**

People will normally invent something that they want very much in the real life if they had the ability. As a father of a two-year-old boy, I would make a baby sitter robot. The reasons are as follows.

In the first place, a baby-sitter robot can take care of my baby when I go to work. There will be a dilemma in front of parents when they have a child, who should stay at home and who should continue to work, mother or father? With a baby-sitter robot, they do not need to make a choice. Parents will no longer give up their jobs because of their child.

In the second place, a baby-sitter robot can make my baby stay away from danger. A person cannot concentrate on one thing 24 hours a day. It will be dangerous when he/she is taking care of a baby. A baby is so unpredictable that you never know what he/she will do in the next minute. For instance, the baby may swallow a coin or fall to the ground from the bed when you just do not look at him/her for a second.

However, a robot does not have such a problem because she is never tired. She can keep an eye on the baby all the time. Any potential dangerous action will be prevented. Even when the baby is sleeping, the robot can still watch the baby if you want. In addition, a baby-sitter robot can entertain the baby. Songs and stories can be inputted in the robot's memory and replayed whenever the baby needs them. It is so easy to change them that the baby will never be bored on one song or story.

In conclusion, I would like to invent a baby-sitter robot not only because it can take care of my baby for me, but also because it can make my baby safe and happy.

Topic 133 **Are childhood years most important in one's life?**

It is about time somebody exploded that holy old myth about childhood being the most important years of our life. Childhood may certainly be important, but if we compared it with other period of life such as adolescence, I do not see any more importance.

First of all, parents are absolutely dictators. Children do not have options, or if they do, nobody notices. Think of the years when you are a child. Who ever asked you an option? I have no such experience, to say the least. Parents choose the clothes we wear, the books we read and even the friends we play with. We have to manipulate so as not to interfere too seriously with the lives of our elders.

Even so, it is only part of the reason. We have vague memory of most parts of our childhood. Many of the things we learnt, the happy hours we spent and troubles we suffered have no trace in our mind at all. Do you still remember every quarrel you had with your little friends? Do you clearly remember every trip you had with your parents or other children? Most of you may probably say nay, I think.

However, we may learn a lot when we are children. All these may contain what we think of as the most important thing, but we are passive to learn them. Without independence, how can we say childhood is most important period of our life? So, as I see it, childhood is certainly not the moors important years of a person's life.

Topic 133 **Are childhood years most important in one's life?**

A person's childhood years are indeed the most important years of his life and I agree with this statement.

The initial years of childhood are the time when a person learns a lot about himself and his family and the society. A child's mind is impressionable and he imbibes values and behavior that he gets to see around him. So the role of his family and school is of utmost importance.

It has been seen that children who get the love and support of their parents and teachers in their childhood turn out to be mature and emotionally balanced teenagers and adults. On the other hand, if we look at the childhood of criminals and other anti-social elements, we will find that most of them have been through tough times as children. They were deprived of proper care and upbringing. Delinquents also have a history of abuse in their childhood many a times.

Children are always inquisitive and willing to learn. So if they are provided a stimulating environment in which they can develop their talents and learn to enjoy their work, they become good citizens who are an asset to the nation. Family is the most important institution in a child's formative years because parents are role models for their children. Children develop their ethics, moral values and temperament in tune with what they see in their parents and elder siblings. The type of personality that a child develops is difficult to change later.

So I firmly believe that childhood is a vital part of a person's life that plays an important role in shaping his future.

Topic 134 **Should children be required with household tasks?**

When children grow up old enough to be able to help with some household tasks, some parents do insist that their children should take those kind of family works as early as they can, I do not think there is any in properties about the parents' conclusion.

As a complex activity for children, household tasks will do them good, both physically and mentally. When children are about the age of 4 or 5, some simple tasks such as wiping the kitchen floor or cleaning their own dishes after supper will urge them to balance their using of their forearms and wrists, fingers, and develop their brain power to control all those cooperating activity of arm muscles and their whole nerve system. When they grow up a little more, maybe parents could teach them to operate on washing machines or to use microwave-ovens, that kind of activity can make them learn the basic principles of auto machines, which no doubt will make them to face the outer world in a brand new way.

Helping in family works also can take children into more active communication with their families. When parents first teach children to use simple tools, children will learn how to understand the instructions clearly, and they may learn to communicate with other kids taking the same assignment to solve their own problems. So, family work is not just a kind of work assignment for children, it is more like a kind of learning process, they can learn not only how to finish those assignments but also learn how to communicate with each other.

After finishing those household works assigned to them, kids always get compliments from their family, this will encourage them to try different things in a more creative manner at home or at school the other day.

In a word, I think it is very beneficial for children to take the household tasks as early as they can, that will make them more active, more intelligent in communication and more happy in living with their families in harmony.

Topic 134 **Should children be required with household tasks?**

Should children be required to help with household tasks as soon as they are able to do so? People have different opinions. Some people think that parents can do all the household tasks without children's help, children are still too young to do house work and sometimes they even make things worse. Other people, however, argue that it is very useful for children to take part in the household work. As far as I am concerned, I agree with the second opinion.

In the first place, children may have the sense of contribution when they take part in household tasks. After a child was born, the parents are always the part that gives, such as feeding, changing clothes, and bathing the baby. Others help children because they are too young to do these tasks. When they grow up, they will gradually have the ability to do something, such as washing clothes for themselves, cleaning the room for themselves. If they are required to do what they can do, after finishing their jobs and looking at the result of their jobs, such the clean clothes and the clean room, children will have a strong sense of contribution and success, which will help them form a good personal character.

In the second place, participating the household tasks will teach children how to cooperate with other people. For instance, When doing a house cleaning, one person cannot finish it all by oneself. Different tasks should be divided among several people. For example, dad cleans the windows, mom cleans the kitchen, boys clean the floor and girls decorate the wall. Gradually, children will get to know that they need to cooperate with others to make things done better and faster.

Topic 135 Should high school students wear uniforms?

I hate uniforms! It makes all the students look the same. When I am trying to find my friend from a group of student, I always make mistake because I cannot tell the difference among the girls who are all wearing the same clothes. Moreover, I am always nervous about my uniforms since I may not have another one to change into. The other one is still waiting to be washed or is still wet. After P. E., you cannot identify which coat is mine, so I just take one that looks like it. I am sure the coat I am wearing now is not the one I had first. That is my life with uniforms.

Because everyone is against it, my school revoked this rule. Then, we could wear everything we want to. But new problems came up. Everyone began to buy new, brand name, expensive clothes and the campus became a big stage in no time. At last, the uniforms came back to our lives.

Undoubtedly, everyone has the freedom to choose what to wear and, of course, everyone wants to make himself/herself good-looking. But when we are just students, study is our first important thing to do. Paying too much attention to attire can influence our study. Furthermore, we may spend too much money that is not earned by ourselves but come from our parents' hard working.

The reasons above cause more and more schools make a rule to forbid trendy dresses or make students wear uniforms. It is not a good way but an effective way to solve these problems.

If we want to get rid of uniforms forever, we must solve these problems by ourselves instead of the schools rule. We should earn school's trust by our behavior, then we can thoroughly say goodbye to uniforms!

Topic 135 **Should high school students wear uniforms?**

When asked about what to wear to school—uniforms or not, some people hold the opinion that to wear school uniforms is better than to wear other clothes one wants to in many ways. Others, however, stand on a very different ground. Personally, I prefer to wear school uniforms because it has more advantages.

There are numerous reasons for me to believe that wearing uniforms are better and I would now explain a few important ones. The main reason is that to wear school uniforms can make the students more concentrate on study. It can be given a concrete example that students go to a school that requires them wear their uniforms will surely have less trouble in picking clothes to wear every morning. And they will not pay their attention to the clothes others wear; this means they can be more concentrated on the study.

Another reason why I advocate the attitude of that wearing uniforms is better lies in the fact that the uniforms are specially designed for the students. I believe it suits for them very much and can do well to the students at school. On the contrary, some of the students do not know what is good for them, and will choose some clothes that do not suit them or even do harm to them. All these demonstrate the undeniable fact that to wear uniforms at school is better.

Of course, choosing to decide what to wear to school also has advantages to some extent, this enables the students to develop the habit of making choices all by themselves, that is to make decisions themselves. If all the factors are completed, the advantages of wearing uniforms carry more weight than that of not. From what we have discussed above, we may safely draw the conclusion that wearing uniforms at school is better.

Topic 135 Should high school students wear uniforms?

My high schools required us a few years ago to wear school uniforms. Somehow this requirement is not mandatory anymore, therefore only a couple of students have decided to wear the uniform from time to time. Other high schools in my town never required such things as a uniform, so the decision of the principal brought a lot of contradictory discussions.

In my opinion, the fact that this requirement did not last is a confirmation of the fact that it was not a good idea. First of all, I consider that what we wear expresses our personality. Our clothes tell a lot about the type of person we are, so an outfit established by others means a denial of expressing ourselves. It is also true that we cannot wear at school fancy clothes, like when we go out with our friends, for example. But even if some of us decide to wear extravagant clothes, I think this issue concerns only them. They establish an image of themselves and therefore they will be regarded as they wish to be regarded.

Teachers told us that we should be proud to wear the high school uniform when people recognize us on the streets, saying that we belong to the best high school in town. We were not exactly regarded as eminent students, especially by our colleagues from other schools. I believe that the way in which we behave and the way we think shows better what kind of an education we have than the fact that we are wearing gray clothes, which we do not even like. The schoolyard looked so strange when we were coming out from classes. All of us in dark uniforms, as if we were alike. We were not, and we should also show that to people surrounding us.

It's my belief that requiring high school uniforms is an unnecessary thing. A prestigious high school is not a high school who likes to show off with its students, but one who lets the students express themselves freely.

Topic 135 **Should high school students wear uniforms?**

It is a confusing question to decide whether to wear regulative school uniforms or not. As far as I am concerned, although school uniforms will not make everyone satisfied, the advantages of wearing school uniforms outnumber those of the opposite views.

The first and the most important function of school uniforms is let young students focus on studying, not diverting to compete with other classmates' clothes. If school uniforms do not exist, being easily impressible, children will pay much attention to what their friends and stars on TV wear to show fashionable, fancy and stylistic pattern. It is reasonable to make the young people wear uniform to prevent them from diversion of studying.

Furthermore, school uniforms save money for students' parents. Because of love, they hardly refuse to buy new clothes for their children even though they really do not need yet. The young consider little about money and have small resistance to the temptations of the fashionable T-shirts and jeans, and their parents usually spoil their children. So school uniforms can help students learn frugality, plainness and neatness are much more worthy than fashion.

The last but not the least reason for school uniform is to strength the spirits of students' organization and the obeying of regulations. That moral practice will benefit them to the preparation for future occupation and experience.

In short, school uniforms are in use of students' study distraction, frugality, and moral benefits. We can safely draw the conclusion that school uniforms are valuably recommended.

Topic 136 Is winning the most important aspect of playing a game?

To my way of thinking all the humanity is bit by bit losing the very important strain of enjoying life as a process not only gaining any profit. As it is happening with all life throughout, then it concerns the playing games as well. Of course some kind of award, at least winning, is very important to gain sense of complacency and self-confidence, but it should not be the main purpose of playing games. Therefore I strongly disagree with the opinion that playing game is fun only when you win. Here go my reasons:

First of all, the main purpose of the game is to enjoy the game as the process and through this process to communicate with other players you are playing with. This is extremely important both when you are keep playing with your family members, and with your friends. If playing with our family and friends were fun for us only when won, it would lose its main purpose of bringing joy of communicating with other people through the game; be it more serious games, for example Chess, or simple games with the ball. Therefore it is very important to teach people this kind of playing from early childhood.

Secondly, there exist games, especially popular in the western world, serious sport competitions, as basketball, tennis or football. In this case playing game brings joy only when it ends by winning, for they are supported by terms of money and recognition. Then, I think, games gain a strained meaning, because sometimes they more look like war actions, rather than competitive games. In this case is very important not to lose the human proprieties and game may be fascinating as well.

At the end I would say, that it is very important for people of different ages to learn to gain fun and joy from games without winning, just communicating and getting more acknowledge with other people through the game. Because, to my way of thinking, that is the main purpose of the game.

Topic 136 Is winning the most important aspect of playing a game?

The statement in the direction is a long-term consideration of many people including me. Many people will argue that playing a game is only fun when you win. I, however, after thinking about it on many occasions, decide to stand up against this view for the following reasons.

The first and the most important reason for my opposing the idea is that playing a game, no matter you win or lose, helps release a person from the heavy pressure, in most cases, resulted from intellectual activities. There is no better example than myself when I was trying so hard to enter the university. At that time, when I was too exhausted to memorize any single incident in the history book, a play of badminton would refill me with fresh energy to go back to my studies, though I hardly won any of these badminton games as my partner is an excellent player. Therefore, the biggest advantage of playing games lies in the fact that it helps people relaxed.

Another reason for my disagreement is that one will find out his or her capacity of making progress while playing a game. When learning a new game, if your opponent is a more mature player than you are, it is for sure that you will not win him or her at the beginning, but in the process of the game, if you are a conscientious player, you will definitely learn to grasp the basic skills of a certain game, which enable you to play better and better. Consequently, the awareness of your ability in learning new things is the best award you can find in game playing.

Therefore, I will conclude by saying that playing a game itself is worthwhile and to win or not to win is not a matter to concern since you could get rid of the feeling of exhaustion and confirm your confidence as a learning-capable being.

Topic 136 Is winning the most important aspect of playing a game?

Recently, many people argue as if it is a general truth that playing a game is fun only when you win. In various games and matches, the main aim of players from both sides seems to be winning. And winning is not only for the players themselves, but also for the honor of their team, and even for that of their nation. But to be frankly, I cannot agree with them. There are numerous reasons, and I would explore only a few primary ones here.

The main problem with this argument is that the real meaning of a game is to enjoy the process of the game; the result, whether it is win or lose, does not seem matter. Think of the original games of our ancestors, the goal is to show their love of sports, their physical strength and celebrating the hunting. And the true intention of their game is for relaxation and amusement. Another good example is that children enjoy playing games more than adults. When we watch children play, we can understand that they are more concentrate on the game itself, and do not care for the result. There are to young to realize the importance of winning the game, therefore they enjoy it more.

If the players play a game for winning, they will concentrate on scores too much, and forget to enjoy the game. In this society, everyone want to be winner, for they will not only win the honor, but also win fame, money, and so on. In the same way, the loser will lose everything. It seemed that playing a game become a way to get material comfort, but not fulfillment of spirit.

Furthermore, when players play a game for winning, they face the stress from the team, even for the nation, and they struggle to win. Sometimes, players do everything by fair means or foul in order to win. They may use illegal drugs, or bribe the judges. There are various scandals about athlete almost in every international game, and this thing become more and more serious. These are all because the results of games have been linked to money and the honor of a country.

General speaking, when you only want to win, you will lose the fun of playing a game. Taking into account of all these factors, we may reach the conclusion that, it is wiser to learn to enjoy playing without regard of the result of game.

Topic 137 Should high schools allow students to choose subjects?

There are lots of debates among parents, educators and students on the issue of whether or not to allow students to study the courses that students want to study. It seems to be reasonable to many people that allowing students to choose the course they want can inspire their learning interest and find their talents on certain subjects and pursue further development. But if we take a deeper consideration, it is not difficult to make the judgment that to ensure the students have a comprehensive knowledge domain is the main objective of high school education, therefore I disagree with the idea of allowing students to study any courses that they want to study.

As we all know, the main purpose of school education is to provide a systematic education to all students. In order to let students be educated in all aspects, the curriculums have to be researched and predefined by professional education institute. If we allow students to select course, we cannot guarantee all necessary courses to be covered in the regular class time. Moreover, both parents and educators believe that high school education shall provide each student a fundamental knowledge base that is essential to their future development in the society. It is the school's responsibility to enforce the rule and make sure that all the necessary knowledge is to be taught.

On the other hand, we may consider introducing some optional courses to the high school curriculums so the students can choose some of the courses within the limitation of a big syllabus. For example, for an art classes, the school can offer music and painting courses and each student can choose either one of them according to his or her personal interest. But this is not to say that the students should have the freedom to choose any course.

In conclusion, high school education is a standardized process in which major courses shall be predefined and we need to make sure students are educated in all necessary fields and build a foundation for the development after high school.

Topic 138 **Member vs. leader**

I agree with the statement that being a member of a group is far better than being leader of the same due to that an individual can adapt certain qualities. Major among them are compromising abilities, sincerity and doing work perfectly free from external pressures.

Firstly being a member of a team acquires the ability to compromise and to cooperate with other members. Both of which are very helpful for an individual to cope with future life and to develop strong characters. Teamwork by itself increases social skills and develops friendly attitude among teammates. Every member freely mingles with each other and shares his responsibility in times of need. For example if a co-worker falls sick, he is taken good care and other members will share upon his duty.

Secondly comes sincerity, a member in team is always under strict control and supervision of the leader. As a result of which he is very careful not to make mistakes and performs his tasks accurately and attentively. For example, if a member in the group has to come to work at 9. 00am, he comes there well before time and never gives chance to anyone to comment that he arrived late.

Finally comes the quality of work that is always done perfectly by a member because he is free from external pressures, unlike his team leader. Neither he need to worry about the outcome nor take the headaches of any failures in the future. So he does his best in doing work with complete satisfaction without worrying about the results. For example, many higher authorities and pressures of outcome of the game influence a captain in a baseball team. In doing so he may not perform up to the mark and may lose his concentration at the playground. On the other hand an ordinary player has no tensions and pressures and mostly he becomes the main person to win the game.

In order to build a strong character by acquiring qualities like compromising, sincerity, and doing work perfectly with free mind it is better to be a member in a group rather leading it.

Topic 138 **Member vs. leader**

According to my opinion, it is always better to be a leader than a follower. True leader show initiative. They take actions and they assume responsibilities. A leader makes a decision. Some followers may approve of the decision, others may complain about it. However, these followers all chose to follow, not to lead. They chose not to make a decision. That's how I am different. I am not a follower. I want to make decisions.

A good leader will not react to events, but will anticipate them. A leader will start a plan of action and then will persuade others to follow. For example, a class president at a local college may feel that the relationship between the community and the campus is not a good one. The citizens may feel that the college kids make too much noise on the street, litter public areas, and shop in other communities. A good class president will recognize that the community and the campus depend on one another. The president will ask the student body to keep noise down, help clean up the neighborhood, and work with businesses to attract students. A good leader takes the initiative.

Good leaders must be action-oriented. Having taken the initiative, they must see the job through. They have to take charge and lead the followers. They have to motivate and encourage the followers. The followers (in this example, the student body) must understand why good relations with the community are necessary. The followers must be persuaded to do something about it.

I enjoy taking the initiative, determining the direction, and being responsible for my actions. I do not want to suffer through other people's stupid decisions. If there are going to be stupid ways to do something, let them be mine. Would not you agree?

Topic 138 **Member vs. leader**

One of the most frequently confronted situations of modern life is to be included in a group as a member or to strive for the leadership of a group. A member will have to follow the leader's order, an argument goes, but he will feel less pressure, thanks to fewer responsibilities. I'm afraid I can hardly agree with this argument as far as it goes. For me, two advantages of the leadership stand out with great force.

Firstly, common senses lead us to the conclusion: a leader is the core of a group or an organization and has the supreme power in it. Winner of the competitive elections, a leader meanwhile wins the authority of dealing with the affairs within the group in his own way. Generally speaking, everyone will hope that his personal point of views can be adopted to solve certain problems. When it comes to members of a group, they may feel free to propose an extraordinary variety of suggestions. No matter how proper they may be, it depends on the leader to turn them into final decisions or just to deny it. A CEO, the head of a company, for example. No subordinate dare start a project or invest in a program without his permission. In contrast, the CEO will take risks in an unpredictable deal, providing he considers it worthwhile. Obviously, whether a leader or not would make a difference.

And secondly, a leader can make the best of his position to have his working abilities and social skills developed. Just recall our personal experiences, which will support my statement about the second advantage, a more important one. As we grow from children into teenagers, we are proud of organizing a football match or being the key figure of a game; as we leave adolescence behind and enter adult life, we are eager to play a vital role in campus activities or clubs. But why? The very reason is that we believe it wonderful opportunity to prepare ourselves for future careers by communicating with the people in and out of the group and conquering the difficulties facing the group. And so is the fact. An example is my uncle's success as a businessman. Enthusiastic about being the leader of any group he joined, say, monitor of his class, he was always more self-confident than his peers and his outstanding abilities in management won him good reputations.

I think that such a closer look at the subtle advantages of being a leader offers some startling surprises to those advocates of being a member of a group. Why do you still confine your attention to the temporary relaxed feeling of a member? Why not seek for the benefit in the long run as a leader? Please join us, and another prominent leader will probably come into being among us.

Topic 138 **Member vs. leader**

Both a leader and members play crucial roles in a team. However, being a leader asks for much more talent and special ability in dealing with challenges and different types of people. The truth is that very few people have these qualities. Therefore, I think for majority of people, being a member is better, for that would be the position where one can make the most contribution and make one's life worthwhile.

First of all, being a member does not mean being less significant in the success of a task. Often enough, people are amazed by the glory of a successful leader, who has to bear the extra pressure, responsibility and risks to achieve the supreme statue and to gain the power of authority. However, people overlook the vital contributions made by the group members and think them as less important. They also forget about the fact that the main body of a group is made up by members who is the main driving force that makes plans into reality. A captain of a ship is the leader who needs to give instruction on how he wants the ship to be driven. All other cruise members need to do their jobs well to ensure that the ship go into the right direction at suitable speed. Unlike most of the people would have argued that members just simply follow what have been told, I think members also have to think. It is only that they have to think specifically in the area of their job instead of think globally. Most people will work the best with a specific goal in the particular area that they are most familiar with.

Secondly, being a member gain no less sense of satisfaction than being a leader. This, of course, depends a lot on one's perspective of success. In my point of view, success means being able to make the best of one's ability and to have achieved the self-motivated goal. Being a member makes no less chance to be successful. In fact, most people will perform better in this less stressful state, compared to the highly pressured nature of a leader's work. Knowing that his accomplishment of the assigned task contribute to the overall success of the group, and the vital role he has played in supporting other members and the leader, one can appreciate the fruit of success.

Last but not least, being a member means more involvement with the actual process of the work and naturally leads to closer bond with other colleagues. Usually, after working closely together after a period of time in a project, a mutual understanding naturally develops between the members. This would take a leader great effort and maybe a long time to be regarded as member of the party. There is famous Chinese traditional saying that goes, "one cannot stand the cold for being up there." It is a well reflection of the loneliness to be a leader. On the other hand, one can be embedded in a family of coordinators who understand each other well and easily help and support each other.

All in all, besides the common opinion about more free time and more leisure lifestyle of being a member instead of leader, I think the above three points are strong enough to show that it is better to be a member for most of the people.

Topic 138 **Member vs. leader**

The question of which is better, being a member or the leader of a group, is a complex and controversial issue. Some people think that they would rather be members of a group than the leader of it, while others maintain an opposite view. As far as I am concerned the latter view carries more weight. Leadership is a difficult issue and requires lots of personal skills. I will try to express my position more clearly.

On one hand, leadership is a challenging and demanding task. Being a leader, you will not only be in the position of taking initiatives, but also have to develop plans and make decisions. Furthermore, it is up to you to carry out the group goals and plans and listen to suggestions from the group members. As a consequence, the group leader needs to spend a lot of time and energy on group affairs than the group members. Only in this way can the group achieve its every goal.

On the other hand, being a member of the group is obviously less challenging and less demanding. A lot of people are qualified and available as being group members; therefore you can find a replacement for most group members easily. Whereas the leader is much harder to replace: since his role is of more importance, and fewer people are well qualified for this position. For example, a few years ago, Margareta Ley, the owner and director of ESCADA, a famous cosmetics company died. Even today there is still a big hole in the company account due to the decreasing sales volume resulted from her absence. No one in the company was capable enough to fill her position.

From the point of view of a successful group, it is very important that every group member is cooperative and knows how to work as a team. One of the most important tasks of the group leader is to facilitate communications and cooperation among the group members.

To conclude, being a leader of a group is much more challenging and rewarding than being a member. Having a good leader is of vital importance for the group. One bad member may not make any change at all to the group, whereas a bad leader would ruin a group's success.

Topic 139 **What is the most important room in a house?**

Every room in a house plays a special role in our life. The living room mainly provides people with a place of entertainment, the dining room a place of having dinner, the storeroom a place of storing sundries, the study room the place of studying, and the bedroom a place of sleeping. In my opinion, among all these rooms, the bedroom is the most important room in a house. This point of view is based on the following reasons.

First of all, people commonly spend most of their life in bedrooms. Normal people spend 7-9 hours in the bedroom that is about one thirds of a whole day. If people pay enough attention to their bedroom, they will actually make most of their lifetime better. For example, if people have fresh air in their bedroom, that means they breathe fresh air in one third of their lifetime. As for other rooms, since people don not have to stay such a long time, their important are much less.

Secondly, bedrooms provide people a really private space. Different people have different tastes. In this private space, people can assign the environment as their will. They can decide the color of the wall, the arrangement of the furniture and the little decoration in their own bedrooms. Furthermore, if they want to be completely alone for thinking independently or just for quiet, staying in their own bedroom will be the best choice. This is another reason why a bedroom is the most important room of a house.

Lastly, good bedrooms can always help people have a good sleep which can make people recover from the tire gained from the daily work and well prepared for the following day. Suppose having not slept well for several days, people will be slow both in their thinking and action and they will even feel ill. On the contrary, with a good sleep, people will have a good mood and good energy. In the daytime, they will act effectively and they will probably do a good job. Thus their confidence will be increased. Therefore, bedrooms are the most important for it has big connection with the quality of the other time of people.

In conclusion, if you want to make most of your life time better, if you want to enjoy a really private space and if you want to get best prepared for the following days, give enough attention to your bedrooms. Bedrooms provide us the basic factors in our life. Therefore the bedroom is the most important one in a house.

Topic 139 **What is the most important room in a house?**

What do I consider the most important room in the house? Why is this room more important to me than any other rooms? As the questions pops up before me, so do the images of the various rooms in my house. I think that I consider the dining room to be the most important room of the house.

First of all, this is the room where all the members of the family sit down together, at least for dinner. This brings closeness among the various members of the family. It also gives each of the members an opportunity to relate his/her experiences during the day and share those of others. It is here where tensions die down when mother cracks a joke or dad relates a humorous incident of his job.

Secondly, this is where we feed and nourish ourselves. It serves as a point where you stop, even for a minute (like morning rush hours), and grab your bread and milk. The dining room serves as a showroom of the kitchen bringing the not-so-good looking vegetables appear mouth-watering. This is where you take your food normally.

Thirdly it is the room to which you turn too when a large number of relatives arrive. Set up some more chairs and you are ready to take care of all of them. Can you do this in the bedroom or the bedroom? Some will suggest outdoors as an alternative but do all people have the luxury of a lawn? And what if it's raining? Turn to the dining room!

In concluding, I would like to say that the dining room seems to be the most important of all rooms in the house. It is a nourishment point, an expansion unit and a family hub, all combined into one. I consider it as the server of the modern home, networking all aspects into one entity.

Topic 140 **Hand vs. machine**

From my point of view, there are many factors affecting whether to choose an item made by hand or by machine. The main factor to make a judgment is whether we use the item for our daily life or for collection and decoration purposes.

For items used in our daily life, the choices we make depend on the following factors: function, form, and price. Function is the most important thing for us. If a product is beautiful, but it is not able to perform the function, it can only be called a decoration, or a piece of garbage. For example, when we buy a TV, what we really care about first is the quality of the picture and sound, how many stations it can receive, and whether it can be connected easily to the VCR and DVD player at home. The second factor that affects our choice of a product for daily use is its form. Is the TV too big, too small, or too ugly? Will it fit into the living room? Will it be compatible with the colors of other appliances and the furniture? The third factor we may consider is the price. Even if we are very happy with the item, there is no meaning if we cannot afford it.

So, in our daily life, there is really no difference whether our clothes or furniture are made by hand or made by machine. It just doesn't matter as long as they can perform their function. For items for collection and decoration, it is a completely different story. Ancient tools and historical artifacts have more market and educational value than modern day massively produced products, and traditional handicrafts make good tourist souvenirs and beautiful decoration for the house. Therefore, when it comes to items for collection and decoration, I would definitely choose items made by hand, because they are just so special.

In conclusion, depending on different items and different uses, I will make different choices.

Topic 140 **Hand vs. machine**

Although products such as furniture or clothes made by hand are detailed and unique pieces, I consider that is better to buy items made by machines. The main reasons to do that are, price, and warranty, as well as standardized methods to manufacture them.

The more automatic a production line, the lower the cost. When we buy a made-by-hand pure wool suit, we are buying a product with both more quality and more suited for our specific needs. Nevertheless, such kind of suit is often quite expensive than a suit made in an automated manufacturing process. The same increase of price takes place with shoes, cars, sweaters, toys, or any other item built on a customized basis.

Another reason for me to choose an item generated by machines is the standard. I know when I buy a car from Ford Motor Company, that the parts of its engine compliant the requirements of Ford, and have less risk of failures caused by manufacturing mistakes. This is possible because most of the production phases were completed by machines such as assembling robots, sensors, and computers. On the other hand, a Rolls Royce car, despite the fact I do not have the money to buy one, is made by hand, and such piece of detailed and beautiful work probably might have little manufacture defects that automation avoids.

Finally, because of the standardized methods used to manufacture some item, producers can offer more extended warranties to their products. A three hundred dollars watch probably can work properly for over ten years, and the producer can offer a warranty longer than would offer a famous watch producer from Switzerland who makes all of his watches by hand.

Technology has extremely benefited our contemporary society. The use of machines on production processes increase quality, decrease prices, and continuously provides improvements to every product in the market. For that reason, I think that items made by machine are the best for me.

Topic 140 **Hand vs. machine**

The preference of machine-made clothes or hand-made clothes is a matter of one's personality. Some people who like clothes produced by machine argue that the clothes are much cheaper, and the machine work surely beat those handmade ones. On the contrast, people enthusiastic at handmade clothes hold the idea of "rare is good" and they also believe that handmade items bear more meaning in them such as love, concern and friendship. As far as I am concerned, I would stand by the side of handmade advocators and my reasons go as following.

First of all, I believe there are some advantages in machine-made clothes, the main of which is their availability. It saves you time and energy to buy a machine made clothes in a department store rather than make a cloth by yourself or your tailor. And low price is also an attractive merit. As machine made clothes take advantage of whole made and wholesale, the cost of which definitely much cheaper than that of a single tailored one.

In spite of the above advantages of the machine made clothes, however, I still prefer handmade clothes personally. Handmade clothes have particular patterns and designs that entirely tally with my own tastes. When wearing the handmade clothing which is designed by myself, I will never worry about running across a woman who wearing the same dress as me. My clothes will be the only one in the world, the thought comforts me most.

Furthermore, no wonder that handmade clothing is the fittest clothing to you because it is totally tailor made for yourself. Consequently it will make your figure look best and make your appearance more confident.

Finally, a handmade cloth could be the most precious gift to your parents or friends. The cloth will convey your love and concern to the gift receiver.

In brief, the advantages of a handmade cloth outweigh those of a machine made one so much that everyone could draw the conclusion that handmade clothes are better.

Topic 140 **Hand vs. machine**

There are many items that are either made by hand or by machine. For example, clothes are made both by hand and machine. My preference would be machine made clothing because the most merchants would carry it for sale during certain seasons and it is not as expensive. There may be one or two disadvantages to the clothes made by machine; however, I believe that there are for more advantages. The reasons for my view go as follows.

One of the minor disadvantages of a machine-made clothing is its quality. For instance, I would often purchase my clothing that is imported from Hong Kong or Korea, which has better quality than that made of my own country. In general, machine-made clothes are produced in large quantities according to season. When the season changes, another line of fashion will be on its way out for sale. Consequently, many businesses would not use higher-quality materials to produce its' line of clothing.

The main disadvantage of a machine-made clothing is the quality of the materials being used. But the advantages far out weight hand made clothing because clothes made by machines are produced faster. Due to the quicker production; people can have access to the latest styles and colors. For instance, swimsuits, pants, shirts, tops, etc... have different types of styles, colors, and cuts. Due to the seasonal trends, majority of the people does not worry about the quality of the clothes.

The second advantage of machine-made clothes is the price. Because these clothes are produced in larger numbers and the quality is lower, the pricing will also be lower than hand made clothes. Due to the mass production of machine-made clothes, merchants will be able to purchase a certain line of fashion in larger quantities. With larger quantities of same fashion around, the prices will also be cheaper. This will be a positive situation for the consumers, whom would like to spend as little as they can, but still wants to remain in fashion.)

Although I agree that there is a disadvantage to machine-made clothes, I feel that the advantages are more important. Machine-made clothes can bring the latest fashions from Japan and certain western countries. In addition, the price is lower. Therefore, in my opinion, these advantages play an important role in the consumers' decision to purchase clothes.

Topic 141 What do you want to change about your school?

Talking of making an important change in my school, I'd like to suggest that our education system put more emphasis on the development of learning skills and applications of theories into practice instead of simply learning knowledge from books. The proposal is based on the reasons as follows.

For one thing, overemphasis on academic learning poses a threat because of confusing the purpose of learning. As school credit is usually considered the major criteria of academic learning, in a credit-driven school, one may try hard to learn simply for learning's sake. In other words, college students tend to blindly cram their brains with numerous texts and formulas while do not have a clear idea of what they really want to learn, why they need to learn, not to mention how the things they are learning are useful to the reality. An example is way that common ESL students learn English: they may spend several years in reciting grammar rules, but can hardly utter an English word in front of a foreigner.

Another reason that causes me to make the suggestion is the requirement of today's ever-changing knowledge economy time. With the increasingly accelerated pace of information explosion, one can hardly depend on knowledge from books that he or she has learned at school. Mastering learning skills and knowing how to apply the skills into practice are becoming indispensable than ever before. A recent survey conducted by educators shows that most students in our country lack the ability of using tools and solving problems compared with their counterparts in the United States. This informs us to take a serious look at our book-knowledge based education pattern.

In sum, it's high time for us to give a touch on our education pattern concerning the narrowness of book-knowledge learning as well as the necessity of practical learning required by the contemporary world.

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Topic 142 What gift would you give to help a child develop?

Children's development plays a crucial role in building their physical and mental characteristics. It is known that children are able to absorb all necessary information provided by their parents and other adults. Their unlimited curiosity for discovering new interesting facts could help their development, especially in their early ages. We know that nothing could raise children's interest and attention as high as various gifts we presented to them. Hence, every gift for a child should contain particular purposes to help in child's development. In my opinion, a perfect gift for a child could be Lego toys.

I strongly believe that Lego, known for its impressive building sets, acclaimed and praised by pediatricians worldwide, has its versatile capabilities to help children develop creative, logical and imaginative skills gained during playing with this terrific invention. Children could create and construct many different objects, depending on their ideas and enthusiasm. They could spend hours and hours playing with this amazing toy, constructing from simple squares to intricate and complex objects such as electric automobiles, airplanes and spacecrafts.

The quite interesting fact of this toy is that parents could observe developing processes of their children in a short period of time. This advantageous aspect of Lego toys, in my opinion, could affect on significantly important increases of the children's development. Such increases of logical and organizing skills could be accomplished faster than those of children, who do not have these toys. As a result, this advantage could provide much better results in children's future school classes, especially in Algebra and Geometry.

Generally, toy-building sets, such as the already mentioned Lego, could effectively develop many important skills and characteristics, benefiting children's future abilities to think, organize and make correct decisions. Also, the most important fact is that children's development could be achieved significantly during playing time with Lego toys rather than doing perplexedly complicated exercises, resulting in a slow progression. And as a result, this perfect gift could bring development, fun and enhanced imagination to children and their parents.

Topic 142 What gift would you give to help a child develop?

People enjoy endless excitement and joy of receiving gifts ever since they are very young. As reading this topic, I recalled the sweet memories of my birthdays, a little girl waiting beside the table expecting her gift from dear parents. In turn, if I am a parent who is choosing a gift for my deeply beloved child, what gift shall I give to my little girl? Undoubtedly, I want my gift to be meaningful and helpful on my child's way of life that is long and awaiting. A book will be my best option since this chooses is testified by my own experience.

Books give little children wings of imagination. I remember my first favorite books were a series of cartoons called "Ddcat" in which a mighty cat comes from the world of future brings to a dumb little boy all the amazing inventions. I laughed for the funny endings caused by the boy's improper use of those inventions, and I cried for the separating of these two dearly friends, but I was mostly amazed by the wild imagination — the ability that was later revealed to be gained in my own writings.

Books are children's windows to the world. My own little, limited world was so much extended by books, which would take me to the North Pole of the Earth to visit the people who live in the world of ice, which would tell me the old tale from ancient time of how the beautiful princess found her love, which would show me the miracles of nature through the world of little ants. It was through books I first acknowledge such a world I live in.

Books teach children the principles of life. When I first cried for Snow White who was driven out into a wild forest by her evil stepmother, I learnt what was good and evil. When I went to my father to admit it was me who dropped the plate after reading the tale that children who lied would have long noses, I learnt that lying was a shameful deed. When I was touched by the wisdom and love in the book "The Greatest Salesman in he World", I learnt to pursuit the meaning of my life.

A good book can give children the access to the world of imagination, knowledge and truth. I believe that a book can contribute to a child's development much more than a soccer ball, a camera or an animal, which is convinced by my own benefits from books. A book, with your love and care, may be a gift of life for you loving child.



Topic 142 What gift would you give to help a child develop?

Perhaps it is the happiest time for children when they get a gift from others. When picking out presents for children, probably different people tend to choose different items. In my opinion, a gift can always contribute to a child's development no matter it is a camera, a soccer ball or a toy animal. However, as far as I am concerned, I would choose fairy books to help him or her develop.

Firstly, fairy books can help a child improve his or her mind and then learn to tell the right from the wrong. As we all know, fairy stories are all written from an imaginative perspective, which beautify the good and uglify the evil to the full. So through reading fairy books, children will definitely get to know whether a thing is good or not as well as what they should do if they are caught in the similar situations as what the stories put in the books. And I believe it will be more beneficial for them to learn a lesson from those vivid stories than just from the plain words of their parents or teachers.

Furthermore, fairy stories can stimulate a child's incentive to reading, which eventually will improve his or her communication skills. All knows it that the communication skills such as reading and writing ability are most important in our daily life. Excellent reading ability helps a child understand the reading materials better; in the meantime, superior writing ability helps a child be understood by others better. Meanwhile, the attractive plots described in the fairy stories will always make a child concentrate on the books for long. Therefore, it is obvious that the children's reading and writing ability will get improvement gradually then.

Altogether, fairy stories or fairy books not only can help children improve their minds, but also can help them better their communication skills. And such is right the reason that I would choose fairy books as a gift to a child.

Topic 143 **A long vacation vs. several short vacations**

It is a hot topic among educational institutions, parents and students themselves about what kind of vacation students should have. Some people want several short vacations, while some others would like to have one long vacation each year. If let me to choose, I prefer the latter for at least three reasons.

For the first reason, to make use of a long vacation we can do something that needs a long time to finish. For instance, traveling far to several different interesting places would be the favorite thing for many students with heavy daily study burden. However, it is completely impossible for students to do such things if time is limited. Perhaps some students need to learn some new knowledge that they are interested in as a hobby, such as going to a dancing class, this period of time just provides them the best chances.

For the second reason, with a long vacation, students might be able to find a relatively fixed part-time job to practice themselves using the knowledge they gained in class which is beneficial for students' future careers as well as saving some extra money for expenditures of the new academic term.

The last but not least, long vacation means that the teaching time is concentrated within a limited period that will make the study more efficient. Such example is that whenever we come back to school from holidays, it always takes us quite a long time to get use to the study environment, which reduces the effects of teaching. So, it is reasonable to arrange the class in a concentrated time.

All in all, from the analysis above, I hope that the government or education institutions can adopt one long vacation instead of several short ones each year.

Topic 143 A long vacation vs. several short vacations

If a student only has one vacation each year, even that is a long vacation, he or she will have to have a long boring school term after the vacation. I believe that students should have several short vacations throughout the year for several reasons.

The first reason is that several short vacations mean several short school terms. The schools can arrange all year's curricula in several short terms more clearly, more efficiently and more effectively. Every subject will have a clear start and end, and can be taught intensely. Otherwise, it will be very difficult to arrange so many subjects in one long term. Schools may have to split the long term to fit in different courses, or let all the subjects take turns in one week. That really confuses the students.

Another reason is that several short vacations are also good for parents to arrange. It's easy to deal with a short vacation than a long vacation. Parents can send their children to short term holiday camps, or just have them travel around. But it is almost impossible to let them do those activities throughout a long vacation. Needless to say, it's much easier to find a short time baby sitter.

Furthermore, several short school terms can help to keep students' interest in study. Every time when they return to schools after a vacation, they will be refreshed and willing to learn. On the other hand, a long school term will make students feel bored and exhausted.

On the other hand, a long vacation may have some benefits. For example, students can attend an after school like a summer school to learn some extra courses, or high school and college students can find a part-time job to make some extra money. Nevertheless, for all the reasons I mention above, only one vacation will make school life boring. So I support that students should have several short vacations throughout the year.

Topic 144 **A traditional house vs. a modern apartment**

Young people usually prefer living in a modern apartment building as they often take consideration of the fashionable things, while more experienced adults would rather live in a traditional house as they like the feel of family and the quiet atmosphere around the traditional house. For my part, I would like to live in a traditional house.

First of all, there must be a variety of old things in the traditional house, owing to many years it has passed by. In my opinion, every old thing has an old story. When you take an old book from the bookshelf which your grandfather has read, when you use the broom your grandmother ever used to clean the house, when you sit on a chair where your mother ever sat to make a sweater for you, I am sure you will feel very warm from the bottom of your heart.

Second, traditional house is often in a quiet district where you can obtain a good chance to relax yourself and think quietly after your work or study. After the temporary relation, you will probably have more energy to put into your job or study.

Third, since it is a traditional house, there must be a good neighborhood around it. If you are in some trouble, the neighbors would help you, and you will feel convenient and joyful living in the traditional house.

On the other hand, if you live in the modern apartment building, the relationship between your neighbor and you is so aloof that you certainly cannot find warm help as you do in the traditional house. Admittedly, living in a modern apartment building has a few positive factors, such as, it may be near your work place, you can save time and money on transportation, you would live closer to modern life, and so on. However, at the same time you will not feel the warmth of the people's relationship. So if we take a careful consideration, it is not difficult to get the conclusion: living in the traditional house is your sagacious choice!

Topic 144 **A traditional house vs. a modern apartment**

I know there are advantages to living in a modern apartment, but I'd prefer to live in a traditional house. My main reason is that I love traditional designs. They're graceful and warm and inviting. I think modern designs are very empty and sterile and not appealing. So, because of the way it looks, I'd choose a traditional house.

I recognize the fact that a modern apartment is going to be in much better shape. Being new probably means all the plumbing works, the roof is not going to leak, the windows are properly sealed, and the kitchen appliances are in working order. A traditional house cannot guarantee any of that. In fact, it's likely that things will break down or need replacement, simply because of age.

Still, if the appliances are old, so is the wood, and that's a big advantage as far as I am concerned. Very few new buildings have the kind of beautiful woods that were used years ago. It's something that cannot be copied.

Space is always important to me, too. I need a lot of room for my home office, my clothes, and to display all the knickknacks I have picked up in my travels. I also like to have interesting space. I do not want all the rooms and windows the same size or a boxy design. A modern apartment usually comes in one size and shape. A traditional house is going to have a variety of spaces where I can put a little table or a window seat. And it will have lots of room, from basement to attic. These are all good reasons for me to prefer living in a traditional house.

Some people love modern design, but it's not for me. The space and beauty of a traditional home are more important to me than having everything new and perfect.

Topic 145 **The role of advertisements**

The issue of the role of advertising in our lives is a very controversial one. Some people think that advertising encourages us to buy things that we really do not need, because they claim that advertisements have the power to influence on our purchasing behavior. Nevertheless, my point of view is that advertisements are incredible source of information about new products that may improve our lives.

First of all, these advertisements can help us to choose things easier and also save our time. For example, as a result of such an advertisement, a few years ago I bought very useful tool to lose my weight. The only thing that I needed to do was to attach it to any problem area of my body for twenty minutes a day. Thus I did not to have do heavy exercises to lose my weight. The additional advantage was that this tool also helped me save time for my favorite activities.

The second reason is that quite often advertisements tell us about new products that can save our money. Again as a result of such an advertisement I bought some special micro fiber cloths, which could help me to clean my apartment only by using water. Thanks to its specific characteristics and possibility of long-time usage, I do not need to buy any more different kinds of liquids or powders for house cleans. Therefore the advertisement of this kind of cloth saved my money.

Last but not least advertisements can tell us about new products, which bring us new ways to cook healthier food. Fore instance, after watching a television advertisement, a friend of mine bought a special pot, with which she can prepare meat and vegetables without using any water or oil. This pot uses only the natural hot steam to cook. Thus it helps to keep more vitamins and minerals in the food, and get rid of the fat.

In conclusion, advertisements of new products definitely improve our life, because they tell us about things that make our life easier, save our time and money, and even cook our food better.

Topic 145 Advertising

Advertisements, one of the symbols of the modern society, are prevailing in every part of the world. Widespread and influential, advertisements are capable of convincing people to purchase commodities that they do not need. Among various factors that contribute to the phenomenon is the temptation of seeming lower price, the influence of celebrities and, in some cases, the exaggerated functions of the products.

The foremost reason for the phenomenon is that hardly anyone is able to resist to the tempting low price, which is a trick played by the sly and shrewd merchants. For example, there are always so many products on sale that few of us are able to be sensible and rational enough not to be lured by the huge price tags with "sale" on them. As a matter of fact, the buyers are hooked by the seeming discount. By frenetic and irrational shopping, people would stock up piles of items that they actually will not be in need of in the foreseeable future or even for the rest of their lives.

Another subtle explanation rests on the fact that celebrities, who have been paid a considerable sum of money, play an important role in the effect of advertisements. Some famous stars are so influential that companies focus their attention on them and make the best use of their fame. As a result, a group of loyal fans would rush into stores and go into rapture if they are fortunate enough to possess one. Consequently, both the stars and the sellers benefit from the commercial game, regardless of what the consumers obtained.

The third convincing reason I would like to mention is that the exaggeration made in the advertisements by the merchants is also deceitful. It is, undoubtedly, confusing and puzzling for ordinary consumers to distinguish the unqualified ones from millions of products presented in front of them. In addition, a majority part of the merchants, some of whom are inadequate and inferior, are in the disguise of appealing appearances. Consequently, it is of no wonder that consumers would buy products preached to be perfect, a considerable number of them are nothing but a waste of money. Naturally, it is probably too reckless to maintain that advertising is a matter of cheating since some accompanying merits also come along with it, such as the aesthetic values.

However, the minor advantages will never prevent us from concluding that advertisements attract consumers to purchase useless products, because of their so called discount, the effect of celebrities and the boastful description.

Topic 146 **Outdoors vs. indoors**

Have you ever dived into a pool in the mountains? Have you ever jogged through the quiet forest? Have you ever enjoyed the sunshine on the afternoon beach? If you do not have such exciting experiences in your leisure time, you may sure lose something valuable that your life can offer. That is why I prefer to be outside than to be inside for my leisure activities.

At first, outdoor activities give me opportunities to touch the nature. I can remember how I was impressed by the beauty of the summit, which only successful climbers can see. Standing on the top of the mountain, I could even reach the blue sky. Outdoor leisure activities help us appreciate the sights of nature, which is not available in our ordinary routines, or indoor activities.

Secondly, outdoors activities are also beneficial for our health. Plenty of oxygen will refresh our brains. The Fresh air, the sunshine and the soft breeze are the basic elements that contribute to a good health. There is no doubt that the only way that we can access these elements is through outdoor activities. After all, no one in the world tend to refuse a strong body, therefore no one has a reason to refuse outdoor activities.

Leisure activities outdoors provide both the chance of appreciating nature and the most practical way to stay healthy. Those indoor activities cannot compare with them. So I prefer to do my leisure activities in the nature. I act outdoors, therefore I exist.

Topic 146 **Outdoors vs. indoors**

People would show different preference to indoor activities and outdoor activities. Some may be interested in spending their leisure time indoors, while others may be fond of the latter. As far as I am concerned, I would always prefer to be outside for my leisure activities.

In the first place, outdoor activities can provide me a pure natural environment in which I will feel more relaxed and refreshing. For example, I can always feel regenerated only after one-hour jogging along a quiet street, with the fresh cool air and wind around. Moreover, it is a real fun to travel and enjoy so many wonderful sightseeing in different places. During their vacation, most people would choose to travel to enjoy a period of leisure time so that they can refocus on their studies and businesses.

In the second place, participating in varied outdoor activities can help us increase knowledge through our own experience and widen our horizon. As a famous saying goes: to become wiser, you need to not only read ten thousand books but also you need to travel ten thousand miles. It is true when we go out we have the chance to meet different people and different things, which cannot happen if you stay indoor. We chat with people and exchange ideas, we visit many places and learn different cultures, all of which can let us know more about a true world.

In conclusion, I personally prefer outdoor activities to indoor ones not only because I can enjoy the relaxation and refreshment in the nature but also through participating in varied out activities, I gain valuable opportunities to convert theoretical knowledge from books into a kind of real experience.

Topic 147 **How should your school spend a gift of money?**

Our educational objective is not only to fill students with the knowledge, but also to improve their capacity and skills of analysis, which will benefit the students all their lifetime. So to achieve this ambitious objective, it is necessary that the school shall have all sorts of laboratories to facilitate various laboratory tests in the school. So naturally, when my school receives a gift of money, I think the best way for us to spend the money is to build basic laboratories for the students and teachers.

Firstly, our school is not well equipped with such a basic necessities. We have capable teachers and intelligent students in our school, which created a strong academic study atmosphere. But due to lack of necessary laboratories, the teaching is only limited in the class. Students learned a lot about the theory but no more practice, which detracts the understanding of students and affects building up of their capacity to apply the knowledge into practice. Therefore, the educational quality is questionable. This has impaired the fame of the school. Consequently, brain drainage is a big problem in the school. The excellent teachers and intelligent students are desperately looking for well-equipped schools for their teaching and studying. So to curtail the loss, it is the high time to invest the fund to build up all these necessities.

Secondly, to spend the money on establishing laboratories will benefit the school for good in the long run. Parents assess the school according to the educational facilities that the school possesses. Poor facilities will keep students away from the school. So from the point of view of attracting more students, building a first-class laboratory is the prime task of the school. Furthermore, the local education authority has also paid attention to the problem of poor educational facilities. If the situation maintains like that without any improving, I suspect our school will be closed down by the authorities.

Last but not at least, if our school use the money on building educational facilities, it will make the donators more comfortable. By building a new laboratory, I believe it can attract more donators.

In sum, to spend the gift fund to build up the laboratory is a wise choice, which not only can satisfy the students and teachers in the school, but also can make the parents and the donators happy.

Topic 148 **Does playing games teach us about life?**

Playing games plays a significant role in people's daily life. You can always see children playing soccer or basket ball in parks, and adult enjoy themselves with the bridge game in clubs. Game may become more and more complex as we grow up, but our enjoyment has never changed. It give us lots fun, meanwhile teach us about life.

First of all, playing games teaches us about the strategies which we can apply in our real life. In fact, most games' original ideas come from real life. For instance, Chess imitate the battles between two countries. During the game of chess, we need to analyze what situation we face, evaluate our assets, guess what our rivals would do in next steps and make the best choice from several possibilities. In real life, when we meet a challenge, we usually analysis the situation and estimate our ability and decide what to do next. Therefore, games are mirrors of real life.

Playing games also teaches us how to deal with other people. We learn about teamwork during the game, if the games are played in teams like soccer or basketball. Nobody can win the game by himself even though he is strong, and runs fast. Everybody should communicate with his co-players. Also, in real life, no one can survive without other people's help and cooperation. A man who gets along well with his co-workers is likely to be successful in his career.

Meanwhile, playing games also help us focus our mind and energy to reach the goal, and teach us to divide a difficult problem into several relatively smaller and easier tasks and solve them one by one. Playing games also teach us to adjust our plan when situation changes. Finding a good job is always not easy, especially during an economic downturn, as we are currently experiencing. At this moment, we may go to school to pursue a higher degree instead of job hunting. It is those games such as chess that teach us to adjust our strategies and pace in real life.

Life is not a game, but games surely teach us a lot about life.

Topic 149 **How would you use a free gift of land?**

A fazenda? A playground? Or a garden? How would you use the land that you have received to use as you wish? Obviously, the answers of different people would be diverse. As far as I am concerned, I would build the most advanced hospital on this imaginary land, for the following reasons.

Firstly, I think the health problem concerns everyone in the world, and then a high-class hospital can favor everyone, not just a portion. There is a common wish in the minds of all people that I can live healthier, and the hospital can meet this wish. Actually, we can live without banks, playgrounds, fazendas, and so on, but none of us can live without hospitals. To some degree, the hospital is the most important building for human being. Therefore, I will choose to build such an important building in my imaginary land.

Secondly, a high-class hospital can be a scientific center for researching advanced cures to some diseases which cannot be cured now. A few diseases, such as AIDS, cancers, and so on, have been torturing human beings for a long time. People die for them. They separate fathers from children, husbands from wives, friends from friends, brothers from sisters. They have made innumerable tragedies in the world. If I could, I would provide the most advanced hospital to the most outstanding doctors to find some therapies against those diseases. After that, there would be fewer pains in the world. What a wonderful world it would be.

Certainly, there can be more reasons to interpret my choice besides the two cited above, but they are not away from the central idea that my land should favor every people as much as possible. What in my land can fulfill this task? A hospital, of course.

Topic 149 **How would you use a free gift of land?**

If I have received some land to use as I wish, I would use this land to build a library. I like to use the following reasons to explain my choice.

The first and most important reason is that a library can bring plenty of knowledge to people. I remember the famous words that knowledge is power. Apparently, a library is the ideal place for people to attain knowledge. In a library, we can get all kinds of valuable information that we need, such as knowledge of geography, history, music and politics, and so on. We can imagine that it is so comfortable and enjoyable when we sit in a quiet library and immerse in the world of knowledge that we cherish.

Another equally important reason is that people can spend their spare time in a more meaningful way in a library. Now the life pace is faster and faster, so people, especially young people, like to go to see a movie, or to go to a disco party. In comparison with those places, I think that a library can provide a quiet and comfortable atmosphere for people who want to reduce the pressure of life.

Moving on to wider themes, a library is a good and safe place for children. Parents would rather let their children go to the library frequently than seeing their child spending lots of time in playing games or watching television. After all, a good book can provide children with enormous help to their future life.

From what has been discussed above, I may safely draw the conclusion that using this land to build the library for people will be my first choice.

Topic 149 **How would you use a free gift of land?**

Land is an invaluable asset and from time of immemorial it has been regarded with respect and perhaps envy by those who do not own any Land is equivalent to money in a tangible form and the potential of undeveloped land has to be seen then to be believed. When it is given in the form of a gift its value is infinite, because this is something that is stolid and eternal. I can let my imagination run riot when I see the various uses it can be put to. As it is a gift I am assuming that the land extends into a few acres.

I have always wanted to live in a sprawling house surrounded by gardens that are bathed in a riot of color. I need space to breathe and the matchbox apartments of the city make me claustrophobic. Long verandahs with porticos must open into rooms where light and air reign supreme. Luxurious bedrooms unmatched in size and decor, lounges which exemplify what they stand for, salons, elegant drawing rooms, a huge library, a study, studios to pursue my hobbies and spiral staircase which lead to the upper floors are what I envision as an abode.

That however is just the tangent of my dreams that touches the periphery of the land. Moving out towards the gardens I find I require even more space than I did for the interior. I need a couple of summerhouses and small private cottages to enable me to get away when I want. A conservatory filled with plants and unusual flowers, a huge swimming pool, a small gym and a spa would be fitting as extensions.

It would perhaps be selfish to utilize all the land for myself. I would like to do something for the people around me. A free reading room and a circulating library is something that many people do not have access to. This I would like to construct for them. To culminate it all I would like to use part of the land to construct a public park and playground for the kids who do not have any such facilities.

Dreams are nice and they sound even nicer when put into words. If I get a piece of land as a gift these dreams can become realities. I enrich my life style and those of others too by bringing joy and spreading it too. I wish it came true.

Topic 150 Is watching TV bad for children?

Everything consists of goodness and badness. People cannot evaluate something only by its benefit or only by its harmfulness. This is why I disagree with the point that watching television is bad for children. I admit that if the children do not watch TV properly, such as watching television excessively or seeing something unfit for them in TV, watching TV would do harm. However, watching TV can benefit children if they make good use of it. Watching TV can help children learn a lot of knowledge in an interesting way, can be a good entertainment for children, and can help children manage their time. In those senses, watching TV is not bad for children.

First of all, most TV programs for children are designed in an interesting way, which is easier for children to understand. For example, a lovely presenter tells a beautiful story with attractive frames on TV and at the same time she introduces some knowledge to her young audience. Thus, children can get knowledge by listening to a story.

Secondly, watching TV can be a different form of various entertainments from what children are accustomed to. Most children like animated cartoons that give them charming images. Some children may enjoy their time in children entertainment TV programs and may also enjoy watching other children performing in TV. Hence, watching TV is another entertainment for children.

Lastly, watching TV can help children make good use of their time. Many TV programs have their certain times. Children always know the show times of their favorite programs. If they want to watch these programs on time, they should complete other things by that time. In other words, children have to be quicker in their other activities. Thus, watching TV can be an active help when children plan their time.

I do admit that watching TV properly needs direction of the parents. Yet, we cannot doubt watching TV is good in some ways for its teaching knowledge to the children, for its entertaining the children and for its well effecting on children's time. I believe most adults today can still remember how their favorite children TV programs benefited them when they were children.

Topic 150 **Is watching TV bad for children?**

Television has increased the speed at which news travels and it can bring situations and images into our homes that previous generations would not have had the opportunity or regret to witness.

Television is commonly criticized as being bad for children that an important fact sometimes gets overlooked. In my personal opinion some types of television viewing may actually enhance children's intellectual development.

Television contains an enormous variety of forms and content. The effects of television viewing depend on program content and genre. According to a research, young children who spent a few hours a week watching educational programs such as Sesame Street, Mister Rogers' Neighborhood, Reading Rainbow, Captain Kangaroo, Mr. Wizard's World and 3-2-1 Contact had higher academic test scores 3 years later than those who didn't watch educational programs. On the other hand, children who watched many hours of entertainment programs and cartoons had lower test scores than those who watched fewer hours of such programs. Good educational programs can provide lasting benefits to children.

Children are most likely to become actively engaged with television content that is neither too easy nor too difficult to comprehend, that is, content that provides some challenges, but also allows a child to gain a sense of mastery. Just like our muscles, the brain gets stronger when it is used, and atrophies when it is not used. It seems that lack of use also leaves it vulnerable to degeneration later in life.

Of course, there are some bad sides for children to watch TV. Our TV-watching children increasingly view life as an entertainment extravaganza, in which they yearn to play a starring role, and here the nasty content of so much modern broadcasting comes into play. Besides, it is hard to watch an evening of TV without encountering unspeakable violence, whose perpetrators are celebrated. Again, the effects of television viewing depend on program content and genre, and parents should teach their children on choosing the right TV program to watch.

Topic 150 **Is watching TV bad for children?**

Television benefits children by broadening their world in allowing them to see and hear places and people that they would not otherwise see and hear, as a way to educate children in subject matter their parents do not understand through viewing educational programs, and providing parents with a cheap form of babysitting, which provides parents with added income that can be used on household expenses. This is not to say that television has no negative impact on children—it does—especially when there is no supervision of the content of what children watch. But the overwhelming impact is positive.

Firstly, television benefits children by broadening their world in allowing them to see and hear places and people that they would not otherwise see and hear. This is especially the case for children growing up in rural areas where the number of people they know through direct contact is small and one-dimensional, i.e., the people all look and think much the same way. Additionally, children in rural areas may not often have the opportunity to travel very far from where they were born. Consequently, television provides the wherewithal for children to launch themselves into a much wider world—even if it is in the realm of the mind and not the realm of the body. The sum total of this influence is to provide children with a base of knowledge that transcends their they can learn from their local area and increases the chance that individuals so exposed can be more appreciative of the differences that comprise our multicultural world.

Secondly, television benefits children by educating children in subject matter their parents do not understand through viewing educational programs. Television, through satellite and cable hookups, now is capable of providing countless educational programs in subject matter as varied as Cantonese to Apache; from using solar energy to wine making in a tub; from making your own bar-b-q to advanced algebra. Never before has so much knowledge been offered by so many expert teachers without one ever having to leave one's home.

Television benefits children by providing parents with a cheap form of babysitting, which provides parents with added income that can be used on household expenses. Well, we all here of the "irresponsible" babysitter-television. However, if monitored carefully, this "irresponsible" babysitter can provide far more information than a bored teenaged babysitter taking nips from parents' booze bottles and clipping her nails, while telling the kids to shut up as she makes her way to and from the refrigerator, making a serious dent in the family's food supply.

None of this argues that exposing children to television doesn't have a down side—it certainly can. For example, television can have serious sexual content and much violence, which could not be good for innocent young minds. But if properly monitored with a working filter, this can be dealt with.

Topic 150 **Is watching TV bad for children?**

With the advancement of technology, the greatest difference between children now and in the past is that children now enjoy more luxurious usage of newly invented technologies. Nowadays, children virtually superfluously spend their after-school life on watching television programs, playing computer games and Internet chatting apart from completing their necessary homework. Though it is well debatable on if it is good or bad for children to watch television, however, I do think that watching appropriate amount of television programs is good for the development of a child.

First of all, television programs provide an extensive amount of information and knowledge for children to learn on their own. It is a well-known fact that, with audio and visual aid in a learning process, a child will pick up knowledge more easily rather than broadly absorbing whatever his teacher regardless of his interests delivers. For instance, the Discover Channel provides services of introductions to science and technology in a very comprehensive manner. In fact, TV programs provided by this channel convey knowledge by giving many detailed examples from the actual world, instead of producing the theoretical models. Watching television programs of this kind does no harm to the children, but in fact, provides more comprehensive education to them.

Further more, watching television widens a child's mindset. In order for a child to grow into a matured adult, he needs to have an astute brain to adapt to the society. Television programs provide a lot of up-to-date news and information on current affairs. By watching television, one is able to receive information in a relatively shorter period of time. Empirically, a better-informed child is more likely to mature earlier than his peers. This also enables him to gain experiences for his future work as a member of the society.

However, in order for a child to grow in the right direction, appropriate programs have to be selected for him to watch. Otherwise, he may end up watching programs that may misguide him in this global world. This may be very dangerous to the physical and mental health of a child, as a little bit of misbehavior may cause great harm to the child. A good example is a TV drama series where a princess demonstrated some dangerous actions to the audience. Unfortunately, most audience of this series is children. Due to their lack of mature mindset and appropriate parental guidance, they ended up having followed the action of the actors, and getting themselves into serious injuries, and some even died. Hence, it is inevitable to see that watching television programs without appropriate guidance from parents may result in serious troubles for children.

The advancement of technology has allowed children now to have a more enjoyable life compared to their parents. At the same time, children are able to pick up knowledge from TV programs. However, parents need to pay close attention to the programs that their children watch to ensure that they are appropriate, so that their children will grow up healthily.

Topic 151 **What is the most important animal in your homeland?**

My homeland Taiwan is well known for its great and diverse possession of animals. However, among this great variety of animals, Taiwanese deer is the most important and unique animal. This beautiful animal saved my ancestors from starvation in their pioneer days, and what's more, it symbolizes the beauty of my homeland Taiwan.

When my ancestors first came to the Island of Taiwan, they had nothing except a few pieces of clothing and tools. As they were facing hunger, they caught the glimpse of a beautiful deer in silky beige fur and snow-white spots. Astonished at the sight of such a stunning creature, they appreciated God for bestowing them such a precious gift. The deer saved my ancestors from starvation, and hence, my people worship it as the gift from God. Were it not for the Taiwanese deer, my ancestors would not have survived, and I also would not be sitting here writing this essay.

Moreover, Taiwanese deer symbolizes the dazzling beauty of my homeland—the Taiwan Island. Taiwan has been famous for the name "Formosa" which means "beautiful" given by a Portuguese explorer in the 1600's. Its beauty is celebrated worldwide. Moreover, the Taiwanese deer is widely recognized as one of the most beautiful kinds of deer. It acquires silky fur of the color of cedar, covered by little white spots that spread out like stars in the sky. In addition, I can proudly and positively say the only place on the Earth where you can find a Taiwanese deer is the Taiwan Island. Every characteristic of the deer matches my beautiful homeland perfectly, and the deer is the best representative of my homeland.

Overall, although there are various animals living in my homeland, Taiwanese deer is the most important one as it was the food that saved my ancestors and it represents my homeland. Unfortunately, this incredible creature now is facing extinction. I genuinely hope by writing this essay my voice can be heard and people will try to save the Taiwanese deer.

Topic 152 **Why should forest be saved?**

Have you ever stopped other people when they were chopping down the trees? Have you ever felt painful when you saw a large piece of forests were burning down by the fire from the television? Have you ever shouted to those people when they were using woods to build their house? Maybe you have not. Just because human beings have not paid enough attention to those events, many parts of the world are losing the most important natural resources—forests. I strongly feel that it is important to save forests on the Earth. In the following discussion, I will reason and provide evidence to support my point of view.

In the first place, the most important reason to support my viewpoint is that the forest is the heart of the Earth. Just like the heart of a human being that contributes to all of the circulations in a person, the Earth needs its heart to keep working. Everyday, forests take in the carbon dioxide, and by combining with the water, they produce the basic sugar ~glucose~for other living creatures and also release the most important gas to the Earth's atmosphere—oxygen. Without food, a person can remain alive for 5-10 days; without water, a person can survive for 1-2 days; but without oxygen, no body can keep alive after 10 minutes. When people are destroying the forests, they are trying to ruin their own lives.

In the second place, forests are the significant resources to hold the soil. The roots of the trees stretch into the Earth and tightly grab the soil. However, after losing the forests, during rain time, the soil will be easily brought down. For example, because of the expansion of the city, a large piece of forest was destroyed in the rural area near my hometown. One day, one of my old friends went to that place to do a research. However, just as the bus arrived to the foot of a hill on which the entire forest had just been brought down, suddenly, it was starting to rain. The water brought down a large amount of soil and rushed down with unimaginable speed. Without a time for the bus driver to react, the bus was covered under the mud. The mud not only destroyed the bus, but also killed all the people in it. I cried when I heard the news, but no tears could bring my friend's life back.

To sum up, forests are the important natural resources for our human beings to preserve. In order to live a better life, every person needs to take care of the environment.

Topic 152 **Why should forest be saved?**

What is clear is that forests provide humans with many social, economic, and environmental benefits.

However, huge areas of the richest forests in the world have been cleared for wood fuel, timber products, agriculture, and cattle. If the current rate of deforestation, about 80,000 square kilometers per year, is kept, they may completely disappear by the year 2030. In Vietnam, our country, according to the ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, 1,054 forest fires occurred last year, destroying 15,370 hectares of forest and causing damage worth US \$ 9,8 million. Particularly, Upper U Minh, formerly a nature reserve, was mostly destroyed, just after being re-classified as a national park.

In fact, like Vietnam, the countries with the most tropical forests tend to be developing and overpopulated nations in the southern hemisphere. Due to poor economies, people resort to clearing the forest and planting crops in order to survive. Therefore, the most effective conservation policies are to relieve poverty and expand access to education, healthcare, and the most important, alternative livelihoods. Allocating forests to farms and plantations is also a sound one. In addition, stricter laws should be issued to reduce the destruction of forests, which is caused mostly by logging interests.

All in all, nowadays, one of the greatest concerns worldwide is the loss of natural resources, particularly forests. Many solutions have been suggested to save forests from destruction. However, many forests in the world remain unprotected.

Topic 152 **Why should forest be saved?**

Have you ever walked in a forest? How good it feels to breath the cool fresh air! Every one should admit that forests are very important to our life. But forests are disappearing quickly all around the world. We should act now to save them.

Forests are essential in protecting our land. In China the government used to encourage people to cut trees to meet the nation's demand of wood. Now people come to notice that with the decline of forest area large amount of soil is being washed off by rains and carried away by rivers. Without forests deserts expand quickly. They are now threatening the nation's limited agricultural land. Now the government begins to realize the importance of forests and is encouraging people to grow trees.

Forests are homes of many animals. Without forests animals cannot live. Many species extinct and many more such as pandas and tigers are endangered. The extinction of animals will be a big problem for our ecosystem and will even threaten our survival.

Forests also provide us with many useful things. Fresh air, Juicy fruits, meat, milk and rawhide are only a small part of what we gain from forests. How can we survive without these supplies?

From the reasons stated above it is clear that forests are one of the most important natural resources, so we should do our best to protect them.

Topic 153 **Is a zoo useful?**

Every city has one or more zoos. For a while, people think that a zoo is no useful purpose. If I were faced with this issue, I would think that zoos are useful. In the following discussion, I would like to reason and provide evidence to support my viewpoint.

The first reason is that zoos are often used as places to preserve the endangered species, such as the giant pandas and tigers. It is the conservation of animals that is the most important function of a zoo. With the advances in reproductive technologies, which assist in breeding captive animals, the zoo has become the most important place for animal conservation. Thanks to zoos, certain species of animals have been saved from extinction. Such animals are bred in captivity and when they are ready to survive in the wild, are reintroduced to their original habitat - in the rain forests of Brazil, for instance.

In the second place, children can obtain direct knowledge about a variety of animals by visiting zoos. They can see what a tiger is like, hear various sounds of birds and tell one animal from another. If there is no such a place, how can they make contact with animals? They may never have a chance to see various animals even though they learn many from books. When I was a little girl, I liked animals very much, especially birds. But I could not feed them for myself, so the zoo which was located near my home was the place I went to most frequent. And I really love these places.

Finally, a zoo is a place for fun. In fact, this is why it is so good at educating the public about the importance of conserving wildlife and the environment: it puts fun into education. Seeing pictures is not the same as seeing animals at close up. What makes visiting a zoo so enjoyable is our close contact with them. Therefore a zoo not only attracts many tourists from other countries, it also allows us to see, without having to leave home, big cats and exotic animals of distant countries.

In summary, I believe that a zoo has some useful purposes to serve: to preserve the endangered species, to educate the public about wildlife, and for its visitors to have fun. So a zoo of course is a useful place for us and we should have them.

Topic 154 **Is it right to ban smoking?**

Smoking is highly injurious to health and its adverse effects on passive smokers is well established. I, therefore, strongly favor the ban imposed in many public places and office buildings in various countries.

Smoking in public places and office buildings irritates and causes discomfort to non-smokers. Moreover, the passive smokers are also highly susceptible to various diseases like cancer and other ailments based on the findings of various researches. As public places and office buildings are open to all the people especially office workers, no individual has any right to knowingly cause harm/injury to others health.

The health problems caused due to smoking in public places/offices would result in additional financial burden on the exchequer to divert its resources in medical facilities to combat such problems. These avoidable health problems of the employees due to such few irresponsible smokers would result in increased absenteeism and economic loss to the companies. It is a common experience that offenders do not bother to follow any civic rule unless heavy penalty or strong rule is imposed by civic authority.

However, it would be prudent to provide some limited confined places in the public areas and in the office buildings exclusively for the smokers. These rooms are required to be adequately provided with proper devices for removing obnoxious gases like CO₂, SO₂, CO, NO₂ etc from the smoke before being released to atmosphere. A nominal fee might be charged from the smokers to discourage their smoking habits.

Finally, I strongly support such rule to impose ban on smoking in public places in order to avoid detrimental effects on the health of common people knowingly.

Topic 154 **Is it right to ban smoking?**

There is no doubt that we human beings are social animals. Living in a society, we certainly cannot do whatever we like. Putting ourselves in other people's shoes is a key principal to live in a social group. Smoking in public will violate this basic rule. Therefore, I believe that people should not allow smoking in public places and office buildings.

It is widely believed that smoking is bad for people's health. Since not everyone likes smoking, the rule banning on public smoking should be enforced. It goes without saying that public spaces such as office buildings, department stores or classrooms are places for everyone including adults and children. The second-hand smokes produced by smokers may be more harmful for the health of non-smokers according to the New England Medical Journal published several years ago.

Moreover, smoking is bad for the health of smokers. The rule might help the smokers who want to quit smoking. The rule can reduce the opportunities for smokers to smoke and gradually help chain smokers get rid of this bad habit. Smoking is a habit that is not easy to quit. The rule might use its legal power to assist the smokers to protect their own health.

Smoking in public spaces might be dangerous because there are a lot of careless smokers who forget to extinguish the sparkles after they smoke. The irresponsible action may lead to big fire and a great numbers of people will be hurt in the accident. Nevertheless, enforcing the rule can prevent the occurrence of accidents.

Some people might believe that it is their rights to smoke wherever they please. However, I would say that people who do not smoke have their rights not to inhale second-hand smokes and risk their life in dangerous places. Smokers still can smoke in their private places such as their bedrooms or living rooms as long as no other people's rights are not damaged. After all, the rule is used to protect the personal liberty of everyone.

Topic 155 What plant is important to the people in your country?

There are many kinds of plants in Thailand since Thailand's land and climate are very suitable for agriculture. As soon as I am asked what the most important plant in my country is, I undoubtedly point out that rice is the most necessary plant in Thailand for several important reasons that I will detail in this essay.

Firstly, rice is the main kind of food in Thailand. Even though there is much more food here such as noodle or fast food, almost all Thai people still eat rice as their daily traditional dish because we have eaten rice for a long time from our ancestral age to the present time. Moreover, rice still provides substantial energy to our bodies, so we have enough energy to do our activities everyday. For foreigners, they can have breakfast only with hams and eggs. For me, if I have breakfast with no rice, I feel that I am still hungry.

Secondly, as a agricultural country, exporting rice is the main part of my country's revenue. Even though we sell several kinds of plants to other countries, rice still makes much more income to us than others. In addition, Thailand ranks first in rice exports in the world. I cannot imagine if we do not have rice as the vital economic product, how could our country survive. I absolutely see the significance of rice because even USA also eagerly tries to develop and cultivate rice by itself in order to defeat Thailand.

Obviously, no other plants can replace rice in terms of the important food and the vital economic values at present and in the future, even though several kinds of plants are also cultivated here.

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Topic 156 Which country would you like to visit?

If I have the opportunity to visit a foreign country for two weeks, I would not hesitate to choose Gambia—a country lies in West Africa.

I began to notice this tiny country at the time I was reading the novel - *Roots*. It tells the story of an African-American family and a descendent finally found out his roots in Gambia. I was quite impressed by the characters, plots and interesting African life styles described in the novel. The book gives me a totally different view about Africa and it was my first time to take a close-up look into an individual African country.

In the past when I think of Africa I think of poverty, disease, and poor people, but never had I realized how amazing Gambia is until I finished reading this novel. They have lovely traditions. Every night, people from the same tribe would gather together. Adults could talk about things happened in the daytime while kids enjoy the stories told by the elders. Teenagers go hunting every day and compete for the most harvest. They never write down their history, but the historians would take the responsibility of passing it down by telling the following historians these huge historical events. Everybody leads a happy and serene life and live in harmony with the nature. I can imagine the vast grass, wavy lake, cheerful herds; it is a fairyland far from conflict, controversy and war.

How can anyone be not attracted by Gambia after knowing a little bit about it? If Pushkin had had the chance to visit this fascinating country, he would probably say "Oh, Gambia! How violently its name plucks at everyone's heart!"

I have been dreaming to visit Gambia and joining those villagers, sitting under a big tree, listening to the stories, hunting the animals and being enlightened by the historians. How I wished to go there!

Topic 157 **Computers vs. traditional schools**

With the knowledge explosion, many ways of education will be offered to students. In the future, students may choose to study at home by using technology such as computers or televisions, or choose to study at traditional schools. In my opinion, the former is a better choice.

In the first place, students can adopt an individualized and effective way of study by using high technology at home. Traditional schools make schedules according an average student's needs. Although they concern the demands of the majority, their schedules are not the just fit ones for many students. But using technology such as computers or televisions, a student can make the class schedule of his or her own, concerning personal ability, recent health condition and so on. In traditional schools, it is impossible that a teacher lecture you the same lesson twice at your own convenience. By using technology, students can review some lessons easily to get better understanding of some courses.

In the second place, studying at home by using technology can save much space and resources. The more quickly the society develops, the larger the quantity of people who need to go to school. The fast growing industry and service facilities have already made our world a crowded one. If we use traditional schools as we do now, the places that education facilities occupy, of course, will become another contributor to the crisis. On the contrary, studying at home by using technology will not only save more place, but also can release the places they are now occupying.

Maybe some people will put forward a doubtful point about studying at home using technology, that whether the students can be self-disciplined. I am sure that some measures can be taken about some of the disadvantages of learning at home. In conclusion, studying at home is an ideal choice. I hope we can see the new type of education in the near future.

Topic 157 **Computers vs. traditional schools**

Different persons will have different opinions about studying at home or studying at school. I will prefer to go to traditional schools because schools provide disciplined learning, experienced teachers and good facilities.

Although learning from computer and television is comfortable, it is void of disciplined learning environment provided by schools. Schools provide balanced atmosphere where each subject is given equal importance and is taught on a regular basis. This leads to an overall development of children. This discipline is absent in learning through computers and televisions at home. We are inclined to subjects which appeal us. Some children find art and crafts as interesting and devote most of their time in them, while others find math and science more interesting and avoid reading books on social sciences. This erratic and unbalanced reading inhibits overall development. Moreover children are too young to decide what they should learn or should not. At this situation schools prove to be beneficial where teachers know their students and give individual attentions to improve their skills.

Not everybody can afford the best equipments and technology available in the market. At this juncture schools provide best-experienced teachers and best facilities available. Schools invest on these instruments that students can use while it is difficult to buy each and every piece individually by yourself if you are learning at home. Also there are instances where students are required constant vigilance. For example while performing experiments in chemistry, which involves lots of dangerous chemicals, an experienced adult such as a teacher or a lab technician must be present. In these labs children are in habit of messing with things. They try to experiment mixing every solution they can find. So regular vigilance is required on each student. Similarly while doing dissection of rats in biology labs, from time-to-time guidance is required by students to understand and complete the experiments successfully. No television or computer can give such attention to each individual.

While studying at school, children get to know each other. They learn to work in team when they are given group assignment. They learn to distribute tasks among themselves according to their strong points and complete their tasks. Therefore a feeling of compassion is developed among them, which is not possible in television learning.

Keeping all these benefits in mind, I would like to go to a traditional school for my learning.

Topic 158 **Are celebrities opinions right?**

Everyone is entitled to have an opinion. When it comes to opinions, though, there's a difference between the majority of people and celebrities like actors, athletes, and rock stars. If you're an average person, only your family and friends care about your opinion. If you're famous, the whole world listens, or so it seems sometimes. Is this the way it should be? I do not think so.

We shouldn't pay attention to famous people's opinions just because of who they are. Being a famous basketball player doesn't make someone an expert on environmental issues. However, that basketball player has a better opportunity to be heard than most people do. If that player feels very strongly about an issue, he can use his fame to draw attention to it and get other people involved. That way they can see attention and needed dollars to that issue.

People who are rich put their money behind a cause. In the same way, famous people are using their most valuable asset. In their case, it's not money. It's their name recognition. Should people pay attention to what they think just because of who they are? I don't think so. I also do not think we should discount what they think just because of who they are. They have a right to their opinion. If their name draws people to that cause, all the better for the cause.

I think too often we categorize people and try to keep them in their place. Celebrities have brains and should be allowed to use them. When they're advocating a cause, their opinion should be just one of many factors we use to evaluate that cause.

Topic 158 **Are celebrities opinions right?**

In today's commercial world, companies try to sell as much of their product as possible. In this scenario they try all means and methods to peddle their wares. One of their methods is eliciting the good offices of famous personalities such as actors, athletes and rock stars to endorse their products. But why would they resort to this?

Past experience and research must have indicated that this kind of propaganda does bear fruit and people are lured by the opinions of such high fliers. In my opinion blindly believing and following such opinions would be quite foolhardy. It would be more feasible if one analyzed the opinion using their own common sense and judgment and made an informed decision. Hence we should not totally disregard the opinions of these personalities but listen and act upon them in a sensible and discerning fashion. But blind faith without verification would not be advisable.

Depending on the situation and the product being sold or the message being propagated, we could choose to follow or opinion or disregard the same. It would also depend on the credibility of the person endorsing the product. Even in the situation where the person is a big wig with an impeccable reputation I would suggest corroborating the authenticity of his/her claims before believing the same. After all, we are thinking individuals vested with the power of intelligence and the ability to choose.

We must not abuse this right. In some cases, we find famous people stating their opinions about a social cause... In this case, they are being used to spread more and more awareness and influence people into the bettering the society they live in. For example, we find some of the big shots in the entertainment industry rallying for AIDS awareness... yet others who encourage people to donate their organs after death. These are social messages for the betterment of the society. One might choose to listen to these messages and act upon the same, or disregard them... but at least one can give it a thought.

On the other hand, lets take another example of an issue that is still being hotly debated and is in the eye of a major controversy. It has recently been revealed that aerated drinks with coke as their basic ingredient contain harmful chemicals & pesticides. As soon as this rumor began doing the rounds, the relevant companies roped in the top-notch film & sports personalities getting them to endorse their product via equivocal statements about the safety of their product. The Health board took umbrage to this fact as it had not yet been fully proven that these drinks were indeed devoid of pesticides. They declared that the public was being intentionally misled. Thanks to the endorsements by the famous stars, most people, a lot amongst them being youngsters, disregarded the health warnings of the Health board and continued consumption of these drinks.

This example should lay bare the capricious nature of opinions of these famous personalities. They may be driven by financial and publicity seeking goals.

Hence in conclusion I would like to say that it is best to hear out the opinions of famous personalities, but finally make an intelligent and informed choice based upon our own experience, information and intelligence.

Topic 159 **What change should be remembered?**

The past 20th century has been a century of advances and developments: the emergence of the Internet and web technology. When I think of the 21st century, I am afraid to say that nothing but only bad come to my mind: overspreading epidemics, increasing religion conflicts and resources overusing.

The first thing that has hit my head is the overspreading diseases which modern medicine has nothing to overcome. For example, in Asia, there were hundreds of people who had a new disease called "SARS", a killer responsible for over one hundred people. In Hong Kong and Vietnam, the bird flu infected large numbers of poultry and caused children's death. In the United States, the west-Niles virus is feared among public since it transmits through mosquitoes. All of these diseases are new to human because of their rare genetic structure. Such diseases challenge modern medicine. However, there are only prevention but not cure.

Another thing that on everyday news is the religion-related terrorists activities. Even now the American-Iraq war has been tensioned in spite of the last's cease-fire. Some people say that this is a war between Christianity and Islamic, others insist that this a war aimed to oil power. As a result, innocent children and the public are sacrificed for those so-called "cause", meaning justice or security. It is hard for me to understand that how much human being have involved from animals, if we can only use force in this high technology time.

The last but not least thing that occurs to me is the concern of natural resources. Despite the fact that we are running out of available natural resources such as clean water, oil, and natural gas, our life is becoming more and more convenient, which means we will consume more energy than ever. This is also a vital problem for human's existing.

For the three factors I have mentioned above, I believe that there are some changes in this century, although I doubt whether those changes will lead us to happier future than now.

Topic 159 **What change should be remembered?**

Which invention was the greatest invention of the 20th century has been discussed many times. Different people have different views. Some think the greatest invention was television; some think it should be cars. But as far as I am concerned, the greatest invention of the 20th century would be computers. The reasons for my opinion are as follows.

First of all, computers save a great deal of efforts people spend on calculating. Before computers were invented, people had to calculate manually. Sometimes it took scientists weeks, even months to have a result. Of course, they might make mistakes during their calculation. That affected the accuracy of data. But with the help of computers, people are freed from heavy calculation. It only takes seconds to have a result which used to take weeks in the past.

Second, computers can simulate different environments that cannot be created in real life. In the science research, sometimes scientist need to have a simulation environment to improve their theories or as a basis of further research. Without computers it's difficult to have accurate and reliable results. But computers can make everything easy. Just input programs and data everything will be done.

The reason I think is becoming more and more important nowadays. That is computer is the way of access to the Internet. The Internet was developed based on the local area network (LAN) of computers. Today, the Internet has become the fastest developing medium in the world. You can find almost everything you need on the Internet, communicate with friends, read news, watch movies, listen to music etc. But you must do all the above things on a computer. Cannot log in the Internet means behind times today.

Although many other inventions of the 20th century brought great convenience to human or changed people's lives, computers have the most valuable contribution to human, and it will have much more contribution in the future.

Topic 160 **Complain in writing vs. complain in person**

I would actually prefer not to complain at all, and in cases where it is really necessary to do so, I would most likely complain by phone.

Although, in order to stay within the topic let us compare two given possibilities; complaining in writing and complaining in person.

Complaining in person enables us to interact personally with a real person who represent the company where we purchased a product from. This method of complaining definitely gives certain advantages as opposed to complaining in writing. For instance, one can always ask to speak with a manager if he would find a clerk's answer not good enough. And this approach also enables us to take the reason of complaining with us and actually demonstrate to the manufacturer or seller what is the actual problem is.

On the other hand, complaining in writing has its own advantages and could serve as a very powerful tool to a sophisticated complainer who knows how to fight for his rights. Firstly, words written on paper could serve as a latter proof in court, if, of course, the dispute would go that far. Also in some cases the company we purchased a product from may not have live representatives available in your region, and therefore, complaining in writing could save you unnecessary long trip. Finally writing a letter with complains could save you a lot of aggravation that you always risk to get by complaining in person.

I personally prefer to complain as less as possible, although if I had to choose from two forms of complaining, I would choose to do it in writing.

Topic 161 Why people remember their gifts?

I have never met a person who does not enjoy receiving gifts or presents. In my opinion, the reason is that it makes us feel special and loved. Sometimes we appreciate more the attention of the person who gives us a present than the present itself. However, definite gifts mean much more than others; they have a great value for us and they become precious pieces of our memories.

There are many celebrations in one's lifetime when he receives presents - birthdays, anniversaries or any other happy occasions. Some of them he remembers as more special and important than others. Why is so?

One hand the reason could be that the present means something really significant. It may also be truly expensive. Moreover, the gift could be unique and invaluable for the one who has received it.

On the other hand we remember some gifts as special ones because they have been given to us as a sign of endless love and care. Furthermore, they could be given as signs of appreciation and respect. Sometimes even the trivial present given from somebody really special could become a treasure. What is more - it could be remembered as one of the most special gifts that we have ever received. In other cases some presents are thought to be special because they are given as a surprise without any occasion and remind us that we are still truly loved or not forgotten.

I consider that the answer to the question, why people remember special gifts or presents that they have received, is absolutely simple. It is because they are... special. No matter what the reason is, every one I know remembers his or her special presents and gifts.

I remember mine. And I am sure, dear reader, that you remember yours, too.

Topic 162 **Do stars deserve high salary?**

Everyone needs money to support his family and enjoy life. I believe that is one of the most important reasons why people go to work. While an average person just earns basic salary, some famous athletes and entertainers earn millions of dollars every year. Why is that so? Do these people deserve such high salaries?

Before answering these questions, let me ask you another question, where did your salaries come from? From our employers. Right! Those famous athletes and entertainers made a lot of money for their own employers. Because their skills and achievements on some specific sports or entertainments, other people would like to pay money to watch them playing games or acting in movies. This is part of the nature of human beings. From this aspect, they earned what they got. They deserve what they earned.

In addition, usually those athletes and movie stars have some special talents in a certain area. Athletes are experts at some specific sports such as baseball, basketball, football and so on. Movie stars are good at performance art. Average people cannot reach that level, no matter how hard they try. People who watch their games or movies can obtain happy experiences and enjoyments, which can enrich people's life and benefit people's health. Without sports and movies, our life would be much boring and less pleasant.

Furthermore, those famous people sacrifice something to get what they have. For example, almost all athletes suffer from injuries because of heavy trainings and physical competitions to win the games. Movie stars have to face the fact that the average people are not only interested in their movies, but also interested in their personal lives. This is also integral part of human beings.

Do not be jealous of those famous athletes or entertainers, although we all admire the millions of dollars they made. They have talents, they made us happy and they sacrificed something, either injury or privacy. They earned their own paycheck.

Topic 163 The importance of reading and writing

For ages, reading and writing has been vital aids to the intellectual, emotional and spiritual growth of mankind. With rapid changes in the society and scientific advancement of human race over the decades, the necessity and importance of reading and writing has increased remarkably. It has become a pivotal skill a person should learn to be successful.

Several reasons account for the lesser importance of reading and writing in the past. Firstly, education was restricted to certain sections of the society and not everyone benefited from its advantages. Only the learned few enjoyed intellectual satisfaction. Knowledge was not shared freely due to lack of proper means of communication, thus preventing many from realizing the benefits of education and learning. Secondly, technology was not so advanced in the past. Hence the general pace of life was slower than it is now and people did not feel the need to keep themselves abreast of affairs around them. In other words, the need did not arise for mass awareness and participation in efforts for intellectual enlightenment through reading and writing. Nevertheless, writing was a more popular than reading since it was the most common means of communication - in the form of letters.

However, at present the scenario has changed considerably. Innovation and change are integral parts of life. Now advancement in technology marks the day. To cope up with the rapidly evolving new ideas and concepts, reading has become more important now than ever before. Invention of high-tech gadgets and state-of-the-art information systems in areas of communication, transport and general business demands more awareness about contemporary events and changes. With advancement in technology, man's eagerness to succeed has increased. Consequently the realization has dawned on him that such dreams can be materialized through intellectual advancement - a feat possible only through self-reading and personal research. With the invention of computer has commenced an age of electronic communication and online commerce.

Although writing letters has decreased considerably with the advent of electronic mail, it will take some time to make our varied businesses paperless. Thus though reduced, people still do some writing, wither in forms of documents, memorandums, business contracts or research papers. Education has made people more aware of his potential and reading and writing has become instrumental to man's success in today's competitive world.

Topic 164 **What do you do for good health?**

'Health is wealth' is very much true. One must try hard to remain healthy. If we are healthy, we can easily fight with other problems of life. But if we are unhealthy our most of life will go in fighting with health problems. It eventually leads us to failure.

People do many different things to remain healthy. Some go for a healthy diet, other recommend exercise, and the rest thinks that health awareness is important. But in my view one must not think and act only on one aspect. People must go for a healthy diet, exercise and health awareness.

A healthy diet is very important for one to remain healthy. People must take care of their diet. Diet should be balanced. Nowadays Americans are facing a very big problem of obesity. This is due to their unhealthy diet. Most American used to eat in fast-food restaurants. Obesity leads to many health problems like heart attack, blood pressure, cholesterol problem. Fat people can work less and with less efficiency. I sometime eat food for my tongue's taste too. But most of time I stick to my balance diet which contain fruits, green vegetable, and juices. I always take care not to intake more oily food or sugary food. Sticking to healthy diet put me in great shape and healthy life.

Exercise is also important. Nowadays people make lots of excuses for not do exercise. Some have time problem, some have physical problem, some have space problem. But I think these all are excuses. One can find little tome for his or her self for healthy life. Everybody nowadays is busy but taking few minutes out of this busy schedule make lots of difference. I personally prefer Yoga. Yoga not only gives physical exercise but also mental relaxation. Meditation is my favorite. This helps me in concentrating in my work as well as relaxing out of this stress full life. Few minutes of exercise can make lot difference.

Health awareness is a factor why people are living more. Nowadays life span of people is increased. People are living longer. This is because of health awareness. Regular medical checkup, clean -tidy life style, nutritious foods are few examples. Previously people eat what they found. But nowadays people read ingredients of food product as well as how many vitamins it contains. I personally select food product according to my needs of vitamins, minerals etc. I also schedule appointment with my physician once in a six month. And also take care of go to dentist once in three months. In total I would love to remain healthy and for that I'll work what ever it takes. I also urge other people to stick healthy lifestyle by taking healthy food, exercise and regular medical checkup. I believe in 'prevention is better than cure.'

Topic 165 What is one thing to improve your community?

Volunteering a few hours each week to some community activity is an important way of investing in the future of our society. I chose to spend my time working with elementary school children helping them to learn to read. Developing good reading skills will help these students keep up with their classmates, open new worlds to them, and help them succeed in life.

Students who are not good readers cannot keep up with their studies. They will not understand the lessons; they will come to school unprepared; they will not be able to perform. By learning to read, students will be on equal footing with their classmates. They will be active participants in class.

Books on different lifestyles, occupations, cultures, or governments will open new doors to students. Students who cannot read will only know what they see around them. Students who can read will be able to travel to new worlds and experience new ideas without ever leaving their classrooms.

Today, a person who cannot read is severely handicapped. A non-reader will have to work at the most menial jobs. Readers, especially good readers, have the whole universe open to them. They will have the possibility to learn any job that interests them.

By volunteering to help an elementary school child learn to read, I am helping him or her not only today, but also for the rest of his or her life. I am helping them keep pace with their peers and explore the world and themselves through books.

Topic 166 **What events make a person an adult?**

The difference between children and adults are very easy to tell from their physical outlooks: children are small, weak, have a poor judgment, and have to depend on adults. On the contrary, adults are big, strong, and more independent. Every child will grow up to become an adult. What events make a person an adult? In my personal opinion, there are a lot of events that mark the turning point for a person to become adult.

In many countries, when a child becomes eighteen years old, he or she legally becomes an adult. There will be a big celebration and many best wishes from relatives and friends; the young person may also have a great longing for a bright future in his adult life. He may move out from his parents' house and live alone; he may start dating and doing activities which only adults can do, such as going to a pub.

Graduation from college is another big turning point for a person to become adult. In college the young person may rely fully or partially on his parents for financial support, but after he graduates, he must find a job for himself, and live on his own. Graduating from college and joining the work force can also make a person an adult.

Marriage is also a big event to a person. Once become husband or wife, the young person starts to take care of others, and take responsibility for the family. Once the young person becomes a parent, he or she should also take care of the baby.

I believe that getting married and have children is the most important event that turns a person into an adult. Only after one gets married, does he or she take on the responsibility to the family and the society.

Topic 166 **What events make a person an adult?**

People recognize a difference between children and adults. There are usually some certain experiences or ceremonies that make a person an adult. Some children are in a rush to become adults and it seems to be running away from it. The child can make others believe him as an adult, by acting like one.

In most countries attaining puberty is a big step toward becoming an adult, therefore many people celebrate it. For Moslems, puberty is very important, because from that point of time the child must say his prayers. Age is another important thing for adults to accept a child as an adult. That is way we celebrate our birthdays, reaching a certain age that might differ in different countries, but it usually is the same age as a child can vote.

There are many events that help a child act more like an adult. For example, working and earning money is a good way for those how to become adults sooner. It gives the child confidence to be independent. For example being able to leave their parents and stay on their own can make a difference. And of course being ready to accept responsibility changes the opinion of others about a child.

So there are many ways to that even when a child dose not want to become an adult will be known as one, sooner o later. And for sure for dose how are in a hurry there are lots of ways that they can prove to adults that they deserve being one earlier than they are expected to be.

Topic 166 What events make a person an adult?

What are the differences between children and adults? After a short while staying with a couple of children and adults, one may discover the answer in several aspects such as the language skills, the analyzing skills and the ability to get along with other people. Obviously an adult acts much better in solving problems and working with other people than a child does. But what events make a person an adult? As far as I am concerned, two main events are vital to the process of growing up: the experience of education and the experience of social activities.

Firstly, the most remarkable differences between children and adults are the language skills and the analyzing skills. Education is the most efficient channel to help children develop all these abilities. In grammar lessons, children have the opportunity to master the rules of language gradually until they are able to understand the ideas of others completely and can fully express themselves. Through training in the lessons of reading comprehension, they learn to grasp the main idea, the structure and the organization of an article effectively, which enables them to absorb knowledge through reading in the rest of their lives. Also, the lessons in sciences like mathematics and logics contribute much to sharpen their ability of analysis. This ability is potentially a powerful device in solving all kinds of problems not only in their future careers but also their daily lives as adults.

On the other hand, to get along well with other people is a highly required skill for an adult. Children often encounter obstacles with their friends in occasions like distribution of toys. They frequently show insufficient care about others and lack the strategy of compromise. Such poor performances will be improved only by continual social activities during which children will gain the precious idea of team spirit and learn how to cooperate with each other step by step, until eventually they become competent group members, which is an essential demand of adults.

Taking into account all the descriptions above, with the two major experiences, as in education and in social activities, children would turn into qualified social members, namely adults.

Topic 167 **Should the school purchase computers or books?**

The problem that whether school should choose to buy books or computers can be controversial nowadays because people often think that computers can replace books soon. However, I would like to be on the side of people who suggest that schools should books instead of computers. There are several reasons of it and I will discuss two main causes.

First, even though students can access the information they want more easily, they often recognize that most of the information in computers is apt to be inaccurate. Due to the fact that many people send their information by the Internet or email in order to get their own interests such as money and fame, in this case, their information are often distorted and biased.

Second, students who study their special area cannot get a deep and wide knowledge through computers because the knowledge from computers is inclined to be shallow and introductory. If possible, students have to print them out to study with long time and write something related on it.

School's essential purpose, I believe, is getting student to have a deep and wide knowledge to prepare for their future lives in society. In this perspective, books are more suitable to achieve this quintessence duty of schools than computers. Therefore schools should choose to buy books.

Topic 168 **Why study abroad?**

Nowadays, more and more students choose to attend schools or universities outside their home countries. Then why studying abroad is so attractive to people even though it often means greater expense and more difficulties? Because those students are bound to benefit considerably from their foreign study experience.

The modern world needs people to have comprehensive knowledge and experiences. The world is no longer a separated one in which each part can afford to be totally independent. The communication and interchange in fields of culture, business, finance and other human activities are so unprecedentedly frequent and vigorous that the general or specific knowledge of other members of the global village turns to be most important to the prosperity of countries, or the success of peoples. This kind of knowledge is usually better achieved if pursued abroad.

Furthermore, foreign experiences improve one's willpower and ability of adjusting to a new environment, and one's capability to overcome various hardships and setbacks. Young people are considered aggressive and ambitious. Their success is not based on comfort or easiness, but on their incessant painstakingly efforts and their never-ending willingness to surpass themselves. In a foreign country they are confronted with greater challenges, more unsteadiness and less help from their families and friends. All these undoubtedly lead to an independent, self-supporting, resourceful person who will also be sympathetic and generous to other people around.

With these advantages, we may conclude that the foreign study experience enlarges a student's view of the world, as well as improves one's personality and character, which will guarantee a more splendid future in his life and career.

Topic 168 **Why study abroad?**

Recently, the rush of studying abroad has been gaining its popularity at an amazing rate. More and more parents have sent their children to western countries. Is it a benediction or a malediction? In my view of point, I suppose that the pros of studying abroad overweigh the cons.

Admittedly, we cannot ignore that studying abroad has its drawbacks. For one thing, every year those who have been studying in western countries have to spend approximately 15,000 US\$ for tuition fees which are out of budget of average families. Moreover, We have to face the barrier of communication because of the dissimilar lifestyle and teaching means adopted by the western universities, which does engender many student involved in disoriented rather than adapt to the local life.

Nevertheless, another side of coin of studying abroad is definitely exciting. Firstly, most of western universities, equipped with best facilities and well-educated professional team, can help students to have easy access to the latest knowledge of this society. It will undoubtedly dedicate to students to enhance their knowledge of technology and serve their homeland when they return to their home countries.

Furthermore, a degree acquired in a western university that are recognized by major countries, along with excellent foreign language skills, undeniably would guarantee a promising position in a joint venture company, which, to some extent, means high income and social status.

Last but by not least, living abroad for years, we may experience a totally different life in contacting with people from different cultural backgrounds. Therefore we will have a chance to establish our individual networks that will promote our business in the future.

To sum up, after all factors being taken into consideration, we might come to a conclusion that the advantages of studying abroad surpass its disadvantages. Albeit it may cause some difficulties to students, which can be overcome by arduous work, studying overseas will reward those people a brilliant future.

Topic 169 **Why is music important to many people?**

Obviously music has inspired a seemingly endless stream of fantastic productions such as CD, MTV, broadcasting, concerts and so on, which we just cannot live without. Today music is not just something for fun at all. It springs out general human feelings, needs and desires at every level.

Music can bring us information about cultures, history, science, and religion all over the world. It is like the vase that can collect every little dew in every corner in the world and then pure it to irrigate people's hearts and allow people to understand each other better regardless of different languages, ages, and races.

Music provides an opportunity to reduce stress and help us walk fearlessly towards difficulties. "Never give up never give in. There can be miracles when you believe through hope is fragile it is hard to kill." In this rush world it is inevitably that we sometimes feel so tired and frustrated and even are going to lose our hope. When our favorite tunes start playing filled with magic and power, they are like the catalyst to refresh our heart and to enable us to think on the right track. In stead of beaten by adversities, we can feel so optimistic that we will continue being the truth seekers and rule our domain whatever how hard it is.

Answered without hesitation, music is an exploration of our deepest feelings and motivations and one of the greatest of human treasure. Not only is it hard to measure how much those musicians' masterpieces bring into our society but also it is also difficult to imagine how long they will continue to influence us. In conclusion, as music can function as the roll to bring the world peace and beauty, and bring people happiness and enjoyment, it is self-evident that music is so important to us.

Topic 169 Why is music important to many people?

Music plays a very important role in our life. We can almost hear music anywhere. Different music serves different functions in our life. Why is music important to many people? The reasons are presented below.

Music is a very important form of art. Like other arts, music is ubiquitous and has become a part of our life. The whole lifetime of most people is accompanied by music. A baby falls in sleep in the music of a lullaby; a young student may learn to play a musical instrument and listen to music from the radio, TV and a Walkman. There is music for birthdays, for weddings, for Christmas, and for New Year's Day. There is music for every single occasion in our life.

We are surrounded by various kinds of music since we were born and music has become an integral part of our life. Interesting enough, music often serves as an important part to other art forms, such as music in dancing, drama and movies. As a matter of fact, many famous music pieces come from dancing and movies, such as the theme from "Love Story".

Music is part of the history. The history of music is almost as long as the history of human civilizations. Music from old times has become the great culture heritage to us. One of the examples is classic music of Beethoven and Tchaikovsky. People enjoy their music from generation to generation.

Listening to music is one of the most popular forms of entertainment. There are so many kinds of music that can suit tastes of different people. Young people like pop music and Rock-and-Roll and older people may enjoy classical music and opera. Whether we are happy or sad, there will always be music that we can listen to.

People can express their feelings and emotions through music. Lovers often play soft love songs to show their love and devotion to each other.

For the reasons presented above, we can see how important music is to our life. It is hard to imagine a history without music, and a life without music.

Topic 169 Why is music important to many people?

"Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast."

English literature is full of references of music. Literatures of different eras reflect the likes, dislikes and nature of people belonging to that era. If you read music-related phrases or poems of any era, you will find that these phrases or poems reflect the same reasons people listened to music years back, as they do today.

Music is, and has always been a part of mankind. Walk into any IT company today, and you will see people working with their headphones on. Stroll into the reception of any Multinational company, you will be greeted with a pleasant music playing at a low volume from the speakers. Most people say that music helps them work better and creates a relaxing ambience. Any great occasion is incomplete without music. Be it Valentine's Day, friendship day, someone's birthday, or a party. On Valentine's Day, love songs hit the top charts; special cassettes are compiled as valentine day's specials. On parties and birthdays, people like to celebrate with loud music.

Can you imagine any type of dance without music? Dance steps are created according to the rhythm and beats of different types of music. Operas, plays and musicals all revolve around music. While watching different dance forms and musicals, you also enjoy the music that is a part of it.

You will find that music is your best companion. If you are feeling low, there will be peppy songs to cheer you. If you are in a philosophical mood there will be different types of music to add to your reflective mood. Different people have different preferences towards music during different moods.

There is an endless variety of music available - instrumental, blues, jazz, rock, pop, reggae and lots more. Every type of music has a different impact on people. Some people prefer to begin their day with soft instrumental music. Some prefer hard rock playing in their cars as they drive to work. Different people like to end their day listening to different types of music.

So, music is an inherent part of human life. Even nature has it's own music. Bird's chirping in the morning, water gushing down rivers, and breeze blowing through trees are all a part of nature's own music. Life without music would be still and meaningless. That's the reason people listen to music for different reasons and at different times.

Topic 170 Why are groups or organizations important to people?

Human beings are social animals. One cannot live a good life, if totally without others. Although people sometimes may prefer staying alone to think and do their things, generally, they have to join social activities. Obviously, group activities are an important part of people's lives.

Since the ancient times, people learned to live together. Compared with the cruel natural environment, human beings seemed too weak and helpless. Wild animals posed a threat to their lives all the time. If, instead of fighting with the severe nature together, by living alone, few could be successful to survive. People at that time had to take part in-group activities.

Even in today's modern society, with the help of highly developed science and technology, people do not need to struggle for survive and life becomes no longer as dangerous and hard as before, group activities are still a necessary in many aspects. In my opinion the following are some important arguments.

First, group activities help people to reach their goals. As we all know, one piece of chopstick is easy to be broken, but when ten pieces of chopstick are bound together, it will be a tough job to break them. Suppose building a house, one person may spend years to finish, but when groups of people take part in, the building will be accomplished more quickly.

Besides, group activities can help people when difficulties arise. It is hard to imagine when a person, who never joins in group activities, suddenly got sick, what he will feel if nobody comes to help and take care of him.

The most important of all, group activities make life more colorful. This can be testified in our daily life. It is fantastic to take part in signing, dancing, or traveling groups, after tight-stringed workdays. But all this activities will lose their attractions and meaning if done by a person alone. Suppose a very sociable person may be surrounded by applause and respect. Absolutely this will boost up his self-confidence, and therefore makes his life more enjoyable.

Group activities have already become an indispensable part of people's life. So how can you shun other people? Go out and meet them!

Topic 169 **Melodic Memories**

For as long as I can remember I have loved listening to music. Whether I am simply walking to the store or going on a trip around the world, I would need to take my discman. In fact, I would rather have my discman than my toothbrush. Music allows me to escape from reality, alter my mood, and even remember events through association.

During a year away from home, I might have the need to mentally escape from one thing or another. If, for example, I had an extremely bad day due to losing my wallet or suffering some sort of injury, I could use my discman as medicine. Merely put on the headphones and let the righteous reggae of Bob Marley ease my pain. Music can make us forget about our current circumstances, even if only for a few minutes. This reason alone would make me want to bring my discman over anything else.

Closely related to music's ability to make people forget, is its ability to alter moods. I can imagine that during my year away from home, I might feel some form of homesickness. It is inevitable for all travellers, let alone teenage ones such as myself. If it ever happened to me, I could simply put in a CD that reminds me of home and let it wash away my worries. Music can make me go from sad to happy and angry to relaxed. In this respect, Music is better than any drug on the planet.

Finally, I can also use music as a tool to remember certain events during my year away from home. If I was in Paris, for instance, and I wanted to really remember what it was like to walk down the Champs Elysee, I could listen to a song by NOFX conveniently entitled Champs Elysee. Then every time I listened to this song in the future, I would remember what it was like to be there. This can also work with totally unrelated songs. A song can help you remember a certain trip or time just like the smell of bacon sizzling can cause you to remember waking up when you were little. Music can be a valuable memory aid.

If I had to spend a whole year away from home I would not have to think very hard about what I would want to take as my additional item. My discman is my best friend, my long-term memory, and my anti-depressant. I could not live without music.

Topic 171 What one thing would you take for a trip?

Whenever I prepare for a long trip, I remember that there is always one thing which I will remind myself to take with me every single time, that is a photo of my whole family, with my mom and dad and me in it. I know that one will be enough for me, and I tell myself at the bottom of my heart that this one photo will be my best companion through the entire trip. It constantly brings me back the warm feeling of home and it helps me overcome those difficulties on my way.

Wherever I go, one family photo always tends to provide me the familiar feeling of home and a sense of belonging. For any person, especially a sensitive girl like me, the biggest enemy is nothing but loneliness and fear. Immersed by that wordless isolation and fear of the brand-new environment you have to deal with. There are no friends by your sides to talk to and there is no one or place you can rely on. What do you need the most at this moment? I may say a photo of your family, of all your very dearest family members in it, your mom, dad and your brothers and sisters. They are the biggest comfort one can feel so directly and immediately. Their sincere smiles and their soft and emotional eye-expressions soon remind you again that familiar feeling of home and the power to assure you that no matter where you are, you are not a rambler in this cold world and you are not all alone by yourself, you belong to them and to that home.

Also, a family photo helps one get through one's difficulties when they are on a trip. What do we think of the most when we are in trouble or in those tough situations that we have to deal with? Is it not our own families? What are we longing to see and hear the most? Is it not their loving faces and their caring words? Well, why not take a look at your photo in hand when they are not around at those particular moments? For it has an incredibly invisible power which can restore your inspiration and your faith at that very instant when your eyes make contact with your mom and dad. You feel as if you can see through their eyes and hear their genuine suggestions.

Relief you from that desperate loneliness and comfort you when without anyone around but those hardest times come into life; that is what a family photo can do—forever be a very best companion of you on your way of that endless trip...

Topic 171 **What one thing would you take for a trip?**

When you see a beautiful view of rising sun, when you see a spectacular waterfall, when you enjoy the moment you travel with your friends, at this time, what do you especially want? I believe the answer is a camera. It is also what I would take in addition to clothing and personal care items when I plan to have a long trip.

The main reason for taking a camera is that a camera will record everything that happens during a trip. If you see a beautiful scenery, you can take a picture of it. If you meet a humorous and nice person on the way, you can have someone taken a picture for you and the new friend. If you meet a girl you fall in love in the trip, why not ask your friend to take a picture when you give a rose to her? Let's imagine how disappointed it is if you do not have a camera with you at that time.

Another reason is that each picture is a memory. Maybe a person will take many trips in his life, if you take many pictures in each trip, you will find it is just like a novel about your own life. When you are old, you will always recall many things that happened long before. At that time, you will take out the albums and look at them with happy tears. You also can find how you loved the life and what a pleasant life that god gave you.

Above the two reasons, you can find it is very important to take a camera with your trip. And that is my choice when I am preparing for a trip.

Topic 171 What one thing would you take for a trip?

If there were just one other thing I could take with me on a trip, it would most probably have to be my copy of Hitchhiker's *Guide to the Galaxy*, my favorite novel by Douglas Adams.

This might seem to be a strange choice to many people, most of whom would generally prefer instead, to take something of more practical value, like a cell-phone or a camera. I however, do have reasons for my decision.

For one thing, I am a book-worm. I adore reading books, and cannot imagine a world without them. Books relieve boredom, dissipation, and listlessness. To me, books are the perfect antidote to counter depression and loneliness, feelings that one is bound to experience if one is going to stay away from home for such a long period. The Hitchhikers *Guide to the Galaxy* is a book that is calculated to enliven any mood, and any situation.

Another reason for my choice is that a trip generally entails a lot of traveling. I am not excessively fond of traveling, but I happen to be one of those people who can read while traveling, and so find it a most delightful way to spend journeys that otherwise tend to be rather tedious. The book has made bearable many a boring journey in the past and I anticipate that it will stand me in good stead during this trip too.

The hitchhiker's guide to the Galaxy has been my favorite book for a long time now. I have read it several times, and look forward to reading it again and again. It has brought laughter and humor into my life, and I cannot remember a page in the book that I did not enjoy. It has been an admirable travel companion to me in the past, and I would definitely take it with me on my trip for the simple reason that it is one of my most prized possessions.

Topic 171 A picture

If I were supposed to leave my home for one year, I will take surely with me, besides clothing and personal care items, the picture of my girlfriend.

I will take my girlfriend's picture with me, mainly because she is the most important person in my life. Also to be able to see her all days and finally to remember that there is something important to return my home.

My girlfriend is the love of my life. During all the time I have spent with her, I have realized that she is the only woman I want to be for the rest of my life. She brings me both peace and security. Furthermore she gives me a reason to keep enjoying this party called "the life." No matter how, I will always try to be with her. That is why, carrying a picture of her can be a way to see her during all this long year. I could see her anytime I wanted to, no matter what time it is. In the mornings I would receive all her blessing thoughts just by looking to the picture. This would give me the strength to start the day with happiness. In the afternoons I could buy some food and eat in front of her to feel that we are eating together. Finally during the nights I could talk to the picture, pretending that she is there in the same place with me, and tell her all the experiences I got through the day, so that would help me to go to the bed not feeling alone but full of peace.

The picture would help me to remember that there is someone in other place who loves me and who cares about me. It would remind me that I have her to support me and give me all the confidence I need to be a better man in my life. In conclusion, If I have to choose one thing to take with me in a one year trip, that will be without a doubt my girlfriend's picture. Basically I would feel that she is with me all the time, I would remember that someone else loves me and that I love her too, and finally the picture would bring me the strength and will to be a better person and return eagerly to my home.

Topic 172 **How can schools help new students with their problems?**

Students always face problems when they move to a new school. It might take a long time for them to get familiar with the new neighborhood and the new environment. And it is undoubtedly the responsibility of the schools to help them out.

The most urgent task is to settle the newcomers down and make them acquainted with the neighborhood. In some public schools, the school-owned apartment is far from adequate, therefore the schools may do something to help the students find apartments, as well as provide them with temporary accommodations. There is also little time for students to learn where the laundry, the post office, the supermarket, etc., are. Thus, it is helpful and convenient of the school to provide information as above for the new students.

Students do study. So it is also important for new students to be familiar with the academic stuffs of the new school. I believe it is the academic departments' responsibility to provide the students with such information. Introductory seminars help students be aware of how do the faculties to in their research work such that they can choose their research field and advisor rationally.

What is more, it is also necessary for the newcomers to be fully involved with the traditions of the new school. It is well known than different schools have different traditions, and these traditions should be a precious experience of the students. Then it is always reasonable that the schools provide some opportunities, for instance, holding lectures.

To sum up, the schools may take various measures to help the new students become acquainted with their new neighborhood, and to give the new students adequate information about the school, for example, academic information and traditions. These make the students familiar with the new schools as soon as possible.

Topic 173 **Does borrowing money from friends harm friendship?**

It is claimed that developing a real friendship is a long and complicated process. Maybe the reason is that firstly people have to know each other very well. And after that they begin to trust each other and to prove themselves as real friends.

Unfortunately, it is as difficult to develop a friendship, as it is easy to ruin one. One of the things that can test friendship is borrowing money from a friend. I do agree that sometimes it could harm or damage the friendship. Money can destroy almost everything, in fact. Borrowing and lending money can be considered as signs of mutual trust. And if the money is not given back in time or not given back at all it will embarrass both parties. Thus series of misunderstandings begin which could actually ruin the friendship.

Borrowing money is often comprehended as a simple act of help and favor. But when the faith in the reliability of a friend is lost it will harm and damage the friendship for sure.

Friendship resembles a contract between two people, although its rules remain unwritten. And when one of the friends does not play by the rules the other one simply quits the game called friendship. The result is a bitter recollection from a damaged friendship. In conclusion-we have a few real friends in our lifetime and it would be a shame to lose some of them because of such banal problem as money. In my opinion, money does not worth as much as our friends do. And if we cause harm to any of them and if we ruin something so important and invaluable as real friendship because of money, it will be one of the biggest mistakes in our lives.

So let's be wiser and never make a friend go because of money.

Topic 173 **To borrow or not to borrow**

"Keep your friendship and business relationship separate." This statement is very popular. There are many people who have personal experience that proves this point. A dollar sign often symbolizes greediness, envy and even crime. That is why many people avoid involving money into their friendship. They try to keep them separate.

We can find the reason for this separation if we take a closer look at human existence. An individual has to choose between physical and mental sides of his life all the time. Almost in every religion he is presented as a creature comprised by two parts: one of them is spiritual and good, and the other one is materialistic, and therefore, bad. It is extremely hard to choose once and forever which part of yourself you devote your life to; we usually try to manoeuvre between them. I think that we can stop being afraid of keeping money and friendship closer to each other, and even benefit from merging them.

I personally never had a bad experience with involving money into my friendship. I never borrow money from people, but I have no problem with lending money to my friends. They always return it on time, and I never have to remind them about it. I am also sure that if I have to borrow money from them they will never refuse to lend it to me. Maybe it indicates that they are my real friends. In this case we can see that money can be litmus paper of friendship. I know my friends for many years and I am certain that nothing can break us up: neither money nor other circumstances. If I decide to start my own business I will do it with my friend, because he will not deceive me or steal anything from me.

On the basis of this personal experience of mine I can deduce that money does not spoil friendship; they just indicate the worst parts of our souls - the materialistic parts. Money helps us understand who considers them as a source of living, and who worships it. If my conclusion is right I recommend that everybody involve money into friendship - this way you can find out who your real friend is.

Topic 173 **Money and friendship**

Friendship is the most beautiful thing in the whole wide world. Money, on the other hand, is the most essential thing in the whole wide world. So, while dealing with these two very important and sensitive things, one has to be very careful. Before giving my opinion about the topic, I would like to discuss with you some of the reasons which can harm the friendship and some which do not harm friendship.

Friendship is a relationship based on give and take. So, as long as there is both give and take, I don't think there would be any fear of harming the friendship. Some things to be kept in mind while borrowing money are- 1. Borrow money from a friend who is financially stable and doesn't mind sharing some bucks with you. 2. Return the money before deadline, even earlier if possible. 3. Do not make borrowing a habit. If these things are followed any good friend will be happy to help and the relationship will also be not hurt. After all, a friend in need is a friend indeed.

Some of the things that may hurt the friendship are- 1. Choosing a wrong friend to borrow money. Some people do not like lending money to anyone. Such people will lend the money if a friend asks for it. But then, they become very nosey and keep nagging the friend asking him to pay back. This attitude is very unhealthy for a good friendship. 2. Making borrowing a habit. There are some people who make borrowing a habit. It is ok to borrow money once or twice or when there is real need for money. If borrowing keeps continuing, it becomes very annoying and thus harm friendship, because, too much is always too bad. 3. Not returning the money on time. It is possible that you lend money to a friend because he was in need of money. As a good friend it is his responsibility to return the money as promised, because you may be having some other plans and be counting on that money. So delay in paying back (especially when the donor is in need), can be harmful to friendship.

Life is like a turning wheel. What goes up should come down. So we can never say when we could be in need of money and friends. So I think we should help real friends who are in need of money. We can also borrow money from good friends, but be careful in choosing the correct friend and keep up the trust.

As far as my opinion about the topic goes, I think borrowing money can ruin a good friendship. There are friends who say that nothing can come in-between them and they would do anything for friendship. But such ideas are only good in stories. In real world, money is a very important factor and can influence any kind of person. So chances of hurting a relationship is very high. I think "Friendship is like a golden chain. Once broken, can be mend again. But the scar still remains". So it is not worth to take a chance with the "highly influential money" and ruin an otherwise long-lasting friendship.

Topic 174 **How is your generation different from your parents'?**

Everybody talks about a conflict between generations. This is a well-known expression, used as an explanation for misunderstandings between people of different ages. Although sometimes this is an excuse for not recognizing who is wrong or right, it is certain that every generation of people is different in important ways.

Even though everybody probably thinks this way, the differences between my generation and my parents' generation are striking. The technological progress is a certain cause for these differences. My parents did not have access to information as teenagers nowadays have. Television, for example, was a luxury that not many people could have afforded, and even if they could, the television programs were very poor. I remember my mother mentioning how eager they were to watch TV series like "Samantha" or "The Giants' Planet." Those films seem so trivial these days.

Another important difference between our generations is caused by the type of political power that governed the country. My parents grew up under a communist regime whose main characteristic was censure. This censure prohibited them to speak up their mind in public. Strict rules must have been obeyed; otherwise they could have been seriously punished. Nowadays, we live in a democratic environment that cannot possibly be compared with the pressure of a communist government. This means that people are encouraged to think for themselves and not to fear to express their true opinion. Of course, this leads sometimes to violent acts from people who misunderstand the role of the democracy.

Differences between generations have always existed and it is natural for them to exist. Progress leads to differences of opinions and points of view. It is true that my generation and my parents' generation are different, but this does not mean that one is significantly better than the other one. I think we all should remember that before starting to judge one another.

Topic 175 Should students do some of the talking on classes?

There is a growing public concern over education methods, and the speaker in the title above advocates that education will be truly effective only when it is specifically designed to meet the individual needs and interests of each student. By contrast, some people may argue that the traditional teacher-centered way is more suitable for education. On balance, I would like to side with the former opinion.

First of all, the traditional teacher-centered education ignores the individual needs and interests of each student, which proves counterproductive. For centuries, we place too much emphasis on the importance of teachers in education, and take it for granted that it is the teachers' duty to determine what and how to teach, meanwhile, the students should accept what are provided to them. But recent study committed by many experts of psychology and education reveals that this traditional single-side education method has low efficiency, because this way of teaching puts students in almost a passive position. As our society progresses every minute, old concept of education should be transformed, from teacher-centered to student-centered, which will help to achieve more quickly and effective teaching and learning.

As a matter of fact, only earnest communication and interactions lead to better effects of study, and they should base on the acknowledgment of the differences from one student to another. Since teaching is a process full of interaction, a mutual understand helps teachers to adjust the way of teaching and to let students represent their reactions at the same time. Furthermore, every student is a unique individual. They may differ from each other in regards to reading, writing, comprehension, etc. Consequently, when teaching the classes, a teacher takes diversity of students into account is more likely to pass knowledge to students than a teacher who ignores the difference.

In addition, student-centered education can most effectively involve individual student in the learning process. When student-centered education is introduced, students will feel that they are be focused on, which may help them to participate in the learning process, and this proactive condition will contribute to effective learning. Not only do the students benefit from this method, teachers will soon discover that teaching is becoming a joyful thing, not dull any longer. Another reason to advocate student-centered education is the relationship between students and teachers, or learning and teaching, which was considered two separate things, are in fact two sides of a coin. Once the harmony between these two things is established, effective education will become reality.

However, when we suggest student-centered method, winking at students' unreasonable desired would only result in chaos in education. Like any method else, student-centered education may also have some side effects, if we do not make some rules to control students' behavior, teaching will a tough job and leaning will like playing games. Since these images are not supposed, appropriate management should be introduced with student-centered education.

In sum, it is very likely that people will never be able to come to the same conclusion on this controversial issue due to their different experiences and conflicting values, public awareness of the various dimensions of the issue discussed in the above argument will certainly contribute to the thorough understanding of the problem. Though different views exist, I insist than student-centered education with effective management will enrich our education.

Topic 176 **What holiday would you create?**

If I could create a new holiday, it would be a holiday that honors the freedom and progress of the Afghan women. I would established the holiday to multiply efforts of the Feminist Majority Foundation with the Campaign to help Afghan Women and young girls to ensure that women's rights are fully and permanently restored after the fall of the Taliban regime, which symbolized the brutality against the women in Afghanistan in the past years.

When the Taliban took control in 1996, they instituted a gender apartheid for the women where they imposed strict edicts such as banished women from the work force, closed school to girls, expelled women from universities, prohibited women from leaving their home unless accompanied by a close male relative, forced women to use the burqa or chadari, paint windows of women's houses black, prohibited women from being examined by male physicians, while at the same time prohibited most female doctors and nurses from practicing.

The reality for the women during Taliban control shows a lot of horrors against the women who defied the rules of the Taliban and were severely punished. For example some girls were killed in front of their families because they run to the schools; some women were brutally heated because their ankle was accidentally showed from underneath their burqa. Two women accused of prostitution were publicly hanged in the stadium.

Today, after the fall of Taliban, women can leave their homes without the escort of a male family member. They no longer have to cram into the back of buses and give up their seats to men. They can get their hair and nails done in beauty salons that have opened up all over Kabul. Girls can go to school, and young women to universities, where they sometimes even share classrooms with men. Being a woman can sometimes be an advantage in the job market. In Kabul, Indian models are admired for their fashion, but many Afghan women still wear the traditional burqa.

I would like that the people celebrate the new holiday by publishing the advances of the campaign through web sites, organizing some lectures about the progress of the afghan women, promoting scholarships for women to study, and encouraging the women from all over the world to maintain the faith to pursue the dreams.

The reason why I would create an international holiday for the Afghan women is because the international community must now act to ensure that women's rights are fully and permanently restored, to reestablish a constitutional democracy in Afghanistan that is representative of women and ethnic minorities, and to show an example to women of the world of how can we solve difficulties in this way.

Topic 176 **What holiday would you create?**

People remember the memorable events and great deeds or achievements of great people of a country by celebrating specific holidays as a mark of respect and honor. If I have the opportunity to create a new holiday in my country India, I would like to add 27th August, as one of the national holidays to honor the birth day of noble laureate Mother Teresa to remind all of us about her selfless devotion to the poor, destitute and unwanted sections of our society.

Mother Teresa left her country, Macedonia at a tender age of eighteen and embraced the city of joy, Calcutta, to serve the poor. She initially taught in the Christian missionary school and later she was moved by the pathetic conditions of the homeless people mostly living in the slums. She gave up her teaching profession and started working with her meager savings for the uplift for the causes of the poor.

Initially she had to face the trouble weather from various sections of society. Her continued selfless devotion and love for such unwanted and neglected sections of people was widely acclaimed later on by majority sections of the society and generous financial grants poured in from various agencies. She had further extended her "mission of Charity" for the lepers, orphans etc with the support of over 1000 volunteers working beyond the geographical boundaries of India.

Her love and selfless social service is unparalleled and needs to be reminded on this 27th-August each year by different like-minded groups in the society to walk to different slums with the poor, lepers, orphans or people sufferings from various incurable diseases and bestow their love and affection. They should provide them with clothes, foods, gifts, and financial assistance and take them out in the heart of the city through a procession.

This would help the weaker sections of the society to join the mainstreams of the society and they will not feel neglected and uncared for. Moreover, such love and affection would avert the increasing trend of crimes in the society.

In the present day everyone is on a retrace for his or her material comfort and the human value is on the decline. The remembrance of Mother Teresa's teachings would motivate people for contributing towards a great cause of the society and make this world a better place to live.

Topic 177 **Island Hopping or Road Rage?**

For someone like myself, the choice of spending my hard-saved money on a car versus a trip is a difficult decision. Both cost a lot of money, but each have their own benefits. Having lived my whole life in large cities where public transport has always been the most cost effective and efficient way of getting around, I have always spent my money on traveling. Even though I now live in a place where public transportation is neither cost-effective nor efficient, and where a person needs a car, were a friend to ask me whether they should buy a car or spend their money on a trip, I would recommend going on a trip.

Taking a vacation has more benefits than buying a car. There is a lot that can be learned about other people as well as yourself by going abroad or even traveling around your own country. For instance when I was in my early 20s, I traveled throughout Europe by myself. During this trip, I met a lot of interesting people both other travelers like myself as well as locals. Through this experience, I learned to appreciate other people. I also developed tolerance and independence, which helped me to grow as a person. Buying a car on the other hand, does not help you develop as a person. In fact, I have noticed that since driving on a regular basis, I have become more self-absorbed and less considerate of other people. Even this morning, I found myself getting angry at the driver in front of me for going 30 in a 35 mile zone. I do not wish this stress upon my friend. Rather, I would tell them to spend their money on a nice, relaxing holiday, which brings me to my next point:

Taking a trip helps people relax. There is nothing more relaxing than taking a nice long cruise or spending a few weeks Island-hopping around the Islands of Indonesia or Greece. You can live a stress-free life for a few weeks or months, with nothing but what to have for dinner to worry about. From experience, since owning a car, I have had nothing but stress. My car is old and is in need of constant maintenance and repair. Even now, I am worried that my car will break down on my way to work and not only will I be late, but I will have to pay for the towing as well as. My car is a continual expense that I have to budget for, while a vacation, if you refrain from using credit, is a one-time cost. Remember too that you can also take some spectacular photos. What is better? I would rather see my friend's artful pictures of beautiful scenes and interesting people than photos of their car.

In short, I would suggest that my friend spend their money on a long, stress-free vacation where they can learn about other cultures as well as themselves rather than buying a new car. After all, on returning from this often life-changing experience, they can always work, and it won't be long before they have enough money to buy or lease a new car.

Topic 177 **A vacation or a car?**

On the question of whether it is better to use one's savings to buy a car or go on traveling, I, more often than not, prefer to the latter decision.

It is true that having a car has a variety of advantages; I must confess that I myself enjoy the fun of driving and the strong sense of freedom gained from owning a car. Superior as it is, nevertheless, it brings its own problems. For one thing, private car burdens the traffic that has already been over loaded. Every one of us must have experienced the miserable feeling of being stuck at tollgate on our way to office; only at this moment do most people realize how bad the result of uncontrolled increase in private vehicles can be. For another, it worsens the problem of environmental pollution. The fun of driving is one thing, while how to deal with the consequence of air pollution is another. It is estimated that every year the government of China spends well over 12% of its fiscal income to tackle the environmental damage caused by automobiles.

As a matter of fact, the advantages of going traveling outweigh any benefit we gain from having a car. First of all, studies show that traveling is amongst the most desirable alternatives of social activities. It is obvious that a person fond of traveling must be healthier than one 'dwelling' in his car. Hiking, mountain climbing, camping, skiing, canoeing and all other tourism related exercises force us to use our muscles, stretch our bodies and deepen our breath. Moreover, the overwhelming joy of conquering a mountain peak or lingering in one of the most famous Middle East bazaars is surely out of reach in your car. In addition, traveling fans hardly have to suffer from the torture of sleepless which has long been bothering the 'white collars'. Still, the enchanting beauty of various landscapes and folk cultures helps broaden your eyesight and provides you with a brand new insight into the mysterious planet.

From what has been discussed above, we may safely draw the conclusion that it is not only wise but also socially desirable for us to spend our money on tourism rather than buying a car.

Topic 177 **A vacation or a car?**

The development of technologies and industries has brought us many conveniences. With the help of modern conveniences such as cars, buses, trains and planes, one can travel a great distance in a short period of time. One of my friends has received a gift of money. He is thinking about using this money to buy a new car or go on a vacation. Personally I would suggest that my friend buy a car.

The first and most important reason is that a car can bring him convenience. Undoubtedly, nowadays people rely on cars for transportation more than ever before. For example, when he drives a car to go shopping, he may feel more convenient and can pick up more groceries than before because he can put groceries in the car trunk instead of carrying them by hands. Furthermore, when he wants to pick somebody up, or travel to a scenic spot, a car will make him feel convenient.

Another great reason why I encourage my friend to buy a car is that my friend will not spend much time on commuting anymore. Everyday we waste too much time on waiting for a bus or riding a bicycle to work. We all experienced the frustration of taking a bus. After having their own cars, such the problems will disappear automatically.

Of course, if my friend decides to use his money to go on a vacation, I think that there are some advantages also. For example a vacation may increase his personal experience and knowledge, and may even reduce many troubles that are related to a car. But if all the factors are contemplated, I think that the advantages of buying the car will carry more weight than those of going on vacation.

From what has been discussed above, I may safely draw the conclusion that buying a car will be a right choice for my friend.

Topic 178 **What changes will the 21st century bring?**

About a decade ago, people were eagerly looking forward to ushering the new century—the 21st century with the hope of seeing a fresh beginning of human civilization. There is no denying that with the development of the IT industry and numerous other industries, people's life is getting more and more convenient. However, I have to act as a wet blanket here, unwilling though I am, to point out that the blind "progressiveness" of human beings have caused an irretrievable disaster that is revealing its monstrous face in the new century.

The first sign of damaged nature appeared much earlier without being noticed by us. As a result, nature continues to be abused. My grandmother lives in the countryside. Years ago, when I was still a little girl, there was endless woods and crystal clear streams and rivers there, but now, what you can possibly find are chopped down wasteland and yellow-colored brooks. The environment is deteriorating in spite of a few people's awareness of the danger.

Consequently, the deteriorated environment breeds a far more moody climate than before. My hometown is a beautiful seaside city. Living here for more than two decades, I didn't see any sandstorm until this spring. I could hardly breathe or see things clearly in the yellowish air. I was in shock. Another example comes from a city afar near the Mediterranean. Floods devastate the summerhouses along the coast, aborting people's plans for the summer and causing enormous damage to the economy of those countries.

Therefore, I want to say when you are surfing on line, browsing the messages sent through your cell phones and busy in doing biotechnological experiments, do not be overwhelmed by the benefits of the new century, instead, you should think more about how to protect the environment and thus improve the climate, which is indeed the biggest change brought by the new century.

Topic 178 What changes will the 21st century bring?

With the advent of the 21st century, the world is facing many changes. There are incredible advancements in science and technology fields. In my point of view, these breakthroughs will bring more conveniences to people and make our life easier.

First of all, one of the most significant changes is the use of computers and robots. Using of such computers and robots in industries can bring an increase in output and accuracy. Also, these computer parts and robots are being made so tiny that they can be built into both personal and industrial equipments.

Moreover, there will be more innovations, inventions and researches in different areas of science and technology, such as more advanced telecommunication with a new generation of satellites, faster means of transportations, newer engines for planes, and quicker diagnosis of diseases by using advanced auto analyzers.

On the other hand, a few disadvantages such as air and water pollution, decreasing of natural resources cannot be underestimated. Although these negative aspects are almost negligible in comparison with great advancements of this new century, most scientists believe that these negative effects are not overrated.

In conclusion, it can be concluded that not only does the new century brings us many great advantages, but also it brings a few disadvantages in which people have to deal with.

Topic 178 What changes will the 21st century bring?

The 21st century has just begun. Upon the question "what changes the new century will bring," different people have different opinions. Some may believe that the new century will bring us more awareness on security issues. As far as I am concerned, I agree with this point of view. I believe that safety and security are more and more important for our day-to-day life in this new century. In the following I will try to make my position clearer.

One of the most significant events at the beginning of the new century is the "9/11" attack. The terrorists launched an attack to the United States, causing lost of lives and huge damage to the world's economy. Since the "9/11", there has been more and more worries and consciousness about the security issues in our life than ever before. For instance, when we travel abroad, we have to pass intensive security-checks at airports and borders. The waiting time at those places are much longer than ever before. In addition, nations have to invest greater amount of money to improve the security measurements during international events such as the Olympic Games, in order to protect personal safety of officials, reporters, athletes and audiences from around the world. Moreover, everyday we can hear from the news that some terrorists' attacks and wars are happening somewhere in the world.

The world has become a dangerous place. As a result, more and more people nowadays prefer to spend their holidays at home. In a TV show, "Faith POPCORN- Report", when people are being asked opinions about their homes, they say "my home is my castle". It is even said that it is more secure to live in the wilderness than in the city, due to the fact of crime, drugs and environmental pollutions.

Security issues has changed our lifestyle dramatically. Life will quickly become different for all of us. Therefore it will be more important to reinforce our safety in the new century.

Topic 179 What are qualities of a good parent?

Parents play an important role in the child's upbringing. However, it is not easy to be a good parent, much to the surprise of those who think dealing with young children is a piece of cake. In my view, to be a good parent you have to meet certain requirements that I am going to discuss further in the following paragraphs.

You should spend time with your child. Please do not mistake me. By that I am not saying you must resign from your job and stay at home with your baby all day; instead, I am referring to quality time. To be a good parent you need to know your child well; if you do not even have the minimum amount of time to start with, how on earth are you going to know your child? No matter how busy you are, be you a businessman or a police officer, you must get some time off work to be with your child. Knowing how impressionable a child at his tender age is, you cannot expect him to feel close to someone he barely see everyday, much less play the role of a good parent. However, I am not talking about large amount of time that busy as you are, you may not be able to afford. Remember, it is quality time, not quantity time. You can be a CEO and still be a good parent if you make good use of the limited amount of time you spend with your child. A small talk after dinner or a little story before bed may well perform the magic.

In order to be a good parent, you also have to be strict; it is for the child's own good. He may not like it of course, who will? However, it is from strict parent that a child learns discipline. Under certain circumstances I even agree with the use of force. A good beating or a severe scolding is far easier to remember for a little child than a patient persuasion. He is too young for you to reason with; but you can make him learn his lesson the hard way if the little sweet talk fails. Though I think the use of force is the last resort a parent should turn to, it is nonetheless rather effective.

A good parent should be caring and loving. A strong bond is formed between the parent and the child if there is love. This is something magical and inexplicable but both the parent and the child feel it. What makes a parent so special and important is the unconditional love he/she gives to his/her child. A loving and caring environment is very crucial in a child's growth. Statistics have shown that those from happy families have a more optimistic view of the world and generally live happy lives, while those from broken families or families where both parents quarrel often are more irritable and peevish. A child's character is easily shaped by the surroundings so it is a parent's responsibility to provide a loving environment to his/her child.

A good parent should also be a good role model for the child to look up to. A child learns many of his habits from his parents and it is all up to a parent to choose what kind of habits he/she wants his/her child to inherit. For example, a parent should immediately quit smoking if he/she notices his/her child has the tendency to pick up this bad habit. All in all, a good parent should behave himself in order to set good examples to his child. To be a good parent is hard but not impossible; in fact I believe all those who really put in a great deal of effort should find themselves doing well in this job. After all what is more important is the attitude; if one wants to be a good parent, he can do it.

Topic 180 **Why movies are so popular?**

There is no denying that movies have inspired a seemingly endless stream of fantastic and exciting issues that we just cannot live without. In fact, the dizzying emergence of movie production can create everything we can imagine on screens and what's more they continue bringing us the most wonderful stars and classic stories that will be always remembered by us. Movies have not only been a kind of entertainment we can enjoy, they but have also helped build up an important part of our society.

With the high-tech development of electronic tools it is possible to make everything we are eager to see, especially something that people are always curious about such as dinosaurs, spaceships and even something very scary, unbelievable or gorgeous. For example, directed by an impressive well-known story, *The Lord Of The Rings* brings us to a supernatural world filled with miracles and imaginations that impressed people a lot.

Based on nicely written stories perhaps the most important thing is that movies introduce us those amazing actors. Not only are they so pretty and handsome but they also are the best artists that contribute to our world in many ways. Because of all the celebrated characters they personated, they are considered as the symbol of brave, optimistic, strong-willed and pure-hearted people who are dare to walk fearlessly towards the challenges. Encouraged by them, we become more and more confident and make our minds to be the truth seekers that will insist on overcoming every difficulty to stop being mundane and mediocre.

Even some stars were gone long ago they are still our irreplaceable spirit's leaders such as Clark Gable, Audrey Hepburn, and others. Movies are always not just be appreciated by their dramatic pictures, they are deeply analyzed by worthiness, humanity, ideology and the complex influence they will bring into people's mind. In conclusion, with gorgeous ornamentation and very valuable themes it is no surprising that movies are extremely popular overall the world. Known as the epitome of our realistic society, movies can always dominate its place and continue to bring us what we want to see in sight and what we want to feel in heart.

Topic 181 **Should lands be developed?**

Just as our human beings came from nature, we would return to nature sooner or later. It is self-evident that losing our natural condition means that we are building up a sepulcher for ourselves.

Nature is the original source of our food, house utilities and industries. So we cannot live without her. Sucked the nutrition from nature, we created a wonderful world. She is our mother who we always turn back on. Wise and resourceful are people to try their best to keep nature prosperous and abounded.

Many people may hold the wrong opinion that spending money in preserving nature is a big waste of money. Even though, it is true that we cannot see much of the returns in the near future, it is worthy in the long run. What is more, nature itself can make money. The beautiful landscape of nature that was saved will attract many visitors. We also have many different famous places for people who came from all over the world. In fact, it is a high-profit business and will contribute to our economic in the days coming.

Taking a look at our country's qoe-state, our agrarian land is diminishing quickly. Nature areas are vanishing year by year. We are just facing a thorny way that needs us to take measurements on immediately. Thus, there is no reason to neglect the fact that there is more need for land to be left in its natural condition.

Burdening the great historical task, we cannot use up the limited source to fulfill our unbounded desires. Housing and industry but make us live a bit more comfortable now. They cannot lead us go further. We should leave what we have inherited from our ascendants to the descendants.

Topic 182 Is human relationship with pets useful?

Human has a long history of feeding pets. With the development of human society more and more people have pets in their families. They love to be accompanied by their pets and they look them as their family members. They eat with their pets, stroll with their pets, and even sleep with their pets. And I think having a close relationship with pets is very good for people, the reasons why I say so as follows.

First, having a pet is very good for children. Children always need someone to play with them, take care of them, but their parents cannot do it all the time. When children have a pet, for example, a dog, they will be attracted by it and spend most of their time playing with it. The children will not feel lonely when their parents cannot take care of them. Besides, that also makes parents have their own time to do something they need.

Second, pets are also good for adults, especially those works under pressure. Now many people work so hard everyday that they do not have time to relax and talk with friends. If they have pets, whenever they get to home they can talk to them, look them as persons, tell them what they are anxious about. This would help people to reduce their pressure and make them have a better mood.

Third, most of the owners of pets are senior citizens. That's not a coincidence. Because youngsters leave home for their new lives. They do not have much time to spend with their parents. The old people feel so lonely when they facing the empty rooms. Pets can reduce their loneliness. Old people can take care of them, feed them, talk to them just like taking care of their own children. And the medical research shows that patting pets, such as cats and dogs can reduce the blood pressure, this is also very important to old people.

Although sometimes pets make your room a mess, break your favorite vase, even some time they bite you, the advantages of having a close relationship with pets overweight the disadvantages. Have a pet if you like and enjoy it.

Topic 182 Is human relationship with pets useful?

Many pets are said to be men's best friends. Though being only an animal or a bird, still they are considered to be a part of the family. They share a special bonding with the members of the family. I definitely believe that these relationships are good. There are many reasons to it.

We see many families today with dogs or cats as their pets. We get a variety of pets' food. These families feed their pets with these foods available in the market and raise their pets like their own family members. Today the expenses for raising a child and a pet are the same. Though an animal cannot talk it can understand well and the same as what human beings do. Many pets provide emotional support to the family that they just do it by their mere existence.

Dogs are said to be the best caretakers. They bark upon strangers and welcome known people. In this way it helps his family by guarding them against any dangers. There have been many cases in the past where animals have actually helped in preventing robbery or any other unknown dangers.

These animals do feel the same as humans do. When the family to which he belongs to is not there at home he becomes sad and stops eating. In fact these animals show different signs when they are happy. For example, dogs wag their tail when they see their owners or any of the family members. Since they have the same quality what humans have they are bound to get close to family they belong to and it's the same with the family too. They are provided medication if not well, taken to veterinarians and treated in the same manner in the way any other family member would have treated if unwell.

Animals are said to be their best friends since they do not stab the family they are in. There are movies that show different relationships, which an animal shares with his owner. These movies actually depict the real cases or the real emotion of the animals as well as the family towards them. They expect love and care, which their family gives. Also in a family, when a child grows up he goes to high school and then college. He no longer stays with his parents. But the pet of the family is still there in that family caring and being cared by the family.

Thus because of the human quality of kindness, emotional and well being animals form an important part of the family they belong to and the family treats them as one amongst them.

Topic 182 Is human relationship with pets useful?

Pets have always been a part of human life structure. Thus, each and every human culture contains different morals and regulations on treating the pets. For my part, I must argue in favor of treating pets almost like family members. I am going to mention two reasons to support the slightly altered idea.

First of all, I'd like to mention the fact, that no matter human, animal or plant a living thing has needs and feelings, which if not fulfilled, could have serious effects on its physical and mental (or spiritual) health. Thus, although one may criticize owning and keeping a pet, does not bring as much responsibility as raising a child, the concept of responsibility and caring remains the same in both situations. Consequently I believe the owners should be blamed in case they do not realize and accept the pet's rights, and history of binding in the loving and caring natural environment, which fulfilled all its needs, and in case they keep and treat it as it were a mere source of entertainment or labor. As I mentioned before, a pet is almost comparable with a child. Taking the responsibility to pet an animal requires determined commitment to fulfill its needs and replacing the loving environment it could have in nature, with another loving one. Therefore, if accepted in the social culture as a member of the family, the pet is more likely to receive what it deserves.

In addition to the necessity of the sensational bindings and mutual relationships between the pet and its owners, which makes it like a member of the family, there is a disadvantage to this highly sensational binding. First, they owners should always keep in mind to prioritize emotional and financial needs of the human family members. Secondly, most domestic animals have shorter life than human beings, therefore the owners -in other word, human family members- usually encounter its death during their lifetime. As a result, I believe that the owners must always keep this fact in mind in order to prevent deep sensational damages. Consequently, although taking care of the pet's health, the owners should be able to control their emotional reliance on the pet. However, the unsafe and corrupted human communication in our modern world makes lots of owners so bound to their pets, that they find living difficult after their loss.

A question has been raised on whether pets should be treated as members of the family or not. The needs of pets and the responsibility of the owners as well as the fact that pets usually die before their owners and that human family members must have higher priorities, make me agree with the idea in case the word almost could be added to the main question.

Topic 182 Is human relationship with pets useful?

I think that having close relationship with pets is good as long as you do not over do it. Pets are friendly and loving. Let me explain my point of view.

Pets can be our friends. Especially in old age when our children go away from home to study we feel lonely, then we can keep a pet. Pets could keep us busy and lessen the feeling of loneliness. We can spend most of the time with pets like feeding them, and taking them a walk. Pets are healthy to keep if they could take our mind off of the troubles of day. But on the other hand, if we worry unnecessarily about the items such as food, clothes etc. and behavior of pet, then it's not healthy for us.

Some animals like cats, parrots, and rabbit are very loving. We can easily love these animals. But emotional involvement with animals is not very good. Some people treat pets as part of their family. They take pets to their own bedrooms and give them place to sleep on their bed. They give them seat on couch or take them in the lap. I do not think all this is very healthy for us. We should have separate utensils and space for pets. A few people try to teach pets eating with spoon and forks, they are happy if pets learn easily. Expecting pets to behave like humans might not be good for pets, after all they are animals.

There are many store who sell all kind of stuff related to pets such as pet food, pet clothes, pet toys, and pet homes. Buying nutritious food and separate homes for pets is necessary. We should even buy a few toys for entertainment of our pet. Now a day's pet owners spend hundreds of dollars on buying special types of pet food, costly toys, and expensive pet homes. They try to get luxurious things for their pets. I think these people should donate some of that money to child food banks, since many children in our country do not have food to eat. I think spending extra money on pets is waste of money.

According to me, pets can be friendly and feeling close to them can be healthy, if we do not worry much about them.

Topic 182 **Is human relationship with pets useful?**

Animals started to live side by side with people thousands of years ago. In ancient Egypt people known to keep dogs to protect their houses and lands. Remains of the dogs and cats were found, for example, in ancient burial sites in Egypt. While big animals like horses or cows were used to work and to provide food, small animals, like cats, or birds, obviously were kept for fun and companionship. With all the progress going on, it is not necessary to keep animal to survive, but, amazingly, the population and the variety of home pets is growing. I believe it has some positive sides and some negative.

I heard from many of my friends, that there is nothing like coming home tonight and being greeted by a dog or a cat. They say, it takes all the daily stress away and provides immediate relaxation. And there is no need to talk! I read a few articles in medical magazines, that cats can help people with all kind of body pains, just rubbing off the sore spot. Their warm and energy provide some therapeutic effect. Another positive aspect of having a dog, for example, is that people have to go outside, regardless of the weather. It gives dog owner constant stimulation to exercise. Some people in my neighborhood are jogging with their dog s, keeping themselves and the dogs healthy.

On the other hand, some negative tendencies were shown recently. Needless to say pet owners are very fond of their animal friends. Some people treat them as their children and more and more often prefer them to real people, even kids. It happened, that when a dog threatened the child in the park, the owner would not call the dog and would let it harm the kid. Besides that, I don't think it is healthy for people to escape their relationship problem and create and extra tight binds with an animal. We all know that animal's lives are shorter, than people's are, and the loss of the favorite pet can be just devastating. Another example is the growing fashion trend to keep exotic and dangerous animas as pets, such as crocodiles, lizards, or snakes. In some cases, it not only illegal, but very dangerous for everybody, even for the owner.

To sum I would like to point out, that friendship between people and animals can be very fulfilling, when it is well-balanced and does not, in any way, harms one side or another.

Topic 183 **What have you learned about a country from its movies?**

I believe that every film contains a lot of information about the country where it was made. Usually films show us the great variety of cultural peculiarities about country where they came from. Personally, I have learnt many new things about different countries and their people from watching their movies.

I remember, as a child I used to enjoy watching Indian films. It was very exciting experience for a young girl who was fond of Indian songs and the national clothes. From Indian movies I learnt that the Indian culture is very rich and colorful. I found out that they are mostly romantic people who love to sing and dance. Also, it was interesting to know that there are different religions and a plethora of ethnic groups in India.

I would say that I learnt a lot not only about Indian traditions and culture from watching its films. To tell the truth, Russian movies were very educational for me too. If you watch them carefully, you will probably notice that they contain a great amount of information about Russian people and their culture. For example, I realized that Russians are incredibly honest people who like to celebrate many events with a lot of food, and of course with vodka. I learnt from Russian films about their hostility and willingness to greet and meet other people. Russian movies show that all that is a big part of their traditions.

To summarize, I would say that from watching international films we are able to learn many new things about different nations. Moreover, films educate us about cultural and traditional varieties of many countries.

Topic 183 **What have you learned about a country from its movies?**

Movies are an important part of the culture of a country where they are made. Watching a film, like listening to music or reading a book can tell one a lot about things that people value and the way they interact. In this essay I would like to share my perception about the United States that I gained by watching American movies.

My first observation is that the USA is a very rich country. This is reflected in the types of average people shown in the movies, most of whom are homeowners with a car and a full-time job. They usually can afford to dine in fine restaurants and travel around the world. For example, in the recent movie "Just Married", a young couple from America stayed in nice hotels and traveled all around Europe for their honeymoon.

US movies are also high-budget movies with a lot of special effects and excellent sound and picture quality. This is another reflection of the amount of wealth in the country that can produce movies such as "Troy", "Titanic" or "Gladiator" that featured both multi-million budgets and collections from the theaters around the world.

Another observation is that Americans are very individualistic and independent people. Children leave the family after the high school, since when they often do not receive support from their parents and have to rely on themselves to maintain their living. Many young movie characters (such as in the movie "Bartender" have to support themselves or their education by low-prestige jobs such as waiting even if their parents are very wealthy.)

The last feature of America that I observed from US movies is that Americans are very direct in dealing with other people. They quickly speak their mind regardless of the other person's title or the social status.

I am well aware that movies may exaggerate some of the features characteristic of the country they were made in. Nevertheless I believe that in general they give a fairly good picture of the country's traditions, norms and values. I think that by watching American movies I gained a good understanding of the United States, its society and its people.

Topic 183 What have you learned about a country from its movies?

As my number one hobby, movies take me to different eras, atmospheres, feelings and nations, all the before mentioned is in hand thanks to the technology available nowadays.

The film industry can be observed and digested by many angles, entertainment, documentary, science fiction, comedy or drama. The magic of taking the time to observe rather to watch a film produces a mind trip to every way the camera was filming.

Issues such as costumes, politics, ignorance, and fear need no passport while being filmed, the human condition as well as its surroundings can be captured in the memory thanks to filming and its up braking industry.

Simple daily basis activities, such as public transport, or main social principals or prejudices such as apartheid or racism, can be shown all over the world not only on a printed basis such as a newspaper, book or magazine, but by the whole image of it, not withstanding that images do say more than words, but often help to diversify the truth or the real facts of information. Close related to the before mentioned idea, stands the interpretation that producers, directors, actors and viewers make a truth of their own, but isn't that the way that the world is known?

Definitely since the beginning of the film industry, the movies have showed the existence of the different, the opposed, the distant, but far away from it, movies can help to break trough intellectual, political, and cultural barriers, in order to know better our world.

Topic 183 What have you learned about a country from its movies?

Since its birth, films always function as the main media depicting the environments and people in details. Pondering the specific aspects in the filmmaker and country, we can achieve valuable and wealthy information.

The first treasure we can dig is some social problems in the country reflected by the film. Hollywood, the largest dream makers' cradle, prefers to support some movies revealing some serious current social problems confronting in the United States society. Take the Oscar-winning Film in 2001, *The American Beauty*, as an example. That film received lots of admiration and compliments. We can learn from the film that in the most advanced economy, the normal American people's life still have some dilemma such as marriage dissatisfaction, family cracking, and moral suspicion.

On the other hand, we can learn from a film about the country's history. Take the best foreign film, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, for example, we can appreciate the Chinese ancient melodious music, exotic costumes and magic martial arts. A movie from a country with its own history and tradition that totally different from those in the western movies not only tells a romantic story but teach something beyond as well.

Finally, the country's own culture will be revealed in their films naturally. For example, another foreign film, *Life is Beautiful*, made in Italy, tells a Jewish tragedy happened in the Germany concentration camp in the Second World War. Instead of using the sorrowful way to express the plot, the inspired filmmakers use obviously humorous and romantic ways which probably are rooted in the Italian culture. Culture usually expresses itself in the film spontaneously.

All in all, we can achieve some current social context, or specific historical tradition, or culture in the films. These are the aims that directors, cinematographers, and actors have been working for, and the most important, those are factors why we go to the cinemas.

Topic 183 **What have you learned about a country from its movies?**

Films are a mirror of a country. It depicts the life of common people in a country at a given period in history. This can be exemplified by taking a review of period films like "Elizabeth - the Last Emperor" and "Gandhi", etc. These movies have not only portrayed the lives of famous individuals of their period, but they also give coverage of the people around them, the events that shaped up their personality thus giving us insight of the life style in that particular period.

They not only depict the period in history but also in present. Globally many countries have undergone so many changes recently that we can divide the time period in cluster of 10 years each. The films arrived in each decade portrays the life style of the people in that decade. Thus proving a hallmark of changes in nations thinking, economy, and fashion.

Films reflect the attitude of the particular nations citizens. For example once I had seen one Japanese movie about a woman in transition phase during her divorce. It exemplifies the reaction and outlook of man/woman/child and society in total, towards the painful episode like divorce. I have also came across a movie in my country on same topic. The reactions of people to divorce in this movie are totally different than the one I saw in Japanese movie. This can be a classic example of the difference in the cultures of two countries.

Thus the movies can tell us much more than expected about the country's culture, people. They also make us aware of the current issues in country, the trend, and the fashion prevailing in country.

Topic 184 Self-study vs. group study

Studying is not just reading the content of the book. It involves thorough understanding of the topic, which of course involves good concentration and involvement. This can be achieved either by studying alone or in groups. There are both advantages and disadvantages in both these ways. I would first like to outline some of these pros and cons before putting forth my choice of study.

Let me first consider group-study. No two fingers of a hand are the same. Similarly no two individuals can think the same way. This is the key factor in group-study. It is both advantageous as well as disadvantageous. It is advantageous because difference in people's thinking gives rise to many new solutions to the same issue. It is disadvantageous because all the members of the group cannot learn things at the same pace. Some members learn very fast and others learn very slow. So the fast learner may feel bored to repeat the same topic again and again. The slow learner may develop inferiority complex and feel embarrassed to ask for repetition everyday. The other disadvantage of group-study that I would like to point out is gossip. Even if one member of the group is not in the mood to study, the whole group will be spoiled. He/she will start commenting about a movie or a film star or some unrelated topic and will lead to a big, unwanted discussion consuming all the precious time. Group-study will lead to competition, i.e., each member of the group will try to excel other members. As long as this competition is healthy, it is good for everybody, otherwise it can lead to ego problems which is pretty bad. Punctuality is also another problem in group-study, i.e., even if you arrive first, you cannot start studying. You have to wait for everybody else to arrive. While waiting, you and your one friend may start gossiping, and before you know it, that gossip will be the topic of discussion for that day.

Now let us consider self-study.—The main advantage of self-study is that you can study in your own pace. You don't have to wait for anybody else. You can start studying as and when you are ready. In a group study, you can just think in one angle because there are other members in the group who would give an other view. But that is not the case in self-study. Here you should only think in all different possible views regarding one topic, and in order to support that view you would have to read and refer a lot of different books. So self-study improves your thinking and researching ability. I think concentration is one thing which can be distracted even if you are not in a group. In a group-study gossiping may be one kind of distraction. This kind of distraction is not found in self-study. On the other hand, we can sometimes start day-dreaming and before we know it we would have spent a lot of time thinking and dreaming about some irrelevant topic. But I think the chances of distraction is more in group-study, than in self-study.

Now, for my opinion on the subject. I, personally, would prefer to read alone and not in a group. I believe in doing everything myself. So if I am told to address an issue, I like to think in various different angles, read a lot of books and then come to a conclusion. Another reason why I prefer to read alone is, I think group-study, by itself is not enough. Let me explain what I mean by this. Let us say, the topic of discussion is "Mahatma Gandhi's murder". Group-study involves discussion and exchange of ideas about this topic. But if I have to talk something about Gandhiji's murder, first of all I myself should study about that topic and be thorough with what I have to discuss. So I think group-study is dependent on self-study. Well, the bottom-line is, if given a choice, I would prefer to study alone rather than in a group.

Topic 184 **Individual learning vs. group learning**

Some students prefer to study alone, while others prefer to study with friends. Although studying with friends has its advantages, in my point of view, I would like to study alone. The reasons are as follows.

When you study, especially when you study some subjects that are hard to understand, such as math and physics you need to concentrate on them. That requires a quiet environment without distractions. Studying alone can provide that, and you can read your books and think of questions without being disturbed. It will help you to understand the knowledge better and to remember the knowledge better.

Furthermore, studying alone has another advantage that studying with friends does not have. That is it forces you to think. When you face some questions hard to solve, and there is no other students around you, you have to think of the questions hard and try you best to solve them. This gives you an opportunity to improve your ability to deal with problems by yourself. Obviously, studying with friends cannot give you these. Because when you meet some questions, you probably turn to friends for help.

The third advantage of studying alone is also the most important reason. It can make you think independently and have your own opinions. You have to think independently when you study alone. No one can give you interference or suggestions. You will not be affected by other people's opinions. That can help you create your own thoughts, not to become a parrot. After all, the best parrots still live in cages.

Though studying with friends has some advantages, for instance, it can help you to solve your questions faster and improve your friendship, however I think the advantages of studying alone overweight these of studying with friends. My preference would be to study alone.

Topic 184 **Individual learning vs. group learning**

Every student has his/her own style of studying, in which he/she finds most suitable for him/her to learn knowledge at school. Methods of studying can be classified into two major categories, namely, individual study, and group study. Personally, I would prefer to study with a group of students, and I will explain my opinion below.

The most obvious reason is that studying with a group of students can help students gain more knowledge and understand it more thoroughly. Group study offers students a chance to discuss the problems and exchange opinions with each other. In this process students can clarify their misunderstandings and strengthen their understandings of particular knowledge.

Furthermore, students will obtain more information about how to study from their fellow students, because apart from learning from teachers, students can also learn from each other through group study. Each student has his/her own strength in different areas of study. By studying together, they can communicate with each other about their methods of learning different subjects, thus each student can find the best way to learn a subject with the help of the group. Undoubtedly, involving with different people can strongly widen one's horizon, mature one's thoughts and enrich one's personality.

Apart from gaining more knowledge and information, studying in a group can help students develop teamwork spirit, which is crucial for a student's future success. No matter in school or in the real world, we often need to join efforts to finish a complicated task. For example, you can hardly find one product that is completed by one person, even by one company. Therefore, teamwork spirit that can be developed through group study at school is very important for students' development. On the contrary, students cannot learn the importance of cooperation by studying alone.

On the other hand, studying alone also has some advantages to some extent, such as quiet studying atmosphere, and a self-controlled pace. But from what has been discussed above, studying in-group carries more weight than studying alone. In conclusion, we may safely reach the conclusion that it is better to study with a group of students.

Topic 184 **Individual learning vs. group learning**

We as human beings have different qualities, strengths, and weaknesses. Same goes for studying. Every individual has a different way of studying, where one finds it easier to understand and comprehend the matter he/she is studying in his or her own way of learning. However, methods of studying can be classified into two major categories, namely, individual studying, and group studying.

Some people prefer group studying, because for them group studying provides them with diverse information, that is to say, that each member in the group participates and is able to provide different information on one subject.

Another reason is that if any member finds difficulty in the subject, he/she can easily discuss the problem with other group members, who will be most ready to help each other. Then there is also the aspect of division of work. For example, if students are given an assignment to complete, and if each person in a group is responsible for a different topic, then the load of work is divided among the members of the group and will eventually not burden any one person. On the contrary, many students prefer studying alone, mainly because they want to do their work on their own. Doing so really helps them, because they alone are responsible for what they are studying, and therefore are responsible for their own grades, this evolves a sense of responsibility in the student. Also, since there is no one to share their work with, they have to do all their work on their own, which again is an advantage. For example, a student who studies alone, when given an assignment, does it entirely by himself/herself. Doing so, each and every topic is familiar to the student and the entire work is a product of his/her own effort. So, if he/she gets a grade on such an assignment, the student would know what his potentials, what his strengths and weaknesses are.

I prefer to study alone, since in that way I get the proper sense of what my weaknesses are and what my strengths are. I get to improve my weaknesses. Although if I find any difficulty I cannot take help from any other person unlike students who study in groups, but then I can always ask for help from a teacher. But I believe studying on one's own is important because anyone can study in groups but when it comes to individual studying it becomes tough. And in the real world an individual is confronted with situations that a person is responsible individually. And a person can acquire such a sense of responsibility only through working on his or her own.

Thus, it can be concluded that studying alone is more effective than studying in groups. Although, the different methods of studying mostly depend on what works better for the student.

Topic 185 A house or a business?

Faced with the question whether to buy a house or a business if I had the money, I came to the conclusion that basically the two investments have a major difference that radically influences my choice. I believe that spending the money for developing a business, despite being somewhat risky, is the more reasonable choice as it could bring with it not only eventual profits but also valuable knowledge and experiences to the person involved. In contrast, buying a real estate such as a house can only lead to future troubles and expenses.

Some people prefer to invest their money on things like houses or automobiles because they like the sense of secure and comfort that brought by such assets. But are they really as secure as they seem to be at first glance? First of all, rarely can anyone pay the whole sum for a house at once. In most cases it requires monthly payments for years as well as taxation. In addition keeping a house in a proper condition also costs a lot no matter whether it is used by the proprietors or tenants.

Second, in today's active world where people often move from place to place in search of new experiences or better career opportunities, it has become common for many young people to perceive the place where they live as a temporary hotel where one returns only for eating and sleeping. So it is enough for it to be convenient and affordable.

Investing in a business, on the other hand, is a very serious initiative and a great challenge as well. Deciding to start one's own business requires a certain sense of risk and a strong desire to succeed by improving one's skills. Specialized knowledge in the business field is very essential too. Certainly, however, no one can do all the work by him/herself. So a person who starts his/her own business will have to learn more not only about accounting or management but also learn how to hire the right professionals to manage some of the business affairs for him/her. Furthermore, in spite of the fact that it may take many years and numerous unsuccessful attempts, a business could bring very profitable results as it could grow and develop.

For all the reasons that I mentioned above, I believe that by investing my money in a business I will find many new opportunities for self-improvement and have the chance to be financially independent. Then maybe one day, when I am old and tired, I will buy my own house too.

Topic 185 **A house or a business?**

If I have enough money to purchase either a house or a business, I will choose to buy a house. Having a house is good for living, for children and even for a business.

Having my own house, my family can move out of the apartment where we are living now. I can decorate it just as what I want. I can fill my own house with furniture and appliances that I want. Everyday after I come back home, I can lie down in the white sofa I bought and watch a movie using the home theater system. But if I still live in an apartment, I will not be able to buy all the furniture that I want, because I know I only live there temporarily and there is not enough space for new furniture.

A new house is also good for the children. I can buy a house within a good school district, so my children can go to those prestigious schools now. And all I have to pay is just the property tax and some insurance fee. No rent for living anymore. No tuition for private schools anymore. Needless to say, Children can invite their friends over and have their party in the backyard. A house will win my children's big smile.

After purchasing a house, I still can do my business. With my own house, I can use it as a collateral to get a business loan. Now I can purchase that business. Maybe I am lucky and talented enough to run the business well and get some extra money to payoff the entire loan, and then I get both a house and a business. Maybe I am good in this business and can only pay off the loan after I sell the business, then I still get a house. Maybe I lose too much money in the business and the loaner take my house, and then nothing is different if I first chose to buy a business, because at last, I will own nothing for that bad luck.

Purchasing a house has a lot of benefits. Though buying a business can get me into business sooner, I think I do not need be so hurry because I like to enjoy the life first. So I will use the money to buy a house.

Topic 185 **A house or a business?**

If I were to choose to buy either a house or a business, I would definitely select to purchase a house because of three different reasons. First, my current house is too small to fit all of our family members. Second, buying a house is a good investment because its price tends to increase over time. Lastly, I am not keen on doing my own business.

To begin with, my family is considered one of the extended family. We currently have ten people live under the same roof. Although there are enough rooms to fit all of us in the same house now, it seems to be a problem in the future since my brother is going to have a baby. Therefore, it is a good reason for me to buy a new house to accommodate our family members.

Next, a house is always a good investment since its price usually increases over time. For example, my house in Bangkok cost around 500,000 bahts ten years ago. Its price unsurprisingly doubled. In other words, it costs around 1,000,000 bahts to buy my house presently. Therefore, buying a house is a sure bet to a good investment.

Lastly, as I grew up, I realized that I was not keen on business. When taking classes in business, I usually did not feel confident. For example, when practicing a case study on running a business, I did not want to take risks. Thus, the business I ran failed. As a result, I am not sure that if I were to buy a business, it would be successful.

In conclusion, since a house would give me benefits such as providing more places for my expanding family and being a good investment, I, a person who is not keen on business, would rather buy a house rather than a business provided that I have enough money.

Topic 185 **A house or a business?**

If someone were generous enough to give me sufficient amount of capital to do one of the two things, I would probably go in for purchasing a house. To me, a house is one of the best securities one can have. Besides, I would not describe myself as being particularly business-minded, so given a choice between buying a house or starting a business, a home would be more appealing to me.

I have several reasons for this choice. All my life, I have lived in rented apartments, and am aware of the difficulties that my parents had faced. The constant insecurity of being asked to move out at short notice is one problem. I have watched my parents hunt around for houses, the worry and tension that has caused to them, and finally, the relief and gradual sense of peace that settled in, when we finally managed to buy a place of our own.

Buying a house is an excellent investment, if done properly, and at the right time with respect to the market situation. Having a decent bit of property on one's hands is advantageous when there is a need for a loan during emergencies. Banks generally ask for securities, the most of common of which are houses and jewelry.

Also, a house is a source of ready money, since the market today is more often than a seller's market. If a respectable builder builds the house or building in a convenient locality, it generally fetches a good price, since these are the first two points that are considered by the buyers.

On the other hand, in today's world, with rising prices, inflation, an unstable economy, one can no longer be absolutely certain of a success in business, unless one has a sharp acumen, a sense of risk, and a true entrepreneurial spirit. A business venture cannot be started half-heartedly, just because of availability of capital. A lot of hard work and enterprise is necessary to make a success out of a business in this world of cut-throat competition. I genuinely do not believe that I am cut out for it. My field of study is science, and I am more inclined towards a career that involves research.

Finally, I would like to say that it has always been my ardent wish to have a home that I can call my own, which I can come back to after a day's work, and this thought alone is sufficient to allow me to make my decision.

Topic 185 **A house or a business?**

Nowadays the only thing people seem to be interested is earning more and more money. Many people spend their entire lives doing business and neglect their family and friends. I do not want to be one of them. If I have to choose between earning money and spending time with my family I would choose my family. Therefore, if I have to choose between buying a nice big house for my family and me and a business that would take up all my free time I would choose the house.

The business can make you a lot of money, however, it cannot make you happy. The house, on the other hand, can be a dream that have come true. It can be the best place in the world for you where you can feel safe, calm, and free. The place where you keep all the things that you love and more importantly where the people you love most live. It is also the place where you will spend the happiest moments in your life.

Another reason to choose to buy a house is that it gives you security. The business may fail, but the house will always remain yours. You know that no matter what happens you will always have a place to live. And if you cannot earn enough money to make your living you may let off some of the rooms.

Last but not least, I believe that a house is more valuable heritage than a business. A house can always be sold for its real price while selling a business can be quite difficult and even impossible if it has not been profitable for the past few years.

All things considered, there is no doubt that buying a house is the best choice for me. But a house cannot make me happy if I live there alone. When I picture my dream house I always see my future children playing in it.

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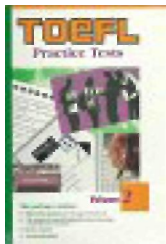
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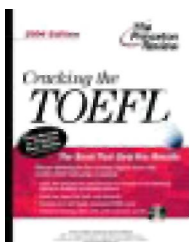
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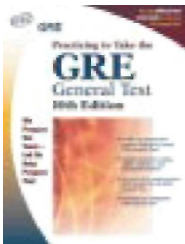
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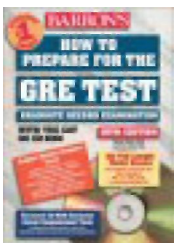


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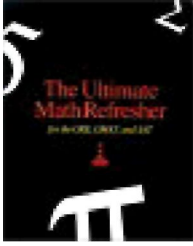
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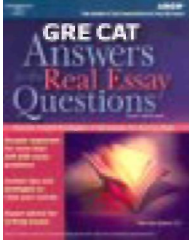
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Scholarship Essay Samples

This section contains two sample scholarship essays:

Scholarship Essay One

CRABIEL SCHOLARSHIP WINNER - won \$3,000 scholarship

Like Mr. Crabiel, I literally work tirelessly in many academic and leadership roles. I sleep no more than six hours a night because of my desire to expertly meet my many commitments. Throughout my life, I have worked as long and as hard as I possibly can to effect beneficial changes in both school and society.

During the summer of tenth grade, I took a number theory course at Johns Hopkins University with students from Alaska, California, and Bogota, Colombia. Similarly, during the summer following eleventh grade, I was one of ninety students from New Jersey selected to attend the Governor's School in the Sciences at Drew University. At Drew, I took courses in molecular orbital theory, special relativity, cognitive psychology, and I participated in an astrophysics research project. For my independent research project, I used a telescope to find the angular velocity of Pluto. With the angular velocity determined, I used Einstein's field equations and Kepler's laws to place an upper bound on the magnitude of the cosmological constant, which describes the curvature of space and the rate of the universe's expansion.

In addition to learning science, I recently lectured physics classes on special relativity at the request of my physics teacher. After lecturing one class for 45 minutes, one student bought many books on both general and special relativity to read during his study hall. Inspiring other students to search for knowledge kindles my own quest to understand the world and the people around me.

As president of the National Honor Society, I tutor students with difficulties in various subject areas. In addition, I am ranked number one in my class with an SAT score of 1580 and SATII scores of 750 in math, 760 in writing, and 800 in physics. In school, I take the hardest possible courses including every AP course offered at the high school. I am the leading member of the Math Team, the Academic Team, and the Model Congress Team. In the area of leadership, I have recently received the Rotary Youth Leadership Award from a local rotary club, have been asked to attend the National Youth Leadership Forum on Law and the Constitution in Washington D.C., and wrote the winning essay on patriotism for South Plainfield's VFW chapter. Currently enrolled in Spanish 6, I am a member of both the Spanish Club and the Spanish Honor Society. In addition, I recently was named a National Merit Scholar.

Besides involvement in academic and leadership positions, I am active in athletics. For instance, I lift weights regularly. In addition, I am the captain of my school's varsity tennis team. So far this year, my individual record on the team is 3-0.

Working vigorously upon being elected Student Council President, I have begun a biweekly publication of student council activities and opinions. Also, the executive board under my direction has opened the school store for the first time in nearly a decade. With paint and wood, we turned a janitor's closet into a fantastic store. I also direct many fund raisers and charity drives. For instance, I recently organized a charity drive that netted about \$1,500 for the family of Alicia Lehman, a local girl who received a heart transplant.

As Student Liaison to the South Plainfield Board of Education, I am working to introduce more advanced-placement courses, more reading of philosophy, and more math and science electives into the curriculum. At curriculum committee meetings, I have been effective in making Board members aware of the need for these courses. In addition, my speeches at public Board meetings often draw widespread support, which further helps to advance my plans for enhancing the curriculum.

I have also been effective as a Sunday school teacher. By helping elementary school students formulate principles and morals, I make a difference in their lives every week. The value system that I hope to instill in them will last them their entire lives. I find teaching first-graders about Christ extremely rewarding.

Clearly, I have devoted my life both to working to better myself and to improving civilization as a whole. Throughout the rest of my life, I hope to continue in this same manner of unselfish work. Just as freeholder Crabiel dedicates his life to public service, I commit my life to helping others and to advancing society's level of understanding.

Scholarship Essay Two

WINNING NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLAR ESSAY

Nothing in all the world is comparable to reading Ayn Rand beneath New York's skyline or to studying Nietzsche atop a mountain summit.

Since childhood, the studies of philosophy and science have interested me profoundly. Having read many books on relativity, quantum mechanics, existentialism, religion, capitalism, democracy and post-Aristotelian philosophy, my quest for knowledge has only intensified. Certainly, the purpose of my life is to discover a greater understanding of the universe and its people. Specifically, I plan to better grasp the interrelationship among forces, matter, space, and time. In addition, I hope to find a unified field theory and a convincing explanation for the birth of the universe.

During the summer of tenth grade, I took a number theory course at Johns Hopkins University with students from Alaska, California, and Bogota, Colombia. My attendance of

the New Jersey Governor's School in the Sciences is another accomplishment that exemplifies my dedication to knowledge. During the summer following eleventh grade, I took courses in molecular orbital theory, special relativity, cognitive psychology, and I participated in an astrophysics research project. For my independent research project, I used a telescope to find the angular velocity of Pluto. With the angular velocity determined, I used Einstein's field equations and Kepler's laws to place an upper bound on the magnitude of the cosmological constant, which describes the curvature of space and the rate of the universe's expansion.

In addition to learning science, I recently lectured physics classes on special relativity at the request of my physics teacher. After lecturing one class for 45 minutes, one student bought many books on both general and special relativity to read during his study hall. Inspiring other students to search for knowledge kindles my own quest to understand the world and the people around me.

Also, as president of the National Honor Society, I tutor students with difficulties in various subject areas. Moreover, I am ranked number one in my class, and I am the leading member of the Math Team, the Academic Team, and the Model Congress Team. In the area of leadership, I have recently received the Rotary Youth Leadership Award from a local rotary club and have been asked to attend the National Youth Leadership Forum on Law and the Constitution in Washington D.C. Currently enrolled in Spanish 6, I am a member of both the Spanish Club and the Spanish Honor Society.

As student council president, I have begun a biweekly publication of student council activities and opinions. Also, the executive board under my direction has opened the school store for the first time in nearly a decade and is finding speakers to speak at a series of colloquia on topics ranging from physics to politics. Directing fund raisers and charity drives also consumes much of my time. For instance, I recently organized a charity drive that netted about \$1,500 for the family of a local girl in need of a heart transplant.

Consistent with my love of freedom and my belief in democracy, which is best summarized by Hayek's Road to Serfdom, I have recently initiated an application to become the liaison to the local board of education. Also, in keeping with my belief that individuals develop strong principles and ideology, I teach Sunday school three months a year and have chaperoned for a local Christian school.

Outside pure academics and leadership roles, I lift weights five times a week for an hour each day. In addition, I play singles for my school's varsity tennis team. Because I find extraordinary satisfaction in nature and have dedicated my life to its understanding, I enjoy mountain climbing. Among the notable peaks I have reached are Mt. Washington, Mt. Jefferson, Mt. Madison, Mt. Marcy and Mt. Katahdin. Unquestionably, my life's aim is to dramatically raise the height of the mountain of knowledge so that my successors may have a more accurate view of the universe around them.

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Sample Medical School Essays

Why Medicine? Essay

My earliest impression of medicine occurred when my mother repeatedly required the assistance of physicians in dealing with her chronic migraine headaches. Her doctors were always there for her, day or night. The respect that my parents bestowed on doctors, and the doctors' ability to ease suffering, sparked a desire to one day become a physician myself. This was an ambitious goal for someone coming from a family in which no one had obtained a professional degree. However, my traditional family-oriented culture, emphasizing doing good for others, contributed to this decision to pursue a career in the medical field. Furthermore, the American individualistic spirit gave me the confidence and opportunity to undertake a challenging medical career.

I also had the chance to gain some firsthand experience in the medical profession when I volunteered for over a year in the emergency room of a regional hospital. From my volunteer experience, I learned the importance of organization and effective communication skills, and I was exposed to the diversity that exists in my community. It has also demonstrated to me why the American health-care system is the best in the world; I saw some knowledgeable minds using some very sophisticated equipment. But I also saw many ways it can be improved. For example, uninsured homeless and immigrant people would often come in, complaining of problems they had been having for a long time. Although we would treat these people as best we could, a health-care system that intervenes in such sicknesses earlier would have minimized costs associated with treating diseases in their later stages.

As a doctor, I hope to participate in these changes in order to benefit more people than are currently being served. Doctors should be able to serve people of all different races, ages, backgrounds, and cultures. I intend to use my skills and unique experiences to achieve this vision of what I think a doctor should be.

Uniqueness Essay

Martial arts and medicine. They seem worlds apart, but they both have played significant roles in my life and for reasons that are surprisingly similar. They both offer challenge, require great discipline, and necessitate a goal-oriented approach.

I first became involved with the martial arts when I was only 13 years old. At that time I began studying karate in my hometown in northern California. Even then I was a goal-oriented individual who was attracted to the step-by-step progression involved in studying karate. Within a year I had earned a brown belt (the next-to-highest ranking) and was actually serving as an instructor at the karate academy where I had learned the sport. Dedication, discipline, and physical and mental prowess were behind my success, which included being the

youngest person in the area to attain the brown belt.

In college I became involved in Tae Kwon Do, the Korean counterpart of karate. This sport, too, requires patience, determination, and a clear mind in addition to physical strength, endurance, and agility. Within a year I had become president of my university's 80-member Tae Kwon Do club, which ranks among the top sports clubs on campus. In assuming this position I began to have the opportunity to test myself as a leader as well as an athlete.

One of the reasons I became interested in medicine is that it, too, requires a meticulous, goal-oriented approach that is very demanding. Of course, it also happens that the substance of the profession holds strong appeal for me, both in terms of the science and the potential for serving others who are in need.

Most of my exposure to the profession has occurred within the areas of surgery and emergency medicine. After first serving as an emergency medicine volunteer technician at a northern California hospital (where I had a moving experience with a young girl's death), I acquired the EMT-1A/CPR certifications and then worked as an Emergency Medical Technician-1A during a subsequent summer. This job was a fascinating, educational, and high-pressure experience that exposed me to the realities of medicine as practiced in crisis situations.

My extensive involvement with cardio thoracic surgery research over the last three years, first as a volunteer technician and currently as a staff research technician, has further fueled my desire to become a physician. I have had to rely upon my own ingenuity and problem solving skills as well as what I have learned in the classroom, and this has been exciting. One of the more unusual aspects of my work has involved me directly in the procedure of heterotopic heart transplantation in rats. This precise and technically demanding procedure encompasses microsurgery and usually is conducted only by residents. In fact, I am the only undergraduate student doing this procedure, which has shown me the extent of both my manual dexterity and capacity for learning sophisticated techniques.

I have been fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to participate and contribute in almost every way during experiments, from administering anesthesia and performing extensive surgical preparations to analyzing the data obtained and operating monitoring and recording equipment, ventilators, and the heart-lung machine.

I am a somewhat shy individual, but I have found that within the medical environment my shyness evaporates. The opportunity to help others one-on-one is so rewarding and comfortable for me that I feel very much at ease, regardless of with whom I am working. I think one of the particularly attractive aspects of medicine for me, especially within such specialties as internal medicine and obstetrics/gynecology, is the potential for forming close, lasting, meaningful relationships with a wide array of patients.

For me, medicine emerges as the perfect avenue for indulging my impulses to contribute, to be involved with science, and to establish important links with others at both critical and noncritical moments in their lives.

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Law School Statement Samples**

Why Law? Essay

My interest in the law began with donuts. As a child, I developed early persuasive skills during family disagreements on how to divide boxes of the treats. My parents belonged to the "biggest people deserve the most donuts" school of thought; while as the youngest family member, I was a devout believer in the "one person, one donut" principle. The debates were often cutthroat, but when it came to donut distribution, I sought justice at any cost.

As my family grew older and more health-conscious, we stopped eating donuts, and for many years I forgot our childhood debates. However, some recent life decisions have brought to mind those early explorations of justice. When I first arrived at the American International School of Rotterdam, I quickly learned that my colleagues were a diverse and talented group of people. Unsure of how to establish my own place among them, I tried phrases that had always worked to impress college friends. "When I work for the UN . . .," I told the second-grade teacher, and she answered with an erudite discussion of the problems she faced as a consultant for that organization. I told the kindergarten teacher, "When I'm in law school . . .," only to hear about his own experiences in law school. By the time I discovered that even many grade-school students were better travelled than I, I learned to keep my mouth shut!

Living alone in a new country, removed from familiar personal and cultural clues to my identity and faced with these extraordinary co-workers, I started to feel meaningless. How, I wondered, could I possibly make a difference in a place as vast as our planet? To my own surprise, I found that answer at church. Although I was raised in the Bah'í Faith, I have only recently understood the essential place that religion plays in my identity. Bah'í social beliefs include the need to work against extreme poverty, nationalism, and prejudice; and I now realize that I cannot hold those beliefs without doing something about them. My identity rests on these convictions; I cannot see the need for help and just move on. I have to help; it's who I am.

The lessons I've learned from my international colleagues have channeled my desire for service into the field of international development. I still wish to fight the "'Biggest Get the Most' Theory of Donut Distribution," but now on an international scale.

Uniqueness Essay

Once in a while I am approached by past research associates who heard that I "got out," as several of them put it, and who want to know how I handled the switch. Some of them have no idea that people with science backgrounds have options other than research and teaching, and many are discouraged by the thought that they would have to leave their beloved science in order to engage in those activities. Several of them have called me from

home to ask these questions, for fear of being overheard at the laboratory.

The first thing I tell them is that there is far more to science than the "bench." I myself entered the science field as an undergraduate, when I chose to study veterinary microbial genetics. I worked in the laboratory of Dr. William Sischo, an epidemiologist who specialized in number-crunching but who needed technical assistance with field sampling and laboratory work to generate the data. Dr. Sischo instilled in me a strong desire to learn about and experiment in genetics. I was fascinated by the many ways genetics can be used to help understand how or why certain biological functions occur, and I wondered how I could use my knowledge of genetics to benefit society.

After I obtained my bachelor of science degree, I went on to graduate school earning a master of science degree part-time while working full-time jobs in a couple of well-established research institutions. I enjoyed both graduate school and working in the laboratory. I also learned the "correct" career path—an academic position at a respectable research university—was what we were supposed to want out of life. More specifically, academic laboratories were acceptable, but working in industry, even to do research, was generally looked upon as "selling out." I believe this attitude has relaxed somewhat since then, since grants and jobs have become harder to secure and tenured positions lack the security they once possessed.

It was during my graduate studies that I began to question my goals and the assumptions they were based on. I was becoming increasingly unhappy with the direction my career was heading, and I began to question my abilities and motivation. Finally, when I heard myself mutter out loud "I don't want to do bench work forever," I sat up and took notice. I decided that in spite of my training, and even though I still loved science, research was not right for me.

I wanted a career, or at least a job for starters, that valued my graduate degree and training, and that was a better fit for my skills and future ambitions. I decided I would do best with a job that was externally driven either by deadlines or by the needs of others; in addition, I wanted to talk, write, and/or evaluate science as a whole rather than focus on one particular aspect of a research project.

As a molecular geneticist, I had occasionally interacted with the patent department at SmithKline Beecham Pharmaceuticals in support of my supervisor's patent applications. They worked on a variety of intellectual property issues in a number of scientific disciplines that were of interest to the company. I realized then that I could make very good use of my science background as a patent attorney.

Earlier this year, I accepted an offer to work as a patent agent in the Corporate Intellectual Properties Department at SmithKline Beecham. The job involves writing and prosecuting patent applications, which in turn requires broad knowledge of both science and law. I soon realized that, in order to become an effective patent practitioner, I must become intimately acquainted with U.S. patent law. Because SmithKline Beecham is an international corporation, I have also learned a great deal about international patent law so that I can assist in foreign prosecution of SmithKline Beecham's patents. When I first started the job, it

occurred to me that my learning curve was a cliff with an overhang, and I was at the bottom looking up.

I was extremely lucky to find a job almost immediately following graduation last January. However, this opportunity was not trouble-free; there were additional risks to consider at the time I made the decision to change. Our company was in the middle of negotiations to merge with another international pharmaceutical company, GlaxoWellcome Pharmaceuticals. As details of the merger were released, we were informed that the majority of the money saved in the merger was going to be invested back into research and discovery. In other words, because of the patent applications that I draft and prosecute, my job as a patent agent will play an essential role in the inventive process in the new company. Daily interaction with inventors keeps me up-to-date with cutting-edge technology in the biotechnology field. As my work progressed, I knew I had made the right decision, and I have never looked back.

In October, I took the complex patent bar examination. My determination to take the examination straight away was derived from my desire to become a registered patent agent before entering law school, so that my academic studies will not suffer while I attempt to balance a career and my education. I am now hoping to complete the career transition over the next four years by attending law school at Villanova University and becoming a patent attorney. A few weeks ago, I was offered the opportunity to move to our new research facility in North Carolina, but declined the offer in hopes of attending Villanova's law program, which is well respected among the various pharmaceutical companies on the East Coast for its intellectual property education.

Intellectual property is a crucial asset to our company, and I take generating and protecting these assets very seriously. A considerable part of my job involves "translating" science for attorneys and patent law for scientists. I also have to be able to understand a new result quickly enough to grasp what the specific invention is and ask further questions which allow me to distill the invention down to its bare essence. Organization is also key-this is something I learned as a matter of self-preservation, since this is a deadline-driven, and sometimes crisis-driven, job.

I now believe that my job as a patent agent is not a break with the past; rather, it is an exciting, alternative continuation of my career as a scientist. The patent applications that I draft and prosecute make me a critical part of the inventive process at SmithKline Beecham. Furthermore, my interactions with inventors on a daily basis keep me up to date with the latest technology. Not so long ago, when I began research as an undergraduate, I wondered what impact I would have on the development of new scientific knowledge. Through my work as a patent agent, I know that I am a key participant in the promotion of scientific progress.

I still run into acquaintances from my research days who ask me why I "left science." I am quick to set them straight. I may not get my hands wet, but I use far more of my education and training than I ever did at the bench, and I am very much still in science. I firmly believe my experiences in science and patent prosecution will allow me to be a creative and contributing member of Villanova University, both as a student and as a future attorney representing achievement.

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Put Harvard-Educated Editors to Work for You!

Graduate School Personal Statement Secrets

EssayEdge.com contains thousands of pages of free admissions essay advice by Harvard-educated editors.

The best way to approach your personal statement for graduate school is to imagine that you have five minutes with someone from the admissions committee. How would you go about making the best case for yourself while holding the listener's interest? What would you include and omit in your story? Figuring out the answer to these questions is critical to successfully preparing an effective statement.

To arrive at these answers, you should begin by asking yourself two specific questions:

- Why have I chosen to attend graduate school this specific field, and why did I choose to apply to this particular school's program?
- What are my qualifications for admission?

The answers will not necessarily come easily to you, but this exercise will have great practical benefit in readying you to write an outstanding personal statement. By answering each question thoroughly, you will have given much thought to yourself, your experiences, and your goals, thereby laying the groundwork for formulating an interesting and persuasive presentation of your own personal story.

As the founder of EssayEdge.com, the Net's largest admissions essay prep company, I have seen firsthand the difference a well-written application essay can make. Through its free online admissions essay help course and 300 Harvard-educated editors, EssayEdge.com helps tens of thousands of student each year improve their essays and gain admission to graduate schools ranging from Harvard to State U.

Having personally edited over 2,000 admissions essays myself for EssayEdge.com, I have written this article to help you avoid the most common essay flaws. If you remember nothing else about this article, remember this: *Be Interesting. Be Concise.*

Why Graduate School?

Graduate school is a serious commitment, and it may have been your goal for a long time. Describing your early exposure to a field can offer effective insight into your core objectives. Watch out, however, that you do not your point in such a clichéd, prepackaged way as to make your reader cringe. For example, you should not start your essay, "I have always wanted to?" or "I have always known that _____ was my calling." Instead, you should discuss specific events that led to your interest in the field.

Graduate school is, of course, a means to an end, and admissions committees prefer students who know where they're going and to what use they'll put their education (though the occasional soul-searcher, who may exhibit exceptional raw potential, is welcomed). For many people, the long-term goal is to work in academia, and to differentiate yourself in such cases, you can stress more specific objectives such as your research interests.

Note: Read the instructions carefully. Sometimes schools will ask for a statement of purpose describing your specific research interests in lieu of, or in addition to, a personal statement that emphasizes your character and qualities. For these types of essays, you can assume that a faculty member will be reading your statement, but it should still be accessible enough for a non-specialist to understand. Remember that such essays should also still aim to engage the reader in a way that conveys your own enthusiasm for the subject matter.

Avoid mistakes like discussing the school's rank or prestige, or simply offering generic praise. Instead, mention faculty members by name and indicate some knowledge of their work. Consider contacting faculty members first and discussing their current research projects and your interest in studying under them. Then refer to these contacts in your essay.

Why Am I Qualified?

The way to prove your qualification is not to list attributes you believe you possess but to discuss concrete experiences that show your abilities and qualities. As always, details are paramount. The rest of your application has already summarized your accomplishments and your activities. Show the reader what you did in concrete terms, and again, highlight your active roles.

The experiences that demonstrate your qualification are not necessarily distinct from those that explain your motivation. You shouldn't plan on dividing the essay into two separate sections for each, but rather organize the structure by topic and extrapolate insights as they develop. It's important that you think of the essay as an integrated whole, not as a checklist of questions you must answer.

Focus on research experience, since research will be your main job for the duration of your studies. Be specific about what you did. If you worked for a year under a professor, you might consider emphasizing one particular project and exploring that in depth. The experience does not have to have been a major undertaking: Any practical experience can be used as long as you demonstrate your enthusiasm and aptitude for the field of study.

Remember to keep the discussion personal. Do not get bogged down in minute details and jargon. Ultimately, the focus of the story should remain on you and your growth or success.

TOP 10 GRADUATE SCHOOL ESSAY WRITING TIPS

1. Don't Write a Term Paper.

As a prospective graduate student, you may be tempted to try to impress your reader with an already tight grasp of academic style. Resist this temptation! You will have plenty of time to produce labyrinthine sentences and sophisticated vocabulary. Your reader will have seen too many essays to appreciate bewilderingly advanced prose. Write clearly and personably.

2. Don't Bore the Reader. Do Be Interesting.

Admissions officers have to read hundreds of essays, and they must often skim. Abstract rumination has no place in an application essay. Admissions officers aren't looking for a new way to view the world; they're looking for a new way to view you, the applicant. The best way to grip your reader is to begin the essay with a captivating snapshot. Notice how the blunt, jarring "after" sentence creates intrigue and keeps the reader's interest.

Before: I am a compilation of many years of experiences gained from overcoming the relentless struggles of life.

After: I was six years old, the eldest of six children in the Bronx, when my father was murdered.

3. Do Use Personal Detail. Show, Don't Tell!

Good essays are concrete and grounded in personal detail. They do not merely assert "I learned my lesson" or that "these lessons are useful both on and off the field." They show it through personal detail. "Show, don't tell" means that if you want to relate a personal quality, do so through your experiences without merely asserting it.

Before: If it were not for a strong support system which instilled into me strong family values and morals, I would not be where I am today.

After: Although my grandmother and I didn't have a car or running water, we still lived far more comfortably than did the other families I knew. I learned an important lesson: My grandmother made the most of what little she had, and she was known and respected for her generosity. Even at that age, I recognized the value she placed on maximizing her resources and helping those around her.

The first example is vague and could have been written by anybody. But the second sentence evokes a vivid image of something that actually happened, placing the reader in the experience of the applicant.

4. Do Be Concise. Don't Be Wordy.

Wordiness not only takes up valuable space, but also confuses the important ideas you're trying to convey. Short sentences are more forceful because they are direct and to the point. Certain phrases, such as "the fact that," are usually unnecessary. Notice how the revised version focuses on active verbs rather than forms of "to be" and adverbs and adjectives.

Before: My recognition of the fact that the book was finally finished was a deeply satisfying moment that will forever linger in my memory.

After: Completing the book at last gave me an enduring sense of fulfillment.

5. Do Address Your Weaknesses. Don't Dwell on Them.

The personal statement may be your only opportunity to explain deficiencies in your application, and you should take advantage of it. Be sure to explain them adequately: "I partied too much to do well on tests" will not help your application. The best tactic is to spin the negatives into positives by stressing your attempts to improve; for example, mention your poor first-quarter grades briefly, then describe what you did to bring them up.

6. Do Vary Your Sentences and Use Transitions.

The best essays contain a variety of sentence lengths mixed within any given paragraph. Also, remember that transition is not limited to words like nevertheless, furthermore or consequently. Good transition flows from the natural thought progression of your argument.

Before: I started playing piano when I was eight years old. I worked hard to learn difficult pieces. I began to love music.

After: I started playing the piano at the age of eight. As I learned to play more difficult pieces, my appreciation for music deepened.

7. Do Use Active Voice Verbs.

Passive-voice expressions are verb phrases in which the subject receives the action expressed in the verb. Passive voice employs a form of the word to be, such as was or were. Overuse of the passive voice makes prose seem flat and uninteresting.

Before: The lessons that have prepared me for my graduate studies were taught to me by my mother.

After: My mother taught me lessons that will prove invaluable as I pursue my research interests.

8. Do Seek Multiple Opinions.

Ask your friends and family to keep these questions in mind:

- Does my essay have one central theme?
- Does my introduction engage the reader? Does my conclusion provide closure?
- Do my introduction and conclusion avoid summary?
- Do I use concrete experiences as supporting details?
- Have I used active-voice verbs wherever possible?

- Is my sentence structure varied, or do I use all long or short sentences?
- Are there any clichés, such as "cutting-edge" or "learned my lesson"?
- Do I use transitions appropriately?
- What about the essay is memorable?
- What's the worst part of the essay?
- What parts of the essay need elaboration or are unclear?
- What parts of the essay do not support my main argument?
- Is every single sentence crucial to the essay? This must be the case.
- What does the essay reveal about my personality?

9. Don't Wander. Do Stay Focused.

Many applicants try to turn the personal statement into a complete autobiography. Not surprisingly, they find it difficult to pack so much information into such a short essay, and their essays end up sounding more like a list of experiences than a coherent, well-organized thought. Make sure that every sentence in your essay exists solely to support one central theme.

10. Do Revise, Revise, Revise.

The first step in improving any essay is to cut, cut, and cut some more. EssayEdge.com's free admissions essay help course and Harvard-educated editors will be invaluable as you polish your essay to perfection. The EssayEdge.com free help course guides you through the entire essay-writing process, from brainstorming worksheets and question-specific strategies for the twelve most common essay topics to a description of ten introduction types and editing checklists.

SAMPLE ESSAY

I have been planning a career in geological sciences for several years, but as an undergraduate I concentrated on getting a solid background in math and science. After graduation, I took a job to allow myself time to thoroughly think through my plans and to expose myself to a variety of work situations. This strategy has been very valuable to me in rounding out my career plans.

During the past 18 months I have had firsthand experience with computers in a wide array of business applications. This has stimulated me to think about ways in which computers could be used for scientific research. One idea that particularly fascinates me is mathematical modeling of natural systems, and I think those kinds of techniques could be put to good use in geological science. I have always enjoyed and been strong in areas that require logical, analytical thought, and I am anxious to combine my interest in earth science with my knowledge of, and aptitude for, computer-related work. There are several specific areas that I have already studied that I think would lend themselves to research based on computing techniques, including mineral phase relations in igneous petrology and several topics in structural geology.

I have had both lecture/lab and field courses in structural geology, as well as a short module

dealing with plate tectonics, and I am very interested in the whole area. I would like to explore structural geology and tectonics further at the graduate level. I am also interested in learning more about geophysics. I plan to focus on all these areas in graduate school while at the same time continuing to build up my overall knowledge of geology.

My ultimate academic goal is to earn a Ph.D., but enrolling first in a master's program will enable me to explore my various interests and make a more informed decision about which specific discipline I will want to study in depth. As far as long-term plans, I hope to get a position at a university or other institution where I can indulge my primary impulse, which is to be involved in scientific research, and also try my hand at teaching.

My decision to focus on math and science as an undergraduate and to explore the computer industry after college has equipped me with a unique set of strengths to offer this program. The depth of my interest in geology has only grown in my time away from academia, and although I have identified several possible areas of specialization through prior studies, I look forward to contributing my fresh perspective on all subjects.

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Graduate School Statement Samples

This section contains five sample graduate school personal statements:

Why Graduate School? Essay

My freshman year at Harvard, I was sitting in a Postcolonial African Literature class when Professor Ngugi wa Thiong'o (the influential Kenyan author) succeeded in attracting me to the study of African literature through nothing more than a single sentence. He argued that, when a civilization adopts reading and writing as the chief form of social communication, it frees itself to forget its own values, because those values no longer have to be part of a lived reality in order to have significance. I was immediately fascinated by the idea that the written word can alter individual lives, affect one's identity, and perhaps even shape national identity.

Professor Ngugi's proposal forced me to think in a radically new way: I was finally confronted with the notion of literature not as an agent of vital change, but as a potential instrument of stasis and social stagnancy. I began to question the basic assumptions with which I had, until then, approached the field. How does "literature" function away from the written page, in the lives of individuals and societies? What is the significance of the written word in a society where the construction of history is not necessarily recorded or even linear?

I soon discovered that the general scope of comparative literature fell short of my expectations because it didn't allow students to question the inherent integrity or subjectivity of their discourse. We were being told to approach Asian, African, European, and American texts with the same analytical tools, ignoring the fact that, within each culture, literature may function in a different capacity, and with a completely different sense of urgency. Seeking out ways in which literature tangibly impacted societies, I began to explore other fields, including history, philosophy, anthropology, language, and performance studies.

The interdisciplinary nature of my work is best illustrated by my senior thesis ("Time Out of Joint: Issues of Temporality in the Songs of Okot p'Bitek"). In addition to my literary interpretations, the thesis drew heavily on both the Ugandan author's own cultural treatises and other anthropological, psychological, and philosophical texts. By using tools from other disciplines, I was able to interpret the literary works while developing insight into the Ugandan society and popular psychology that gave birth to the horrific Idi Amin regime. In addition, I was able to further understand how people interacted with the works and incorporated (or failed to incorporate) them into their individual, social, and political realities.

On a more practical level, writing the thesis also confirmed my suspicion that I would like to pursue an academic career. When I finished my undergraduate career, I felt that a couple of

years of professional work would give me a better perspective of graduate school. I decided to secure a position which would grant me experiences far removed from the academic world, yet which would also permit me to continue developing the research and writing skills I needed to tackle the challenges of graduate school. I have fulfilled this goal by working as a content developer at a Silicon Alley web start-up for two years. The experience has been both enjoyable and invaluable -- to the point where colleagues glance at me with a puzzled look when I tell them I am leaving the job to return to school. In fact, my willingness to leave such a dynamic, high-paying job to pursue my passion for literature only reflects my keen determination to continue along the academic path.

Through a Masters program, I plan to further explore the issues I confronted during my undergraduate years by integrating the study of social, cultural, and linguistic anthropology into the realm of literature. I believe that, by adopting tools used in such disciplines, methods of inquiry can be formulated that allow for the interpretation of works that are both technically sound and sociologically insightful. Thus far, my studies have concentrated largely on African and Caribbean literatures, and I am particularly interested in studying these geographic areas in more specific historical and cultural contexts. I also seek to increase my knowledge of African languages, which will allow me to study the lingering cultural impact of colonialism in modern-day African literature. Eventually, I would like to secure an academic post in a Comparative Literature department, devoting myself to both research and teaching at the college level.

I believe the Modern Thought and Literature program at NAME is uniquely equipped to guide me toward these objectives. While searching for a graduate school that would accommodate my interdisciplinary approach, I was thrilled to find a program that approaches world literature with a cross-disciplinary focus, recognizing that the written word has the potential to be an entry point for social and cultural inquiry.

The level of scholarly research produced by the department also attracts me. Akhil Gupta's "Culture, Power, Place", for instance, was one of my first and most influential experiences with the field of cultural anthropology. Professor Gupta's analysis of the local, national, and foreign realms, achieved through a discussion of post-colonial displacement and mixed identifications, has led me to believe that -- given the complexity of modern societies -- comparative literature's focus on borders (national and linguistic) has been excessively arbitrary. Even more significant is the accurate rendering of individually-lived realities that may then be synthesized with other experiences. I believe that I could greatly benefit from Professor Gupta's teaching and guidance in applying these ideas to the literary arena, and I believe that his work is representative of the rigorous yet creative approach I would pursue upon joining the department.

Why Qualified? Essay

Ever since my first psychology lecture, I have been fascinated by the nature of human memory. Indeed, human memory is one of the most tenacious and enigmatic problems ever faced by philosophers and psychologists. The discussion of memory dates back to the early Greeks when Plato and Aristotle originally likened it to a "wax tablet." In 1890, pioneer

William James adopted the metaphorical framework and equated memory to a "house" to which thirty years later Sigmund Freud chimed that memory was closer to "rooms in a house." In 1968, Atkinson and Shiffrin retained the metaphorical framework but referred to memory as "stores". The fact that the controversy surrounding human memory has been marked more by analogy than definition suggests, however, that memory is a far more complex phenomenon than has been uncovered thus far. I intend to spend the rest of my professional life researching the nature of human memory and solving the riddle posed yet cunningly dodged by generations of philosophers and psychologists.

When I first came to psychology, however, I wanted to be a clinical psychologist. Only upon enrolling in Dr. Helga Noice's Cognitive Psychology course, did I discover the excitement of doing research. The course required us to test our own autobiographical memory by conducting an experiment similar to the one run in 1986 by W. Wagenaar. Over the course of the term, I recorded events from my personal life on event cards and set them aside without reviewing them. After studying the effect serial position on the recollection of autobiographical memories, I hypothesized that events that, when I sat down at the end of the term to recall those same events I had described on the event cards, that events that had occurred later in the term would be recalled with greater frequency than events that had occurred earlier. Although the experiment was of simple design and predictable results, I found the processes incredibly exciting. Autobiographical memory in particular fascinated me because I realized how crucial, yet fragile, memory is. Why was my memory of even ten weeks so imperfect? What factors contributed to that imperfection? Could such factors be controlled?

I had ignited my passion for experimental psychology. Suddenly, I had many pressing questions about memory that I wanted to research. Under the guidance of Dr. Noice, I continued to study human memory. I worked closely with Dr. Noice on several research experiments involving expert memory, specifically the memory of professional actors. Dr. Noice would select a scene from a play and then a professional actor would score it for beats, that is, go through the scene grouping sections of dialogue together according to the intent of the character. Some actors use this method to learn dialogue rather than rote memorization. After they were finished, I would type up the scene and the cued recall test. Next, I would moderate the experimental sessions by scoring the actor's cued recall for accuracy and then helping with the statistical analysis. My work culminated with my paper, "Teaching Students to Remember Complex Material Through the Use of Professional Actors' Learning Strategies." My paper accompanied a poster presentation at the Third Annual Tri-State Undergraduate Psychology Conference. In addition, I presented a related paper entitled "Type of Learning Strategy and Verbatim Retention of Complex Material" at the ILLOWA (Illinois-Iowa) Conference the following year. Again, I was involved in all aspects of the experiment, from typing the protocol and administering it to the subjects to analyzing the data and finally presenting my results.

The opportunity to perform this research was invaluable, particularly as I began taking independent research seminars in my senior year. For the seminars, I was required to write an extensive review of the literature and then design a research proposal on any topic of my choice. Although I had participated in all aspects of research previously, this was my first opportunity to select my own topic. I was immediately certain that I wanted to explore at

human memory. But I spent a long time considering what aspect of memory I found most intriguing and possible to tackle within the confines of the research seminar. I had always been interested in the legal implications of memory, so I to investigate eyewitness memory.

In retrospect, my choice was also informed by my recollection about an experiment I had read about several years earlier. In the experiment, subjects read about Helen Keller. Later they were given a recall test. Still later they were given an additional test to determine the source of their knowledge about Helen Keller. The authors discovered that subjects could not determine the source of their knowledge, that is, they could not distinguish whether specific details of their knowledge about Helen Keller came from the information provided by the experimenters or if the details came from another source at an earlier time. Once their new knowledge about Helen Keller had been assimilated into their previous knowledge about Helen Keller, there was no way to separate the information according to the source it came from.

I wondered what the implications of that conclusion would be for eyewitnesses. I wondered if an eyewitness account could be corrupted by misleading post-event information. My research proposal was entitled "The Rate of Memory Trace Decay and its Effect on Eyewitness Accuracy." While I was not able to complete the experiment in its entirety, I was excited by the fact that I created a possible research protocol. Immediately, I knew I wanted to pursue the field of experimental psychology. My success in course work and my passion for research demonstrated to me that I had both the interest and ability to enter this challenging and rewording field.

I have dedicated my undergraduate years to preparing myself for graduate work in experimental psychology. Once receive my doctorate, I intend to pursue research on human memory while teaching psychology to undergraduates at a small, liberal arts college, similar to the one I attended. It was, after all, my undergraduate research experience that gave me the opportunity to come to psychology with an interest in counseling people, but to leave with a passion for investigating the nature of human thinking. Undergraduates at smaller liberal arts colleges are often left out of research, which makes my desire to provide such experiences that much stronger. In the years ahead, I look forward to teaching as well as continuing my research. In the company of such greats as Aristotle, James, and Freud, I endeavor to leave behind my own contribution on the nature of human memory.

Why Qualified? Essay Two

"To be nobody but yourself--in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you everybody else--means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight; and never stop fighting." When I first read this passage by E.E. Cummings, I realized I have been fighting the same battle my whole life. When choosing the direction for my future, I have often accepted jobs based on a compromise between my own dreams and what others thought my dreams should be. This, of course, has led to an unfulfilling career.

Looking back, I always knew that I wanted to work in public service; but I also knew my staunchly conservative father would not be pleased. To him, the government is too big, too

intrusive and too wasteful. I see things differently. And yet, his approval means a lot to me and his opinion has certainly influenced my the direction of my career. But I have finally come to understand that I must pursue my own path. After careful deliberation, I am confident that public service is, without a doubt, the right career for me.

Ever since my childhood I have detected in myself a certain compassion and innate desire to help others. I was the kid that dragged in every stray cat or dog I came across--and I still do. When I was eight years old, I rescued a rat from my sister's psychology lab and brought her home. I even coaxed my father into taking Alice--I called her Alice--to the vet when she became ill. But aside from my humanitarian kindness to animals, as a child I learned first-hand about America's need to reform and improve medical care. I spent years of my childhood on crutches and in hospitals because of a tumor that hindered the growth of my leg. Without adequate health insurance and proper care, I might still be on crutches, but I was fortunate. Today, as a public servant, I still desire to help others who are not so fortunate. Providing health care to 44 million uninsured Americans, while keeping insurance affordable, is one of the most difficult challenges facing policymakers. I want to work in state or local government to resolve this health care crisis and ensure that the disadvantaged get the care they need and deserve.

In order to succeed in my endeavors toward public service, I now realize that a master's degree in public policy is essential. But when I graduated from college in 1990, I didn't know how to continue my education, only that I should. For a while, I considered such options as law school or international relations, but I always returned to my desire to impact public life. My career in public policy began as a legislative assistant at the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), a non-profit educational organization that couples voices from the state legislature and the private sector to work on salient policy issues. My enthusiasm for ALEC's mission was evident, as I quickly moved up from legislative assistant to the director of two task forces. As manager of ALEC's task force on federalism and its tax and fiscal policy task force, I explored these issues thoroughly, never quite satiating my appetite for more information and knowledge. I found my integral role in the legislative process to be the most valuable and worthwhile experience I've had in my career to date.

Following ALEC, I took a position as a junior lobbyist for the Automotive Parts and Accessories Association (APAA). As a lobbyist, I voiced the APAA's concern over regulatory and environmental issues affecting the automotive aftermarket. Although I was able to help small automotive parts manufacturers battle the "Big Three" automakers, I quickly realized that being an advocate for the automotive aftermarket was not my calling in life. I wanted to promote policies which had the potential to improve life for the greater public, for I could not see myself spending a lifetime working within an isolated industry.

With that frame of mind, I accepted employment as a policy analyst in the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) research department in Washington, D.C. Helping small business owners is a cause close to my heart. For nearly 30 years, my family has owned a barbecue restaurant in the Washington, D.C. area. I've worked in the business at several different times, since the age of 14. Because of my involvement in my family's business, I understand the unique problems facing small business owners. At the NFIB, I valued my contributions because I know small businesses have a huge economic impact on

our country and they are unquestionably an important constituency. Nevertheless, I felt uncomfortable working for a special interest group--even for one I deeply cared about.

From my experiences at the APAA and the NFIB, I have learned how I want to shape my future. My goals are now clear: I want to develop and advocate policy decisions that will benefit society as a whole, not just a few influential special interest groups. I want to uncover the objective truth of issues and tackle them in the best interests of the nation, not distort the facts for the benefit of a small group. I know I am able to look beyond partisan politics to solve problems for this country. Because of these unbending desires to reveal truth and to remain committed to fair and equal advancement for all citizens, I think of myself as an ideal candidate for public service.

Additionally, I consider my active interest in politics to aid my pursuit of a career in public policy. I've always found my interest in politics exceptional, ever since my college roommates used to tease me for faithfully watching C-SPAN. However, my faith in the political process began to wane as I witnessed sensible public policy proposals torn apart by partisan conflict. I saw advocacy groups distort facts, and provide extreme, over-blown examples, jeopardizing prudent policy decisions. I observed how powerful elected officials, ensnared in their own partisan rancor, would block fair and balanced legislation which offered the most practical solution for their constituents. But I also encountered many thoughtful and wise people who devote their lives to public service. These devoted individuals inspired me. Like them, I want to be actively involved in the design and delivery of essential government services that improve the lives of the citizens in our society today. I am positive that by avoiding partisanship and urging the private industry, the public sector and non-profit groups to collaborate, many difficult problems can be resolved.

In order to be an effective public servant, I recognize the indispensability of an advanced degree. I've gained a lot of "real world" experience, but I need more training in the fundamentals of economics and statistics, as well as direction in sharpening my analytical and quantitative skills. I also want to devote time to studying the ethical dimensions of policy decisions. In graduate school, I'll have the opportunity to truly understand and appreciate the competing interests surrounding so many complex issues like health care reform, environmental protection and economic policy.

I've chosen Duke's public policy program for several reasons. Duke's program stands out because there is an emphasis on quantitative and analytical skills, which are so critical to policy analysis. As I mentioned, I feel that if I can strengthen my ability to approach problems logically and systematically, I will have succeeded in sharpening skills I consider necessary to succeed in the public realm. And possibly even more importantly, Duke's program bridges the gap between abstract principles and reality. This interdisciplinary approach is essential for responding to today's policy problems. I am excited by the possibility of combining the MPP program with the Health Policy Certificate Program. I am particularly interested in studying the problem of reforming state health to reduce the number of uninsured, and I believe Duke's curriculum will offer me a chance to do just that. From my own research into Duke, I feel confident in my knowledge of the public policy program and its potential to teach me. And after meeting with Helen Ladd, the Director of Graduate Studies, I'm even more convinced that Duke's program is right for me.

On the road "to be nobody but" myself, I've encountered twists and turns, and some detours-- it is unquestionably the hardest battle I could fight. However, in the process, I've accumulated a tremendous amount of valuable experience and knowledge. My diversity of experience is my biggest asset. Because I can relate a Duke education to concrete examples from my own past, it is the perfect time for me to join the public policy program. I know that my past can be used to prepare myself for the promises of the future. At Duke, I hope to synthesize the two and truly learn what it means to become myself.

Why Unique? Essay One

Perhaps the most important influence that has shaped the person I am today is my upbringing in a traditional family-oriented Persian and Zoroastrian culture. My family has been an important source of support in all of the decisions I have made, and Zoroastrianism's three basic tenets--good words, good deeds, and good thoughts--have been my guiding principles in life. Not only do I try to do things for others, but I always push myself to be the best that I can be in all aspects of my life. I saw early the doors and opportunities that a good education can open up; thus, I particularly tried hard to do well in school.

Another important experience that has had a large influence on me the past few years has been college. Going from high school to college was a significant change. College required a major overhaul of my time-management techniques as the number of things to do mushroomed. In high school, I was in the honors program, with the same cohort of students in all my classes. Thus, I was exposed little to people very different from myself. College, on the other hand, is full of diversity. I have people of all backgrounds and abilities in my classes, and I have been fortunate enough to meet quite a few of them. This experience has made me more tolerant of differences. Furthermore, a variety of classes such as the Humanities Core Course, in which we specifically studied differences in race, gender, and belief systems, have liberalized my world view.

My undergraduate research has occupied a large portion of my time in college. Along with this experience have come knowledge and skills that could never be gained in the classroom. I have gained a better appreciation for the medical discoveries and discoveries of the past and the years of frustration endured and satisfaction enjoyed by scientists. I have also learned to deal better with the disappointments and frustrations that result when things do not always go as one expects them to. My research experience was also important to me in that it broadened my view of the medical field. Research permitted me to meet a few medical doctors who have clinical practices and yet are able to conduct research at the university. This has made me seriously consider combining research with a clinical practice in my own career.

From my earliest memories, I can always remember being interested in meteorology. I believe that this interest sparked my love for the outdoors, while my interest in medicine molded my desire for healthy living. As a result of these two influences, I try to follow an active exercise routine taking place mostly in the outdoors. I enjoy running and mountain biking in the local hills and mountains, along with hiking and backpacking. All of these

activities have made me concerned about the environment and my place in it.

Why Unique? Essay Two

My longtime fascination with politics and international affairs is reflected in my participation, starting in high school, in activities such as student council, school board meetings, Vietnam war protests, the McCarthy campaign, and the grape boycott. As each new cause came along, I was always ready to go to Washington or the state capital to wave a sign or chant slogans. Although I look back on these activities today with some chagrin, I realize they did help me to develop, at an early age, a sense of concern for social and political issues and a genuine desire to play a role.

As an undergraduate, I was more interested in social than academic development. During my last two years, I became involved with drugs and alcohol and devoted little time to my studies, doing only as much as was necessary to maintain a B average. After graduation my drug use became progressively worse; without the motivation or ability to look for a career job, I worked for a time in a factory and then, for three years, as a cab driver in New York City.

In 1980 I finally "hit bottom" and became willing to accept help. I joined both Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous, and for the next several years the primary business of my life was recovery. Although I had several "slips" in the beginning, I have now enjoyed nearly seven years of complete freedom from drug and alcohol use. I mention my bout with addiction because I think it is important in answering two issues that presumably will be of concern to the admissions committee: my lackluster undergraduate record and the fact that I have waited until the age of 34 to begin preparing academically for a career in public policy. It would be an oversimplification to call addiction the cause for either of these things; rather I would say it was the most obvious manifestation of an underlying immaturity that characterized my post adolescent years. More importantly, the discipline of recovery has had a significant impact on my overall emotional growth.

During the last years of my addiction I was completely oblivious to the world around me. Until 1983 I didn't even realize that there had been a revolution in Nicaragua or that one was going on in El Salvador. Then I rejoined the Quaker Meeting, in which I had been raised as a child, and quickly gravitated to its Peace and Social Order Committee. They were just then initiating a project to help refugees from Central America, and I joined enthusiastically in the work. I began reading about Central America and, later, teaching myself Spanish. I got to know refugees who were victims of poverty and oppression, became more grateful for my own economic and educational advantages, and developed a strong desire to give something back by working to provide opportunities to those who have not been so lucky.

In 1986 I went to Nicaragua to pick coffee for two weeks. This trip changed my whole outlook on both the United States and the underdeveloped world. The combination of living for two weeks amid poverty and engaging in long political discussions with my fellow coffee pickers, including several well-educated professionals who held views significantly to the left of mine, profoundly shook my world view. I came back humbled, aware of how little I knew about the

world and eager to learn more. I began raiding the public library for everything I could find on the Third World and started subscribing to a wide variety of periodicals, from scholarly journals such as Foreign Affairs and Asian Survey to obscure newsletters such as Through Our Eyes (published by U.S. citizens living in Nicaragua).

Over the intervening two years, my interest has gradually focused on economics. I have come to realize that economic development (including equitable distribution of wealth) is the key to peace and social justice, both at home and in the Third World. I didn't study economics in college and have found it difficult to understand the economic issues that are at the heart of many policy decisions. At the same time, though, I am fascinated by the subject. Given my belief that basic economic needs are among the most fundamental of human rights, how can society best go about providing for them? Although I call myself an idealist, I'm convinced that true idealism must be pragmatic. I am not impressed, for example, by simplistic formulations that require people to be better than they are. As a Quaker I believe that the means are inseparable from the end; as an American I believe that democracy and freedom of expression are essential elements of a just society, though I'm not wedded to the idea that our version of democracy is the only legitimate one.

Although I have carved out a comfortable niche in my present job, with a responsible position and a good salary, I have become increasingly dissatisfied with the prospect of a career in business applications programming. More and more of my time and energy is now being absorbed by community activities. After getting my master's in public administration, I would like to work in the area of economic development in the Third World, particularly Latin America. The setting might be a private (possibly church-based) development agency, the UN, the OAS, one of the multilateral development banks, or a government agency. What I need from graduate school is the academic foundation for such a career. What I offer in return is a perspective that comes from significant involvement in policy issues at the grass roots level, where they originate and ultimately must be resolved.

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College Application Essay Writing Tips

Step One: Brainstorming

The most important part of your essay is the subject matter. You should expect to devote about 1-2 weeks simply to brainstorming ideas. To begin brainstorming a subject idea consider the following points. From brainstorming, you may find a subject you had not considered at first.

- What are your major accomplishments, and why do you consider them accomplishments? Do not limit yourself to accomplishments you have been formally recognized for since the most interesting essays often are based on accomplishments that may have been trite at the time but become crucial when placed in the context of your life.
- Does any attribute, quality, or skill distinguish you from everyone else? How did you develop this attribute?
- Consider your favorite books, movies, works of art, etc. Have these influenced your life in a meaningful way? Why are they your favorites?
- What was the most difficult time in your life, and why? How did your perspective on life change as a result of the difficulty?
- Have you ever struggled mightily for something and succeeded? What made you successful?
- Have you ever struggled mightily for something and failed? How did you respond?
- Of everything in the world, what would you most like to be doing right now? Where would you most like to be? Who, of everyone living and dead, would you most like to be with? These questions should help you realize what you love most.
- Have you experienced a moment of epiphany, as if your eyes were opened to something you were previously blind to?
- What is your strongest, most unwavering personality trait? Do you maintain strong beliefs or adhere to a philosophy? How would your friends characterize you? What would they write about if they were writing your admissions essay for you?
- What have you done outside of the classroom that demonstrates qualities sought

after by universities? Of these, which means the most to you?

- What are your most important extracurricular or community activities? What made you join these activities? What made you continue to contribute to them?
- What are your dreams of the future? When you look back on your life in thirty years, what would it take for you to consider your life successful? What people, things, and accomplishments do you need? How does this particular university fit into your plans for the future?

If these questions cannot cure your writer's block, consider the following exercises:

J. Ask for Help from Parents, Friends, Colleagues, etc.

If you cannot characterize yourself and your personality traits do not automatically leap to mind, ask your friends to write a list of your five most salient personality traits. Ask your friends why they chose the ones they did. If an image of your personality begins to emerge, consider life experiences that could illustrate the particular traits.

ZJ^Mder y<*ur Childhood

While admissions officers are not interested in reading about your childhood and are more interested in the last 2-4 years of your life, you might consider events of your childhood that inspired the interests you have today. Interests that began in childhood may be the most defining parts of your life, even if you recently lost interest. For instance, if you were interested in math since an early age and now want to study medicine, you might incorporate this into your medical school admissions essay. Analyze the reasons for your interests and how they were shaped from your upbringing.

JUSG^4^JU^R01G Models

Many applicants do not have role models and were never greatly influenced by just one or two people. However, for those of you who have role models and actually aspire to become like certain people, you may want to incorporate a discussion of that person and the traits you admired into your application essay.

4, Read Sample Admissions Essays^,

Before you sat down to write a poem, you would certainly read past poets. Before writing a book of philosophy, you would consider past philosophers. In the same way, we recommend reading sample admissions essays to understand what topics other applicants chose. EssayEdge maintains an archive of over 100 free sample admissions essays. **Click here** to view sample essays that worked.

5. Coal Determination^

Life is short. Why do you want spend 2-6 years of your life at a particular college, graduate school, or professional school? How is the degree necessary to the fulfillment of your goals? When considering goals, think broadly. Few people would be satisfied with just a career. How else will your education fit your needs and lead you to a fulfilling life?

If after reading this entire page you do not have an idea for your essay, do not be surprised. Coming up with an idea is difficult and requires time. Actually consider the questions and exercises above. Without a topic you feel passionate about, without one that brings out the defining aspects of you personality, you risk falling into the trap of sounding like the 90 percent of applicants who will write boring admissions essays. The only way to write a unique essay is to have experiences that support whatever topic you come up with. Whatever you do, don't let the essay stress you out. Have fun with the brainstorming process. You might discover something about yourself you never consciously realized.

Good Luck!

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Step Two - Selecting an Essay Topic

By [EssayEdge.com](#): Our Editing Makes the Difference

Having completed step one, you should now have a rough idea of the elements you wish to include in your essay, including your goals, important life experiences, research experience, diversifying features, spectacular nonacademic accomplishments, etc. You should also now have an idea of what impression you want to make on the admissions officers.

We should remark that at this stage, undergraduate applicants have a large advantage over graduate school applicants. Whereas nobody questions a high school student's motivation to attend college, graduate and professional school applicants must directly address in their essays their desire to study their selected field.

You must now confront the underlying problem of the admissions essay. You must now consider topics that will allow you to synthesize your important personal characteristics and experiences into a coherent whole while simultaneously addressing your desire to attend a specific institution. While most admissions essays allow great latitude in topic selection, you must also be sure to answer the questions that were asked of you. Leaving a lasting impression on someone who reads 50-100 essays a day will not be easy, but we have compiled some guidelines to help you get started. With any luck, one or two topics, with small changes, will allow you to answer application questions for 5-7 different colleges, although admissions officers do appreciate essays that provide convincing evidence of how an applicant will fit into a particular academic environment. You should at least have read the college's webpage, admissions catalog, and have an understanding of the institution's strengths.

Consider the following questions before proceeding:

- Have you selected a topic that describes something of personal importance in your life, with which you can use **vivid personal experiences** as supporting details?
- Is your topic a gimmick? That is, do you plan to write your essay in iambic pentameter or make it funny. You should be very, very careful if you are planning to do this. We recommend strongly that you do not do this. Almost always, this is done poorly and is not appreciated by the admissions committee. Nothing is worse than not laughing or not being amused at something that was written to be funny or amusing.
- Will your topic only repeat information listed elsewhere on your application? If so, pick a new topic. Don't mention GPAs or standardized test scores in your essay.
- Can you offer vivid supporting paragraphs to your essay topic? If you cannot easily think of supporting paragraphs with concrete examples, you should probably choose a different essay topic.
- Can you fully answer the question asked of you? Can you address and elaborate on all points within the specified word limit, or will you end up writing a poor summary of something that might be interesting as a report or research paper? If you plan on writing something technical for college admissions, make sure you truly can back up your interest in a topic and are not merely throwing around big scientific words. Unless you convince the reader that you actually have the life experiences to back up your interest in neurobiology, the reader will assume you are trying to impress him/her with shallow tactics. Also, be sure you can write to admissions officers and that you are not writing over their heads.
- Can you keep the reader's interest from the first word. The entire essay must be interesting, considering admissions officers will probably only spend a few minutes reading each essay.
- Is your topic overdone? To ascertain this, peruse through old essays. EssayEdge's 100 free essays can help you do this. However, most topics are overdone, and this is not a bad thing. A unique or convincing answer to a classic topic can pay off big.
- Will your topic turnoff a large number of people? If you write on how everyone should worship your God, how wrong or right abortion is, or how you think the Republican or Democratic Party is evil, you will not get into the college of your choice. The only thing worse than not writing a memorable essay is writing an essay that will be

remembered negatively. Stay away from specific religions, political doctrines, or controversial opinions. You can still write an essay about Nietzsche's influence on your life, but express understanding that not all intelligent people will agree with Nietzsche's claims. Emphasize instead Nietzsche's influence on **your** life, and not why you think he was wrong or right in his claims.

- In this vein, if you are presenting a topic that is controversial, you must acknowledge counter arguments without sounding arrogant.
- Will an admissions officer remember your topic after a day of reading hundreds of essays? What will the officer remember about your topic? What will the officer remember about you? What will your lasting impression be?

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Step Three: Writing the Essay, Tips for Success

By EssayEdge.com: Our Editing Makes the Difference

Even seemingly boring topics can be made into exceptional admissions essays with an innovative approach. In writing the essay you must bear in mind your two goals: to persuade the admissions officer that you are extremely worthy of admission and to make the admissions officer aware that you are more than a GPA and a standardized score, that you are a real-life, intriguing personality.

Unfortunately, there is no surefire step-by-step method to writing a good essay. EssayEdge editors at <http://www.EssayEdge.com/> will remake your essay into an awesome, memorable masterpiece, but every topic requires a different treatment since no two essays are alike. However, we have compiled the following list of tips that you should find useful while writing your admissions essay.

1. Answer the Question

You can follow the next 11 steps, but if you miss the question, you will not be admitted to any institution.

2. Be Original

Even seemingly boring essay topics can sound interesting if creatively approached. If writing about a gymnastics competition you trained for, do not start your essay: "I worked long hours for many weeks to train for XXX

competition." Consider an opening like, "Every morning I awoke at 5:00 to sweat, tears, and blood as I trained on the uneven bars hoping to bring the state gymnastics trophy to my hometown."

3. Be Yourself

Admissions officers want to learn about you and your writing ability. Write about something meaningful and describe your feelings, not necessarily your actions. If you do this, your essay will be unique. Many people travel to foreign countries or win competitions, but your feelings during these events are unique to you. Unless a philosophy or societal problem has interested you intensely for years, stay away from grand themes that you have little personal experience with.

4. Don't "Thesaurize" Your Composition

For some reason, students continue to think big words make good essays. Big words are fine, but only if they are used in the appropriate contexts with complex styles. Think Hemingway.

5. Use Imagery and Clear, Vivid Prose

If you are not adept with imagery, you can write an excellent essay without it, but it's not easy. The application essay lends itself to imagery since the entire essay requires your experiences as supporting details. Appeal to the five senses of the admissions officers.

6. Spend the Most Time on Your Introduction

Expect admissions officers to spend 1-2 minutes reading your essay. You must use your introduction to grab their interest from the beginning. You might even consider completely changing your introduction after writing your body paragraphs.

- **Don't Summarize in your Introduction.** Ask yourself why a reader would want to read your entire essay after reading your introduction. If you summarize, the admissions officer need not read the rest of your essay.

- **Create Mystery or Intrigue in your Introduction.** It is not necessary or recommended that your first sentence give away the subject matter. Raise questions in the minds of the admissions officers to force them to read on. Appeal to their emotions to make them relate to your subject matter.

7. Body Paragraphs Must Relate to the Introduction

Your introduction can be original, but cannot be silly. The paragraphs that follow must relate to your introduction.

8. Use Transition

Applicants continue to ignore trans>

9. Conclusions Are Critical

The conclusion is your last chance to persuade the reader or impress upon them your qualifications. In the conclusion, avoid summary since the essay is rather short to begin with; the reader should not need to be reminded of what you wrote 300 words before. Also do not use stock phrases like "in conclusion, in summary, to conclude, etc." You should consider the following conclusions:

- Expand upon the broader implications of your discussion.
- Consider linking your conclusion to your introduction to establish a sense of balance by reiterating introductory phrases.
- Redefine a term used previously in your body paragraphs.
- End with a famous quote that is relevant to your argument. Do not **try** to do this, as this approach is overdone. This should come naturally.
- Frame your discussion within a larger context or show that your topic has widespread appeal.
- Remember, your essay need not be so tidy that you can answer why your little sister died or why people starve in Africa; you are not writing a "sit-com," but should forge some attempt at closure.

10. Do Something Else

Spend a week or so away from your draft to decide if you still consider your topic and approach worthwhile.

11. Give Your Draft to Others

Ask editors to read with these questions in mind:

- WHAT is the essay about?
- Have I used active voice verbs wherever possible?
- Is my sentence structure varied or do I use all long or all short sentences?
- Do you detect any cliches?
- Do I use transition appropriately?
- Do I use imagery often and does this make the essay clearer and more vivid?
- What's the best part of the essay?
- What about the essay is memorable?
- What's the worst part of the essay?
- What parts of the essay need elaboration or are unclear?
- What parts of the essay do not support your main argument or are immaterial to your case?
- Is every single sentence crucial to the essay? This **MUST** be the case.
- What does the essay reveal about your personality?
- Could anyone else have written this essay?
- How would you fill in the following blank based on the essay: "I want

to accept you to this college because our college needs more _____."

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College Admissions Essay Samples

Personal Essay

Three times a week after school I go visit my dad. When I enter the hospital room where he has lain in a coma since his accident, my eyes often wander to the lone golf ball my mom placed at his bedside. Just six months ago, my father was driving a golf cart across the street that bisects the local golf course when he was hit by a car. He suffered severe brain injury, and the doctors have ruled out any possibility of him waking up again. When I look at him lying in bed, frail but peaceful as if he were asleep, it's hard not to dwell on the "what ifs": what if he hadn't played golf that day? What if he hadn't been behind the fence when the black Camry plowed into it? What if I still had the chance to ask all those questions that choke me up when I see him in the hospital? I can't pretend that I have developed enough distance from the event to draw conclusions about life, but I am already beginning to see myself in very different terms.

Ironically, through this accident my dad has given a chance to face reality head-on. Before the accident, my relationship with him was warm but fraught with tension. He never seemed satisfied with what I did and reprimanded me for every wrong step I took. He had strong opinions about my hairstyle, clothes, friends, and--above everything else--my academic performance. When I was not sitting at my desk in my room, he invariably asked me why I had nothing to do and told me I should not procrastinate. He stressed that if I missed my teenage years of studying, I would regret it later. He didn't like me going out with my friends, so I often ended up staying at home--I was never allowed to sleep over at other students' homes. All I remember from my past high school years is going to school and coming back home. I was confused by my parents' overprotective attitude, because they emphasized independence yet never actually gave me a chance to be independent.

In terms of career, my dad often lectured me about which ones are acceptable and which are not. He worried incessantly about whether I would ever get into college, and he often made me feel as if he would never accept my choices. Rather than standing up for myself, I simply assumed that if I studied hard, he would no longer be disappointed in me. Although I tried hard, I never seemed to get it quite right; he always found fault with something. As if that weren't enough, he frequently compared me to my over-achieving older brother, asking me why I couldn't be more like him. I must admit that at times I even questioned whether my dad

really loved me. After all, he never expressed admiration for what I did, and my attempts to impress him were always in vain.

In retrospect, I don't think I fully understood what he was trying to tell me. These days, when I come home to an empty house, it strikes me just how dependent on my parents' care and support I have been so far. Now that my dad is in the hospital and my mom is always working, I see that I must develop the strength to stand alone one day. And, for the very first time, I now realize that this is exactly what my dad was trying to make me see. I understand that he had a big heart, even though he didn't always let it show; he was trying to steer me in the right direction, emphasizing the need to develop independence and personal strength. He was trying to help me see the world with my own eyes, to make my own judgments and decide for myself what I would eventually become. When my dad was still with us, I took all of his advice the wrong way. I should not have worried so much about living up to my parents' expectations; their only expectation of me, after all, is that I be myself.

In mapping out my path to achieving my independence, I know that education will allow me to build on the foundations with which my parents have provided me. My academic interests are still quite broad, but whereas I was once frustrated by my lack of direction, I am now excited at the prospect of exploring several fields before focusing on a particular area. Strangely, dealing with my father's accident has made me believe that I can tackle just about any challenge. Most importantly, I am more enthusiastic about my education than ever before. In embarking on my college career, I will be carrying with me my father's last gift and greatest legacy: a new desire to live in the present and the confidence to handle whatever the future might bring.

Story Essay

I walked into the first class that I have ever taught and confronted utter chaos. The four students in my Latin class were engaged in a heated spitball battle. They were all following the lead of Andrew, a tall eleven-year-old African-American boy.

Andrew turned to me and said, "Why are we learning Latin if no one speaks it? This a waste of time."

I broke out in a cold sweat. I thought, "How on Earth am I going to teach this kid?"

It was my first day of Summerbridge, a nationwide collaborative of thirty-six public and private high schools. Its goal is to foster a desire to learn in young, underprivileged students, while also exposing college and high-school students to teaching. Since I enjoy tutoring, I decided to apply to the program. I thought to myself, "Teaching can't be that difficult. I can handle it." I have never been more wrong in my life.

After what seemed like an eternity, I ended that first class feeling as though I had accomplished nothing. Somehow I needed to catch Andrew's attention. For the next two weeks, I tried everything from indoor chariot races to a Roman toga party, but nothing

seemed to work.

During the third week, after I had exhausted all of my ideas, I resorted to a game that my Latin teacher had used. A leader yells out commands in Latin and the students act out the commands. When I asked Andrew to be the leader, I found the miracle that I had been seeking. He thought it was great that he could order the teacher around with commands such as "jump in place" and "touch the window." I told him that if he asked me in Latin to do something, I would do it as long as he would do the same. With this agreement, I could teach him new words outside the classroom, and he could make his teacher hop on one foot in front of his friends. Andrew eventually gained a firm grasp of Latin.

Family night occurred during the last week of Summerbridge. We explained to the parents what we had accomplished. At the conclusion, Andrew's mom thanked me for teaching him Latin. She said, "Andrew wanted to speak Latin with someone, so he taught his younger brother."

My mouth fell open. I tempered my immediate desire to utter, "Andrew did what?" I was silent for a few seconds as I tried to regain my composure, but when I responded, I was unable to hide my surprise.

That night I remembered a comment an English teacher had made to me. I had asked her, "Why did you become a teacher?"

She responded with a statement that perplexed me at the time. She said, "There is nothing greater than empowering someone with the love of knowledge." Now, I finally understood what she meant.

When I returned to Summerbridge for my second summer, the first words out of Andrew's mouth were, "Is there going to be a Latin class this year?"

Detail Essay

I close my eyes and can still hear her, the little girl with a voice so strong and powerful we could hear her halfway down the block. She was a Russian peasant who asked for money and in return gave the only thing she had--her voice. I paused outside a small shop and listened. She brought to my mind the image of Little Orphan Annie. I could not understand the words she sang, but her voice begged for attention. It stood out from the noises of Arbat Street, pure and impressive, like the chime of a bell. She sang from underneath an old-style lamppost in the shadow of a building, her arms extended and head thrown back. She was small and of unremarkable looks. Her brown hair escaped the bun it had been pulled into, and she occasionally reached up to remove a stray piece from her face. Her clothing I can't recall. Her voice, on the other hand, is permanently imprinted on my mind.

I asked one of the translators about the girl. Elaina told me that she and hundreds of others like her throughout the former Soviet Union add to their families' income by working on the

streets. The children are unable to attend school, and their parents work fulltime. These children know that the consequence of an unsuccessful day is no food for the table. Similar situations occurred during the Depression in the United States, but those American children were faceless shoeshine boys of the twenties. This girl was real to me.

When we walked past her I gave her money. It was not out of pity but rather out of admiration. Her smile of thanks did not interrupt her singing. The girl watched us as we walked down the street. I know this because when I looked back she smiled again. We shared that smile, and I knew I would never forget her courage and inner strength. She was only a child, yet was able to pull her own weight during these uncertain times. On the streets of Moscow, she used her voice to help her family survive. For this "Annie," there is no Daddy Warbucks to come to the rescue. Her salvation will only come when Russia and its people find prosperity.

Personal Growth Essay

Tom Zincer succeeded in his task. My science class's first field trip took place on a bitter cold February day in Maine. Tom, our science teacher, led the group of relatively puzzled, well-bundled students into the forest. I was right behind Tom, and the sound of his red boots breaking through the thin layer of ice that covered the crusty snow seemed to bounce off the trees and scare away the few singing birds that had not migrated south for the winter. We stopped fourteen times during that four-hour field trip to hear Tom ramble on about the bark of "this" deciduous tree and the habitat that "this" coniferous tree needs to grow. We examined animal droppings and tracks in the snow and traced a bird's song back to its singer. This was all meaningless to me. I was cold and bored and wanted the field trip to end.

I would later write several essays in my journal about the fact that writing a detailed seven-page analysis of the field trip took all the beauty out of the event. I would complain to Tom about how boring and mundane his class was and how impossible it was to be so "anally" observant. I argued that no field trip could ever be enjoyable if we had to write down and later analyze the percentage of deciduous and coniferous trees, the air temperature, the amount of snow on the ground, the slope of the course taken, the change in temperature over the day, and a plethora of other minutia. Basically, I was lazy. No, no. I was not lazy. I was just not ready; I was not yet ready to become an observer.

"Sam, just trust me on this one. You'll thank me later," Tom said at the conclusion of our meeting. I had gone to see Tom privately in order to discuss how I could survive his class. The minutia was killing me, and my slow death was reflected in my dismal grade. Upon leaving that meeting, I made a personal and academic decision to develop my observational skills, both to please my teacher and to avoid the disappointment of another "D+."

On my next field trip, I set out into the forest with two pencils cocked between my two ears like guns ready to fire. My teeth were clenched with the determination to stay focused throughout the entire field trip and write down every word that man uttered. However, I constantly felt myself drifting, and while my mind wandered, the group advanced significantly

ahead of me, and I missed the sighting of another bird. I ran up to the group just in time to hear Tom start his lecture about a nearby rock formation. Instead of listening, I was asking my friend to see his Picasso-like rendition of the bird. I, therefore, fell behind on the lecture, and so went the endless cycle: fall behind, try to catch up, fall more behind. When it came time to rewrite my field notes in legible form, I stared at a piece of paper that consisted of smudged squiggly lines and eventually tears. Frustrated and disappointed, I retreated back to my cabin to seek refuge.

I quickly got undressed and slipped under my blanket for warmth, comfort, and most importantly protection. After I gave myself a few minutes to calm down, I took out the wet crumbled piece of paper from my pocket and tried to redraw a stick figure of a bird. The twelve stick figures, representing the twelve different birds we saw, looked exactly the same, and trying to redraw each body part of each bird to scale was so difficult that I felt like each pen stroke was met with a ton of resistance. Giving up, I pushed the piece of paper back into my pocket and lay down on my back. I saw Simon sitting in his characteristically feminine position on Ethan's bed. Simon was sitting, facing Ethan, with his legs crossed and his right hand casually nestled on his right kneecap, his foot twitching like the tail of a happy dog. Ethan was lying on his side with his big black headphones cupped around his ears, reading Faulkner. As my head swiveled, I noticed Conrad, sleeping, as usual, with his blanket clenched tightly under his chin, with both fists. I heard Fred and Rob discussing the pitfalls of modern education and could see Donald's head rhythmically moving back and forth, in sync with Jimi Hendrix. I then realized that I too was part of my environment. I realized that I was a silent participant, and more importantly, I realized that I was an observer.

On my next field trip, I had one pencil nonchalantly nestled on top of my right ear. I set out with no mission in mind and had no vengeance in my heart. I intentionally lagged behind my fellow classmates in order to get a wider, broader perspective of the environment. Applying what I learned in my cabin, I was able to engage all of my senses and could attempt to take in the vastness of it all. When we returned from our field trip, the task of doing a "rewrite" did not seem so odious, and my pencil flew across the page like a writer who just experienced an epiphany and wants to get his idea down before he forgets it. I drew every bird, tree, and rock as best I could, and although they were not perfect, they were exactly what I saw.

Hobbies and Interests Essay

The sun is still asleep while the empty city streets await the morning rush hour. As in a ritual, my teammates and I assemble into the dank, dimly-lit locker room at the Rinconada Park Pool. One by one, we slip into our moist drag suits and then make a mad run from the locker room through the brisk morning air to the pool, stopping only to grab a pull-buoy and a kick-board. Coastal California cools down overnight to the high forties. The pool is artificially warmed to seventy-nine degrees, and the clash in temperatures creates a plethora of steam on the water's surface, casting a scene more appropriate for a werewolf movie. Now the worst part: diving head-first into the glacial pond. I think of friends still tucked in their warm beds as I conclude the first warm-up laps. Meanwhile, our coach emerges through the fog. He offers no friendly accolades, just a stream of instructions and exhortations.

Thus begins another workout. 4,500 yards to go, then a quick shower and five-minute drive to school. Another 5,500 yards are on our afternoon training schedule. Tomorrow, the cycle starts all over again. The objective is to cut our times by another 1/10th of second. The end goal is to have that tiny difference at the end of a race that separates success from failure, greatness from mediocrity. Somehow we accept the pitch--otherwise, we'd still be fast asleep beneath our blankets. Yet sleep is lost time, and in this sport time is the antagonist. Coaches spend hours in specialized clinics, analyzing the latest research on training techniques and experimenting with workout schedules in an attempt to unravel the secrets of defeating time.

My first swimming race was when I was ten years old and an avid hockey player. My parents, fearing that I would get injured, redirected my athletic direction toward swimming. Three weeks into my new swimming endeavor, I somehow persuaded my coach to let me enter the annual age group meet. To his surprise and mine, I pulled out an "A" time. National "Top 16" awards through the various age groups, club records, and finally being named a National First Team All-American in the 100 Butterfly and Second Team All-American in the 200-Medley Relay cemented an achievement in the sport. Reaching the Senior Championship meet series means the competition includes world-class swimmers. Making finals will not be easy from here: these 'successes' were only separated from failure by tenths of a second. And the fine line between total commitment and tolerance continues to produce friction. Each new level requires more weight training, longer weekend training sessions, and more travel. Time that would normally be spent with friends is increasingly spent in pursuit of the next swimming objective.

In the solitude of the laps, my thoughts wander to events of greater significance. This year, my grandmother was hit with a recurrence of cancer, this time in her lungs. A person driven by good spirits and independence now faces a definite timeline. On the other side of the Pacific Ocean, my grandfather in Japan also contracted the disease. His situation has been corrected with surgery--for now, anyway. In the quest to extend their lives, they have both exhibited a strength that surpasses the struggles I confront both in sports and in life. Our different goals cannot be compared, yet my swimming achievements somehow provide a vicarious sense of victory to them. When I share my latest award or partake with them a story of a triumph, they smile with pride as if they themselves had stood on the award stand. I have the impression that my medals mean more to them than I will ever understand.

Life's successes appear to come in small increments, sometimes mere tenths of a second. A newly learned skill, a little extra effort put on top of fanatical training routine, a good race day, or just showing up to a workout when your body and psyche say "no" may separate a great result from a failure. What lies in between is compromise, the willpower to overcome the natural disposition to remain the same. I know that my commitment to swimming carries on to other aspects of life, and I feel that these will give me the strength to deal with very different types of challenges.

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Business School Admissions Essay Samples

Why MBA? Essay

Turkish news nowadays carry vivid images which have become terrifyingly commonplace: the surface of the sea littered with dead sheep; a landfill explosion leading to a number of deaths; vendors offering radiation-contaminated tea for half-price; a little girl's death resulting from her fall through an open sewage manhole in her schoolyard; radioactive waste sold to unsuspecting scrap dealers; a twenty-year-old tanker breaking into pieces, spilling hundreds of tons of crude oil into the ocean and killing sea life all around.

The frequency with which these environmental disasters fill Turkish news broadcasts -- along with the obvious insensitivity of the authorities towards both environment and health issues -- prompted me to learn about ways to prevent these types of disasters. At the age of fifteen, I decided to focus my studies on environmental sciences in order to equip myself with the technical tools I would need to make a real contribution.

After earning a master's degree in environmental sciences, I completed a professional international management certificate program in order to gain a management perspective of the field. I then realized that, in order to effectively combine my technical knowledge and management skills, I needed to accumulate real-world experience. Specifically, working at a large company would allow me to develop insight into various industries, as well as an overarching vision of the international business arena.

I have now worked for nearly two years in the energy and environment group of Koc Holding, Turkey's first and biggest diversified conglomerate. As a project engineer, I am mainly responsible for our holding companies' environment and energy sector investments. This position has given me the opportunity to interact with businessmen from all over the world, thereby expanding my international perspective. Because of my outstanding work performance, I was chosen to attend various meetings with local and international governmental bodies such as OPIC, IFC, and the World Bank. It is highly unusual for a young associate to represent the company at such events, and my self-confidence -- as well as my management skills -- was further enhanced by that successful experience.

While working in various business lines, including the automotive industry, consumer durables, and the energy sector, I have realized that the root cause of many environmental problems is financial. I believe that many people in the environmental sector are so ignorant or insensitive that they will cheat customers to increase profits. Furthermore, businesses do not prioritize environmental investments; as a result, insufficient funds are allocated to adequately prevent problems. For instance, despite a population over eight million people, Istanbul, Turkey's largest city, still lacks a properly operating sewage system. In most of the areas of the city, waste water is discharged directly into the Bosphorus.

In the long term, I hope to help solve my country's problems by starting my own environmental-services business in Turkey. The company will serve both local and international customers by providing cost-effective, adaptable solutions ranging from waste management to safety management. In order to accomplish this goal, however, I must deepen my knowledge of the field. Despite my experience, I still lack some important knowledge and management skills, especially in finance, marketing, and entrepreneurship. I am also aware that my knowledge of American environmental issues is insufficient. Since dealing with aspects of international business will be an integral part of my job as an entrepreneur, it is essential that I fill in these gaps.

The NAME School's MBA program is the perfect bridge from where I am to where I want to be. I am attracted by the inventiveness and uniqueness of its entrepreneurial and finance programs, and believe that I will increase my practical knowledge of entrepreneurship by interacting with my classmates. I value the fact that at NAME entrepreneurial education does not stop at the classroom, but rather continues through internships and extracurricular activities. I feel that a business school for entrepreneurs should balance a dose of theory with real-world application, and NAME's curriculum and hands-on experiences through associations, internships, and the management field study provide such balance.

I am also drawn to NAME because of the school's emphasis on teamwork and technology, reflected by such exciting courses and programs as High Technology Entrepreneurship, International Finance, 12-week field application projects, and the global immersion program directed to teach global thinking and global action. Additionally, the school's profusion of student groups and its flexible entrepreneurial program -- with electives from 200 courses -- will allow me to tailor my course of study directly to my career interests. It is precisely this flexibility that I plan to draw on while at NAME and beyond, by taking advantage of (and contributing to) the school's strong international alumni network.

Above all, a NAME MBA will help me strengthen both the finance knowledge and the entrepreneurial skills necessary to secure a position as an environmental specialist in a multinational American-based firm. Such a position, in turn, will prepare me to accomplish my long-term ambition of building my own company. By developing and maximizing the technical knowledge and managerial skills I have already accumulated, NAME will allow me to ultimately make a concrete and substantial contribution to Turkey's environment.

Uniqueness Essay

For the first 20 years of my life, my activities--and self-confidence--were circumscribed by the fact that I was a chronic allergic asthmatic. I was underweight, not as strong or as well as my peers, and unable to participate normally in sports. At night I was unable to sleep without an inhaler beside my bed. I was forced to ingest heavy medication on a daily basis.

At the age of 20 I started running (slowly at first), because I discovered that this exercise--although routinely precipitating a mild asthma attack--would later enable me to sleep through the night. Very gradually, my runs became longer. My strength improved, the severity and frequency of my attacks lessened, and soon I was able to discontinue all medication. More remarkably, after about seven years I was actually able to run 20 miles with no problem at

all. This accomplishment was an enormous confidence booster, as it demonstrated that a normal, healthy life was possible for me and that I could achieve anything if I set my mind to it.

Eventually it was a logical step for me to progress into competition. I found myself running in marathons and, finally, competing in triathlons. In 1983, in fact, I successfully competed in the Hawaii Ironman triathlon, arguably the most arduous and certainly the most celebrated single-day athletic endurance event.

I have assiduously pursued aerobic exercise for the past 11 years, ever since I discovered that such endeavors were finally possible for me and were the means by which I could attain physical strength and well-being. It was a long and arduous road--from huffing and puffing (and wheezing) my way through tentative one-mile runs to involving myself in the rigors of the triathlon--but I was determined to become fit and to stay fit.

It has made all the difference.

Qualifications Essay

As a Marketing Manager with ADP's corporate marketing department, I have been assigned to lead various product-specific marketing initiatives supporting a diversified group of business segments. Among these tasks, none was more important to the strategic direction of the business than leading the development of ADP's web site adp.com.

ADP, a leading \$5 billion technology company with over 425,000 clients worldwide, lacked a consistent or aggressive Internet strategy. Instead, each business unit or division was driving its own website strategy and execution. More often than not, the result was a fragmented message: a cluttered, company-centric website that failed to effectively communicate our broad range of products and services. Despite its market leadership, ADP was meeting neither the expectations of users nor the needs of clients. The company was also missing a tremendous marketing opportunity and risking losing market share because our competition was operating at a far higher level than ours. Realizing that corporate marketing could add value across the company's business segments, I initiated and led a plan to redesign the website and fully leverage the Internet as a marketing channel to drive branding, product awareness, and sales leads through an integrated and path-driven website.

My role was specific: develop a strategy to improve navigation, communicate the complete range of ADP's products and services, optimize the flow of traffic to drive leads for the business segments, persuade visitors to purchase ADP products and services online, and create a platform for ADP's evolving E-business strategy. This initiative was highly challenging because of the complexity of the service offerings, the diversity of the business, and the overwhelming political bureaucracy within the organization.

With a limited budget, limited resources, and limited supervision, I designed a four-phase strategy to re-evaluate the current website and replace it with an active, path-driven site. The strategy included a review of the company's current navigation and content, a strategic assessment mapping navigation and functionality against corporate and divisional objectives, and the design and architecture of the site. Furthermore, we developed a plan to validate our

recommendation with market feedback through client and prospective client focus group interviews.

The first phase encompassed an overall program review, analysis of all current ADP and industry Internet market research, a web traffic audit, and internal interviews with senior management. In familiarizing ourselves with current industry practices, we also reviewed ten competitors and twelve business-to-business leaders' websites. These 22 sites were carefully evaluated for their relative strengths and weaknesses in the areas of navigation, content, degree of user-centricity, and organization. The second phase included a design exploration. Working together with a web design firm, we developed five different design options. In phase three, we gathered market feedback through focus group interviews conducted with both clients and prospects based on the current web site and on the new design options. The final phase involved feedback-based revisions to the designs, which will be presented to ADP's Executive Committee in April and launched in May 2000.

The project was a success. Our recommendation was received with exceedingly positive feedback by both the business units and the Executive Vice President of Marketing. In addition, I have been awarded with the honor of presenting the project to the Executive Committee in April. Our long-term goal is to develop an entire adp.com team dedicated to servicing clients and marketing on the Internet.

The management skills I have gained from this project have been invaluable to my career growth. I have learned the value of qualitative and quantitative research, experience in fiscal management and project management, and the importance of matching corporate strategy to Internet strategy. More importantly, the experience has taught me the value of gathering senior management "buy in" through the progression of a project. I was able to successfully gain the support of senior management by maintaining open communication and making them part of the process. Ultimately, this support was critical to the success of the project, which has brought my department and me increased visibility within the company -- a development that, in turn, has led to more important projects. Through the success of adp.com, I am now regarded as an effective and respected manager who has the ability to analyze and lead complex projects from concept to completion while gaining the support of senior management.

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