

The Learn Hot English *Proficiency Pack*

Ready-to-go lessons for proficiency-level students!

Level: Proficiency, C2. January-April 2018



Introduction

The aim of these lessons is to get your proficiency-level students speaking and writing after reading or listening to authentic, native-level materials. The practical lessons will get your students using lots of useful language and all the essential skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. The follow-up activities will help reinforce learning and give students opportunities to put any newly-acquired language into practice. This will ensure dynamic classes and rapid learning.

The video files consist of mostly English-speakers speaking naturally (they aren't scripted texts). The reading texts are from online native-level sources.

A lot of these activities come with video or listening files. You can download the compressed file from www.learnhotenglish.com/bookfiles and then load the audio files onto your smartphone, tablet computer, laptop, etc.

You're free to do the lessons as you please, but we find it works quite well to discuss the topic first, followed by the video, audio or reading activity, and ending up with a speaking or writing task.

For students with a high listening level, you might just let them watch the videos once to challenge them a bit more. In most cases, this will mean skipping the first viewing activity and going straight to the second viewing one.

Look in the Advanced Pack as there may be some audio-lessons you can use too for your Proficiency-level students. Simply make the listenings more challenging by cutting out any Pre-listening or warm-up activities.

Please e-mail us with any other ideas you may have, or any comments in general:

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Good luck!

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1. Video

What's the right age to get a mobile phone?

1 Discussion: mobile phones

Have a discussion about mobile phones. You can answer any questions you like (and in any order). Remember, the objective of these questions is to get you talking. If a question appears a bit “personal”, just ignore it or invent the answer:

What type of phone have you got? What do you like or dislike about it? Have you ever lost your phone? When and where did you lose it? How much hassle did it cause you? What apps have you got on your phone? What do you use them for? What was life like before mobile phones existed? What would your life be like without your mobile phone? Can you remember your first mobile telephone? What was it like? What did you use it for? What are your favourite functions on your current mobile phone? What new functions would you like to see on mobile phones? What are the pros and cons of having a mobile phone? What ringtones have you got on your mobile phone? Why? How often do you use your mobile? How do you feel about people having (loud) conversations in public on their mobile phone? Do you ever worry about other people listening in to your mobile phone conversations when you're in public? Why? What interesting conversations have you heard on mobile telephones? What's the best brand of mobile phone? Which operating system do you prefer: Apple or Android? Why? How dangerous is it to use a mobile phone while driving? What penalties should there be for doing this? How do you think mobile phones are affecting young people? Do you think schools should ban mobile phones? Why? Why not?



2 First viewing

You're going to watch a video with people giving their opinions on when children should be allowed to have a mobile phone. What do you think about this? What's your opinion? Make notes. Then, watch the video once to compare your ideas. Did anyone have the same opinion as you?

3 Second viewing

Watch the video again. Then, make a note of what each person says about children and mobile phones. Also, make a note of why they think this and any other points they make.

1. David:
2. Deidre:
3. Louise:
4. Daniel:
5. Jackie:
6. Tim:
7. Becky & Natasha:
8. Vicky:
9. Andrew & Tracey:
10. Sonnet:

4 Follow-up

Dialogue

In pairs, write a dialogue of a conversation between two parents who are arguing about whether their 8-year-old daughter should have a mobile phone or not. One parent is in favour of this, the other isn't. Make the dialogue as funny, silly or serious as you like. When you're ready, act out your dialogue (using notes, not reading it out word-for-word). Other students listen and vote on the best ones.

E-mail

Write an e-mail to a school head complaining about some new anti-mobile phone measures that have affected your 6-year-old son. When they're ready, read out your e-mail (using notes, not word-for-word). Other students vote on the best ones. Or, "send" the e-mail to a classmate, who reads it and then reports back on the information, or who responds to it.

Debate

Hold a debate! Your teacher will divide the class into two. Half the class is in favour of the idea of allowing children under 10 to have a mobile phone. The other half is against this idea. In your group (or pair), prepare arguments either in favour of or against the idea. When you're ready, a representative from each group will need to present their arguments. When they've finished, open up the debate so anyone can make comments, respond to previous points, etc. At the end (after a few minutes), hold a vote and see which idea is the most popular. You can vote either way and that you don't have to vote according to your initial group and the stance that they were representing.

Answers

1. David: 12-13 years old because kids are getting older (faster) now.
2. Deidre: 12, or maybe 10 years old because it's important that they can contact mum and dad while they're at school.
3. Louise: quite early. It's good as they can contact their parents, and you can keep track of them, but you have to be careful about what they can get hold of.
4. Daniel: 10 years old. A phone so they can communicate, rather than something they can play on.
5. Jackie: 11 years old. So they can make emergency calls.
6. Tim: As soon as they know how to work it – even as young as three years old.
7. Becky & Natasha: 12-14 years old. When they go to secondary school because they're becoming more independent, but you have to be careful with social media.
8. Vicky: 11 years old because of peer pressure, and it's a safety device.
9. Andrew and Tracey: 13-14 years old when you start interacting and going out with friends.
10. Sonnet: when they're old enough to go out on their own as it's a safety thing. She has a 7-year-old who has a phone, but it's worrying because of the crime implications.

2. Video

What's the best way to control spending?



1 Discussion: money & spending

Have a discussion about money and spending. You can answer any questions you like (and in any order). Remember, the objective of these questions is to get you talking. If a question appears a bit “personal”, just ignore it or invent the answer:

How do you control your spending? Do you use a budget? Why? Why not? Do you stick to it? In what way? How do you track your spending? How did you do it in the past? Has your spending ever got out of control? What happened? What money or income did you have at college or university? How did you control your spending there? What cards have you got (a credit card, a debit card, etc.)? How often do you use them? How do you prefer to pay when you go shopping? Do you ever pay in cash? When? Why? Do you think it's important for children to learn about personal finance? Why? Why not? Do you ever read the financial news? Why? Why not? How important is the financial news? How important is it to keep track of it? How good are you at saving? How much do you save every month? What do you do with your savings? How good are you at finding the best place for your savings? Do you move your savings into different banks, etc.? Why? Why not? Have you ever talked to a personal financial advisor? What about? Have you ever invested any money in the stock market? What did you invest in? How did it go? Do you think the finance minister in your country is doing a good job? Why? Why not? What personal finance decisions have you had to make recently? What are the biggest personal finance decisions you have made or will have to make in your life? What measures have you put in place to ensure your financial security when you retire?

2 First viewing

You're going to watch an expert giving some advice for college students ("university students" in UK English) on how to control their spending. What would your top tips for students be? Make notes. Then, watch the video once. Were any of your ideas mentioned?

3 Second viewing

Watch the video again. Then, answer the questions.

1. What examples does the presenter give of casual spending?
2. What does she suggest using to track your expenses?
3. Why doesn't she like the term "budget"?
4. How does her idea for the spending plan work?
5. What does she suggest doing if you get off track from your budget?
6. What sort of categories can your spending money come from?
7. In what way does she say that a spending plan is like a diet?
8. Why does she think that it's better to use a **money order*** rather than a cheque?

***Money order** – a money order is a paper document used for making payments. They're similar to cheques; however, money orders are prepaid – meaning they're only issued after a buyer pays for the money order using cash or another form of guaranteed funds.

4 Follow-up

Dialogue

In pairs, students write a dialogue of a meeting between a bank manager and a customer, who is having money difficulties. Make the dialogue as funny, silly or serious as you like. When you're ready, act out your dialogue (using notes, not reading it out word-for-word). Other students listen and vote on the best ones.

Presentation

Write notes for a presentation on a money-related topic: how best to control your spending, how to save money, etc. When you're ready, give your presentation (using notes, not reading it out word-for-word). Other students vote on the most interesting ones.

E-mail

Write an e-mail to a friend describing a money-related issue. When you're ready, read out your e-mail (using notes, not word-for-word). Other students vote on the best ones.

Or, “send” the e-mail to a classmate, who reads it and then reports back on the information, or who responds to it.

Answers

1. Going to Starbucks, getting late-night pizzas and spending money randomly.
- 2 She suggests using a notebook to write down everything you spend your money on so you don't end up with debt.
3. She doesn't like the term “budget” because it sounds restricted and like you're strapped down.
4. You need to create categories with allocated money to spend in each one. If you go over in one category, you need to find extra money from another one.
5. You need to go back to the category that you're spending too much money in and then find the money in another category that you're not spending too much money in.
6. Any category or expense that isn't fixed (such as rent).
7. It's all about balance and compensating. So, as with dieting, if you eat too much of one thing, you'll need to have a lighter dinner. It's the same with spending.
8. Because when you're at college it's all new and lot of fun and it's easy to lose track of all the cheques you issue and things could easily get out of hand. However, with a money order, the money has already been paid.

3. Video

What glasses can reveal about your personality!



1 Discussion: personality & character

Have a discussion about personality and character. You can answer any questions you like (and in any order). Remember, the objective of these questions is to get you talking. If a question appears a bit “personal”, just ignore it or invent the answer:

Which adjectives would you use to describe yourself? Choose from the ones below and give examples to illustrate how you’re like that.

Adaptable, agreeable, ambitious, amusing, brave, calm, charming, cheerful, cooperative, decisive, determined, diligent, dynamic, energetic, enthusiastic, loyal, faithful, friendly, funny, generous, helpful, industrious, instinctive, likeable, lucky, modern, peaceful, productive, proud, punctual, reflective, romantic, self-assured, selective, shrewd, sincere, thoughtful, upbeat, positive, optimistic

Do you know anyone with any of these “negative” traits? Who? In what way are they like this? Do you have any of these negative traits? Which ones? Give examples to illustrate in what way you are like this.

Abusive, angry, arrogant, boring, careless, confused, cowardly, cynical, deceitful, disagreeable, domineering, envious, jealous, frightful, greedy, grumpy, forgetful, gullible, ignorant, lax, malicious, mean, naïve, nasty, possessive, ruthless, argumentative, selfish, snobbish, tacky, insensitive, thin-skinned, thoughtless, uptight, vengeful

Now discuss these questions:

What are your greatest strengths or weaknesses? Give examples. If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be? Why? Are you generally introverted or extroverted? Give examples. Are you organised or messy? Give examples. What are three things you're very good at, and three things you need to improve on? How adventurous are you? Give examples. What goal do you most want to accomplish in your lifetime? Why? Where do you see yourself in 5 years? What's the one thing you'd like to be remembered for? What three words would other people probably use to describe you? Who is the most important person in your life, and why? Who do you respect the most, and why? How close are you to your family? Do you tend to take on leadership roles in social situations? Give examples. Do you like interacting with large groups of people? Why? Why not? Do you care what people think about you? Why? Why not? What makes you laugh? What, if anything, shocks or offends you? How do you deal with stress? When was the last time you acted spontaneously? What did you do? Do you usually need to have a plan? Give examples. What annoys you in life (at work, at home, with your colleagues, with friends, in public, on public transport, at restaurants, etc.)?

2 Viewing I

You're going to watch a video with people discussing what your glasses can say about your personality. Look at the descriptions of the types of glasses below. What do you think they could say about the personality of the person who wears them? Make notes. Then, watch the video once to compare your ideas. *Glasses with...*

1. Big round frames =
2. Simple clean frames =
3. Colourful frames =
4. Patterned frames =
5. Aviators =
6. Big black frames =



3 Follow-up

Descriptions!

Use the adjectives from this lesson (or any others) to write a short description of someone famous, or someone from the office or class (be nice!). When you're ready, ask for volunteers to read out their descriptions. Other students have to guess who it is.

Dialogue

In pairs, write a dialogue of a meeting between two managers who are discussing candidates for a job position. Talk about the candidates and discuss whether they would be suitable for the job, referring to their character, experience, appearance, etc. Make

the dialogue as funny, silly or serious as you like. When you're ready, act out your dialogues (using notes, not reading it out word-for-word). Other students listen and vote on the best ones.

Answers

1. Big round frames = quirky
2. Simple clean frames = pragmatic and detail oriented and not so concerned about showing off
3. Colourful frames = creative
4. Patterned frames = cheerful person who doesn't take life too seriously
5. Aviators – adventurous and a risk taker, not concerned with respecting rules
6. Big black frames = young hipster crowd.

4. Video

Should alcohol be banned from airports?



1 Discussion: alcohol

Have a discussion about alcohol. You can answer any questions you like (and in any order). Remember, the objective of these questions is to get you talking. If a question appears a bit “personal”, just ignore it or invent the answer:

How often do you drink? When and where do you usually drink? Do you drink any wine or beer with your meals? When? How often? What are some of your favourite alcoholic drinks? Have you ever drunk to excess? When? Where? What are you like when you’ve had a few too many? In what way do you think alcohol is a drug? When did you have your first drink? How did it make you feel? How have your drinking habits changed over the years? How much do you drink now compared to when you were younger, for example? What fun, funny or embarrassing drink-related experiences have you had? What alcohol-related anecdotes have you got? Should there be any controls on alcohol advertising? Why? Why not? Should drunk people be charged if they’re admitted to Accident & Emergency department? What are the drink-driving laws in your country like? Are they too strict or not strict enough? Why? How does alcohol change your behaviour or personality? What are the most popular alcoholic drinks in your country? What part does alcohol play in your country’s culture? What should the legal drinking age be? What is the legal drinking age in your country? What do you think about it? What are the licensing laws like in your country? How late can bars stay open? What restrictions are there on bar opening and closing times? What do you think about this: are the laws too strict or not strict enough? What laws are there regarding drinking on the street? What do you think about these laws? What kinds of social problems does

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alcohol cause in your country? What can be done about this? Do you think people from different countries act differently when drunk? Have you ever said or done something under the influence of alcohol that you later regretted? What was it? When was the last time you had a hangover? Why did you have a hangover? How did you cure it? What are your top tips for curing a hangover?

2 First viewing

You're going to watch a video clip with people discussing the issue of banning alcohol at airports. What reasons might there be for doing this, and what are the potential pros and cons? Make notes. Then, watch the video once to compare your ideas. Were any of your ideas mentioned?

3 Second viewing

Watch the video again. Then, answer the questions.

1. What does Jade say about not being allowed a glass of wine?
2. What does the presenter say about the facts related to alcohol at airports?
3. What does Lyn say about air rage?
4. What does she say about opening times?
5. Who does she say is causing the problems?
6. How does Lyn say passengers get around the ban on drinking the alcohol they buy from duty-free shops?
7. What does Brian (a viewer who writes in) suggest?
8. What does Lyn say about the problems associated with turfing someone off when they get to the departure gate?
9. What does the presenter suggest they should do?

4 Follow-up

Dialogue

Write a dialogue that takes place at an airport or on a plane. Make the dialogue as funny, silly or serious as you like. When you're ready, act out your dialogue (using notes, not reading it out word-for-word). Other students listen and vote on the best ones.

Debate!

Hold a debate! Your teacher will divide the class into two. Half the class is in favour of the idea of banning alcohol in airports. The other half is against this idea. In your group (or pair), prepare arguments either in favour of or against the idea. When you're ready, a representative from each group will need to present their arguments. When they've finished, open up the debate so anyone can make comments, respond to previous points, etc. At the end (after a few minutes), hold a vote and see which idea is the most popular. You can vote either way and that you don't have to vote according to your initial group and the stance that they were representing.

Answers

1. She says that she would feel that it wasn't fair because she hadn't misbehaved.
2. We've gone from an incident in one in every 1,600 flights to 1 in every 1,200 flights. Every 15 minutes, there's an incident on a flight, almost always because of alcohol.

3. It's becoming a big problem and it's almost always down to alcohol.
4. Bars and pubs at airports can open at any time because they don't have to comply with normal licensing laws.
5. It isn't families, couples or solo travellers who are the problem, but groups of friends and parties who are celebrating something.
6. Passengers hide the alcohol in their hand luggage and then sneak it out.
7. He suggests stamping your boarding card every time you have a drink, with a maximum of two alcoholic drinks per person before boarding the plane.
8. The airline will have to look for this passenger's bags and take off their luggage.
9. He says they should have a breathalyser test, or someone should decide who can or can't get on the flight.

5. Video

Is Britain getting ruder?



1 Discussion: behaviour

Have a discussion about politeness. You can answer any questions you like (and in any order). Remember, the objective of these questions is to get you talking. If a question appears a bit “personal”, just ignore it or invent the answer:

How polite are you? What's your definition of a polite person? Has anyone ever been disrespectful or impolite to you? Who? When? How did you react? Have you ever been rude or impolite to anyone? Who? When? Why? How well-behaved were you as a child? In what way were you well-behaved? Give examples. Have you ever seen anyone behaving rudely at work? What happened? Is there anyone at work who is hard to deal with? In what way? What are your top tips for raising well-behaved children? What kind of behaviour would you find unacceptable at work, in public, on public transport, at a restaurant, at a hotel, etc.? What examples of bad or rude behaviour have you seen lately? In what way is TV changing the way we behave? Is TV a positive or negative influence on the way we behave? Have you ever told off a friend or family member for behaving badly? Who? When? Why? Should we judge people by the way they behave in public or at home? Do you think famous people or public figures give up their right to a private life? Why? In what way do you behave differently with your friends and your family? How do you generally treat strangers? Have you ever been rude to someone then regretted it afterwards? Who? When? Where? How important is etiquette and etiquette training? What etiquette rules are there in your country? How important is it to always be on your best behaviour? Does it always pay to be good, kind and polite? Why? When not? How do you act when you're happy? Do you like being around happy people? What are you like when you're in a bad mood? Should parents be held responsible for their children's behaviour? Have you ever seen somebody else's child behaving badly in public? What was he/she doing? What did you do about it? Have you read any rude or impolite comments on social media lately? What were they? In what way were they rude or impolite? Is one person's rudeness another person's plain speaking?

2 First viewing

You're going to watch a video clip with people discussing whether the British are getting ruder. They use a specific example of how one of the guests on the show was "rude" recently to an Uber driver. Think of as many ways in which you can be rude to a taxi driver. Then, watch the video once. Was the incident they mentioned similar to any of the ones you thought of? How rude do you think the person was?

3 Second viewing

Watch the video again. Then, answer the questions.

1. What did Julia Hartley-Brewer's Uber driver tell her?

That his car produced zero emissions.

2. How did Julia respond?

She said she couldn't care less.

3. What does Julia say about the conversation?

She says that it was a really friendly conversation.

3. What is her Uber rating? What does this suggest about her?

She's got a 4.3 Uber rating, which suggests she isn't generally rude to cab drivers.

4. What does Julia say about why she made the comment?

She said she made the comment because she doesn't buy into the PC eco stuff, and that she isn't one of those people who thinks that green cars will save the planet.

5. What does the female presenter say about the way people interpreted her comment?

Julia put the comment on Twitter and she didn't seem to care that she'd been rude.

6. In what way were people hypocritical towards Julia after the "Emma Watson" Twitter storm she'd caused?

They used vile language to tell her not to be rude.

7. What does Jack (the other guest) say about how comments like this can be interpreted in general?

She says that the comment Julia made was a little bit curt and Julia seemed to be proud of it. She also says that people with large platforms have to be careful because it can make others see things like this as a justification for being rude.

8. What does Jack say about the connotations attached to the expression "I couldn't care less"?

She says that it's dismissive, regardless of the circumstances under which you use it.

4 Follow-up

Dialogue

Write the text for a dialogue between two people, one of whom is acting rudely, or who has been rude. Make the dialogue as funny, silly or serious as they like. When you're

ready, act out your dialogue (using notes, not reading it out word-for-word). Other students listen and vote on the best ones.

E-mail

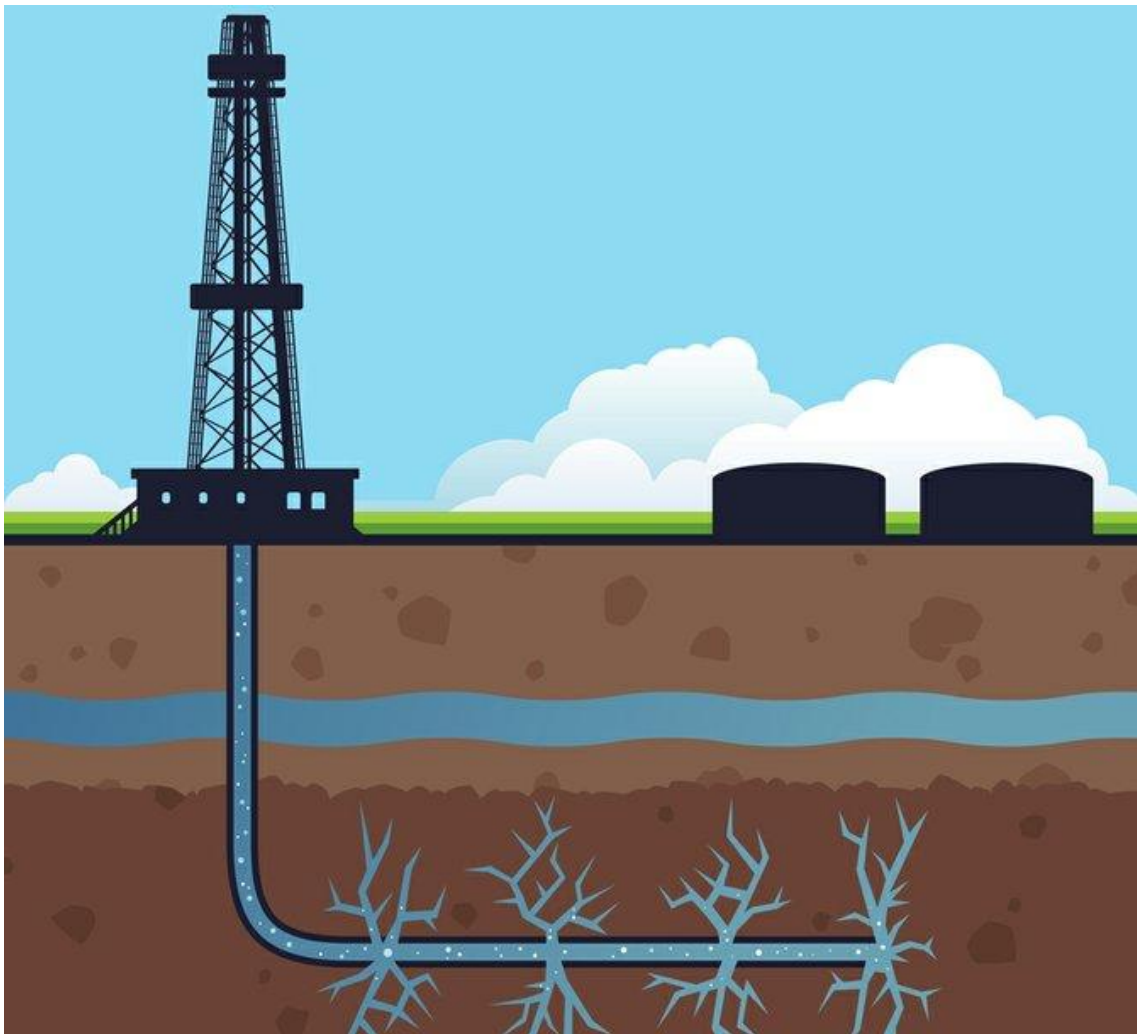
Write an e-mail to someone either complaining about some rude behaviour, or recounting an incident that you considered to be rude. When you're ready, read out your e-mail (using notes, not word-for-word). Other students vote on the best ones. Or, "send" the e-mail to a classmate, who reads it and then reports back on the information, or who responds to it.

6. Video

Should fracking be allowed?

1 Discussion: energy

Have a discussion about energy. You can answer any questions you like (and in any order). Remember, the objective of these questions is to get you talking. If a question appears a bit “personal”, just ignore it or invent the answer:



How is energy produced in your country? What are the main forms of energy production? What is your country doing to reduce pollution from energy production or use? What else can be done? What energy saving measures are they promoting? What energy saving measures have you implemented at home or in the office? How can we reduce the amount of energy we use every day? Do you think scientists will be able to solve the world's energy problems one day? How? How important is renewable energy for the future? What is being done to develop your country's renewable energy capabilities? What else could or should be done? How important is renewable energy in your country? What percentage of your country's energy is

produced by renewable energy? How important is energy independence for a country? What risks are there if a country's energy needs depend on a third country? What are the pros and cons of nuclear energy? How important is the nuclear power industry in your country? What are biofuels and what harm can they cause the environment? Have you got any energy-efficient appliances at home? What are they? What energy sources do you think could be developed in the future? Do you think solar energy, wind farms, tidal power, hydropower and thermal energy will solve our future energy needs? How? Do you think there could be energy wars in the future? Why? Why not? What do you think homes or offices of the future will be like? In what way are our energy demands unsustainable? What negative impact (if any) do renewable energy sources have (wind power, hydroelectricity, tidal power, wave power, geothermal power, solar power, biomass, etc.)? What assistance should governments provide for the establishment of renewable energy production? What is your opinion of the Kyoto protocol? Would you be prepared to pay more for energy produced from a renewable source? Why? Why not?

2 First viewing

You're going to watch a video about **fracking*** (extracting oil and gas from deep within the ground). In the video, Chris Faulkner (the chief executive of the Breitling Energy Corporation) and Ewa Jasiewicz (from the organisation Fuel Policy Action) are debating whether fracking should be allowed or not. What views do you think a person who is in favour of fracking (Chris, in this case) might have on climate change and global warming? Make notes. Then, watch the video once to compare your ideas with the ones in the programme.

3 Second viewing

Watch the video again. Then, answer the questions.

1. What does Chris say about the "100" billion barrels of oil on the Upper Jurassic Kimmeridge (a rock formation) in the south of England under Gatwick (near London)?
2. What does Ewa say about this and the implications for climate change, according to the IPCC (the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change)?
3. What does Chris say about climate change?
4. What does Ewa say about fracking in the UK?
5. What does Ewa say about energy security, energy independence, and fuel poverty?
6. How does Chris respond to this? What does he see as the solution to energy security?
7. What does Chris say about fracking in the United States?
8. How does Ewa summarise her main points at the end of the debate?

*Fracking

Fracking is a form of oil and gas extraction from deep within the ground. It's controversial because some claim that it can contaminate drinking water and cause earthquakes. The technologies and techniques are collectively known as hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking."

4 Follow up

Presentation!

Write notes for a presentation either in favour of or against fracking in your country. When you're ready, give your presentation (using notes, not reading it out word-for-word). Other students vote on the most interesting ones.

Debate

Hold a debate! Your teacher will divide the class into two. Half the class is in favour of fracking. The other half is against it. In your group (or pair), prepare arguments either in favour of or against the idea. When you're ready, a representative from each group will need to present their arguments. When they've finished, open up the debate so anyone can make comments, respond to previous points, etc. At the end (after a few minutes), hold a vote and see which idea is the most popular. You can vote either way and that you don't have to vote according to your initial group and the stance that they were representing.

Answers

1. He says that it would be impressive because the North Sea is a 40-billion barrel oil producer, Saudi Arabia is a 65-billion barrel oil producer, so this would be potentially very big.
2. She says it's horrific because we don't know how we'll extract it. And also because two-thirds of known reserves need to stay in the ground to prevent or stabilise climate change.
3. He says that there's plenty of scientific data to disprove the level of climate change, although he isn't a climate change denier.
4. She says that there are 200 anti-fracking groups in the UK, and they won't allow this industry to take hold in the country.
5. She says that we'll get energy security and independence from renewable energy, which will also help with fuel poverty.
6. He says that only 7% of power generation comes from renewable energy. He says that diversification is important so you don't have all your eggs in one basket. He also says that you can't displace coal, nuclear and natural gas.
7. It's been done a million and a half times safely since the 1940s and that those are the facts.
8. She says it's all about democratically-controlled energy, it's about conserving energy, insulating homes, using less energy, and she doesn't understand why Chris is trying to promote an industry that doesn't exist in the UK and which is already in contraction in the US (it's been banned in Denton, the birthplace of fracking).

7. Audio

[Source: 60-second science from the science magazine *Scientific American*]

60-second science: Wii-itis!



Listening I

You're going to listen to a description of a medical condition: Wii-itis. What do you think it is? Make notes. Then, listen once to compare your ideas.

Listening II

Listen again, and do the following.

1. Write down three details related to the topic.
2. Say what you think of the information.
3. Think of three questions to ask to find out more about the topic.
4. Do some further research to answer your follow-up questions.

8. News article

How to be happy at work!

[source: guardian.co.uk]

<https://www.theguardian.com/small-business-network/2017/sep/13/unhappy-at-work-how-to-spread-cheer-in-the-office>

1 Pre-reading

You're going to read an article about happiness at work. Look over the following paragraph titles. What do you think they're going to say in relation to these topics? Make notes.

- Prioritise personal development
- Take time to talk
- Give back control
- It's all about the perks
- Get out of the office
- Say thank you

2 First reading

Read the article once to check your ideas from the Pre-reading task. How similar or different were your answers?



3 Follow up

Prepare a summary of the main points of the article. Then, deliver a presentation, going over what was said, using as many of the expressions from the article as you can. Finally, ask and answer any questions.

Unhappy at work? How to spread cheer in the office

Over half of employees in the UK are not happy in their jobs. Here's a guide for business owners who want to raise a smile from their staff

Happy, sad and neutral emoticons on instant print

Something as simple as a thank you can make a huge difference to a person's wellbeing.

The average British workplace is not a cheery domain. Over 55% of UK workers are unhappy in their jobs, according to a recent survey by training course site Course Library.

Having grumpy employees isn't just an office atmosphere killer, it ultimately affects a company's profits. A study from the University of Warwick reveals that happy and engaged staff are 12% more productive, while unhappy staff are 10% less productive. Meanwhile, low employee engagement is reportedly costing the UK £340bn per year.

Happiness at work not only improves a person's overall well-being but leads to them staying in their jobs longer. It can also create a stronger workplace culture and improve communication and problem solving. Here are some ways to help spread a bit of joy in your workplace.

Prioritise personal development

Investing in personal development makes people feel they are progressing and, when coupled with recognition and rewards, it becomes a powerful formula for getting the best performance. The Course Library study showed that a quarter of dissatisfied workers felt their unhappiness at work was due to lack of development opportunities. Focus on people's individual needs and requirements at work. Make sure each member of your team is being challenged in ways that are beneficial to their own development and contribute to the success of the team.

Take time to talk

Everyone has different expectations from their roles. Find out if the people on your team need help or if they feel bored and want to try new things. When things are going well for an employee, ask what's been working for them and offer support and encouragement. If there is a problem, make time to sit down with them to chat it through.

Give back control

When an employee has a great idea why not offer them some hours in the week to dedicate to seeing it through? When people make their own decisions, they feel more confident, capable, and determined to see a project they own succeed, which boosts their own productivity, sense of pride and job satisfaction.

It's all about the perks

Bigger businesses may have the budget to offer perks such as free gym membership but rewards and perks don't have to be costly and are a great way make people feel appreciated. A recent survey by office design firm Peldon Rose showed 84% of workers believe that small perks, such as leaving work early occasionally or even getting ice creams in the summer, would make them more productive – yet 34% of businesses don't offer these. Introducing a few simple pleasures into the working day helps to show you care.

Get out of the office

Spending time outdoors can improve self-esteem and mood, help concentration and creative thinking. Whether it's holding a meeting outside, going for a short walk, encouraging sports or even doing a team challenge for charity, creating bonds beyond the office is important for relationship building.

Say thank you

Feeling appreciated makes people more engaged at work. Saying thank you for simple day-to-day tasks doesn't cost anything but can make a huge difference to a person's wellbeing.

9. Debate

Obesity is a disease! Agree or disagree?

Your teacher will divide the class into two. Half the class agrees with the statement, Obesity is a disease! The other half disagrees with it. First, read over the introduction. Then, get together in your groups and read over your arguments. Do this for about 10 minutes and make notes on what you're going to say. Feel free to add in other ideas, or search for some online. Then, have a debate. First, each side presents their ideas. They each have a maximum of five minutes to do this. However, they must do this from notes (they can't read from the list of arguments you gave them – this should be turned over). Then, open the floor for a general discussion. This should last a maximum of 10 minutes. Afterwards, each side makes their closing remarks.



[source: <https://www.procon.org/debate-topics.php>]

Introduction

Did You Know?

In 2013 the United States was the second most obese industrialized nation with 31.8% of Americans falling into the obese category. Mexico was first at 32.8%.

In November 2013, the US Surgeon General reported an estimated 300,000 deaths per year may be attributed to obesity. Obesity was the third leading cause of death in 2009, after high blood pressure and smoking.

Men burned 142 fewer calories daily and weighed 32.8 pounds more in 2003-2006 than in 1960-1962, while women burned 124 fewer calories daily and weighed 25.13 pounds more in 2003-2006 than in 1960-1962.

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Obesity and obesity-related health conditions cost an estimated 10% of annual medical spending in the United States, totalling \$147 billion in 2008.

In 1994, all US states had obesity rates at 19% or lower. By 2010, no state reported an obesity rate under 19%. By 2013, 11 states had obesity rates over 30%.

The United States is the second most obese industrialized country in the world. A 2016 report stated that 36.5% of American adults were obese, compared to 14% in the mid-1970s. Obesity accounts for 10% of deaths and healthcare spending in the United States.

Proponents contend that obesity is a disease because it meets the definition of disease; it decreases life expectancy and impairs the normal functioning of the body; and it can be caused by genetic factors.

Opponents contend that obesity is not a disease because it is a preventable risk factor for other diseases; is the result of eating too much; and is caused by exercising too little. Read more background...

Arguments in favour of the statement

Obesity meets the definition of disease. The American Medical Association's 2013 "Council on Science and Public Health Report" identified three criteria to define disease: 1. "an impairment of the normal functioning of some aspect of the body;" 2. "characteristic signs and symptoms;" and 3. "harm or morbidity." Obesity causes impairment, has characteristic signs and symptoms, and increases harm and morbidity. Scott Kahan, MD, MPH, Director of the National Center for Weight and Wellness and Preventative Medicine Physician at Johns Hopkins University, stated obesity "satisfies all the definitions and criteria of what a disease and medical condition is... The one difference is that people who have obesity have to wear their disease on the outside."

Obesity, like other diseases, impairs the normal functioning of the body. People who are obese have excess adipose (or fat) tissue that causes the overproduction of leptin (a molecule that regulates food intake and energy expenditure) and other food intake and energy mediators in the body, which leads to abnormal regulation of food intake and energy expenditure. Obesity can impair normal mobility and range of motion in knees and hips, and obese patients make up 33% of all joint replacement operations. Obesity is also linked to reproductive impairment, contributing to sexual dysfunction in both sexes, infertility and risk of miscarriage in women, and lower sperm counts in men.

Obesity decreases a person's life expectancy and can cause death, like other diseases. Obesity in adults can lead to three years' loss of life. Extreme obesity can shorten a person's life span by 10 years. A July 13, 2016 Lancet meta-study found that even moderate obesity led to an increased chance of early death: 29.5% for men (compared to 19% for men of normal BMI weight) and 14.6% for women (compared to 11%). The authors calculated that one in five premature deaths in North America could be avoided if obese people were normal BMI weights. The Surgeon General reports an estimated 300,000 deaths per year may be attributed to obesity. People who are obese have a 50-100% increased risk of death from all causes.

Obesity can be a genetic disorder such as sickle-cell anemia and Tay-Sachs, which are classified as diseases. Researchers have identified 79 genetic syndromes associated with obesity. Studies have shown that obesity can be inherited like height. Genetic disposition plays a large role in determining if a person will be obese. A May 2014 study published in the Journal of Molecular Psychology linked higher rates of obesity to the "fat mass and obesity association" (FTO) gene. The FTO gene reportedly lowers activity in the part of the brain that "controls impulses and the response to the taste and texture of food," so people with the gene are more likely to eat more fatty foods and eat more impulsively as they age. A 1990 study published in the New England Journal of Medicine on body mass in twins not raised in the same home concluded, "genetic influences on body-mass index are substantial, whereas the childhood environment has little or no influence." In addition to genetic predisposition, almost 10% of morbidly obese people have defects in the genes that regulate food intake, metabolism, and weight.

Government entities and major medical groups recognize obesity as a disease. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the American Heart Association, the American College of Cardiology, and the Obesity Society, the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), and the American College of Gastroenterology (ACG) have identified obesity as a disease. Even the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) recognizes obesity as a disease so weight loss expenses may be counted as a medical deduction from taxes. On June 18, 2013, the American Medical Association recognized obesity as "a disease requiring a range of medical interventions to advance obesity treatment and prevention."

Physicians from as early as the 17th century have referenced obesity as a disease. English physician Thomas Sydenham (1624-1689) wrote, "Corpulency [obesity] may be ranked amongst the diseases arising from original imperfections in the functions of some of the organs." William Wadd, a 19th century British surgeon and medical author, wrote, "when in excess--amounting to what may be termed OBESITY--[fat] is not only in itself a disease, but may be the cause of many fatal effects, particularly in acute disorders." In the Feb. 12, 1825 issue of The Medical Advisor and Guide to Health and Long Life, Robert Thomas, a 19th century doctor, wrote "Corpulence, when it arrives at a certain height, becomes an absolute disease."

Arguments against the statement

Obesity is a preventable risk factor for other diseases and conditions, and is not a disease itself. Like smoking is a preventable risk factor for lung cancer and drinking is a preventable risk factor for alcoholism, obesity is a preventable risk factor for coronary heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, cancers (like endometrial, breast, and colon), high cholesterol, high levels of triglycerides, liver and gallbladder disease, incontinence, increased surgical risk, sleep apnea, respiratory problems (like asthma), osteoarthritis, infertility and other reproductive complications, complications during pregnancy and birth defects, and mental health conditions. Women who gain 20 pounds or more between age 20 and midlife double their risk of postmenopausal breast cancer. For every 2 pound weight increase, the risk of developing arthritis rises 9-13%.

Obesity is a side effect, not a disease. Obesity can be caused by hypothyroidism, Cushing's syndrome, Prader-Willi syndrome, polycystic ovary syndrome, arthritis, increased insulin levels (from carbohydrate-heavy diets or diabetes treatments) and depression. Certain drugs like antidepressants, anti-seizure medications, diabetes medications, anti-psychotic medications, antihistamines, anticonvulsants, steroids, beta blockers, and contraceptives can cause obesity. Obesity can also be caused by lack of sleep (or sleep debt), ingesting endocrine disruptors (such as BPA, DDT, and phthalates), consuming high-fructose corn syrup, a lack of temperature variation (due to air conditioners and heaters), and quitting smoking.

Many obese people live long, healthy lives. A 2013 Lancet article noted that as many as one third of obese people are "healthy obese," meaning that despite being significantly overweight they have normal cholesterol and blood pressure levels, and no sign of diabetes. Obese people tend to go to the doctor more and have regular checks for other risk factors and diseases. Many people with a BMI (Body Mass Index; a measure of body fat based on height and weight) in the obesity range are not physically impaired and live normal lives. BMI does not take into account the overall health of the individual and can identify fit, muscular people as obese because muscle weighs more than fat.

Obesity is the result of eating too much. The suggested daily caloric intake for 31-50-year-olds is 1,800 calories for women and 2,200 calories for men. In 2009-2010, 30-39-year-old women consumed an average 1,831 calories (which is 1.7% over the recommendation) while men of the same age consumed an average 2,736 calories per day (which is 22% over the recommendation). The average American restaurant meal portion size is four times as large as portions in the 1950s and 96% of entrees at chain restaurants exceed dietary guidelines for fat, sodium, and saturated fat, with some almost exceeding daily intakes in one meal. The body is doing what it has evolved to do by converting excess calories into fat cells. The CDC recommends reducing consumption of sugar drinks (like sodas) and high-energy-dense foods to prevent and reduce obesity. The Mayo Clinic states, "Having a diet that's high in calories, eating fast food, skipping breakfast, eating most of your calories at night, drinking high-calorie beverages and eating oversized portions all contribute to weight gain."

Obesity is the result of sedentary lifestyles. Compared to 40 years ago, people today spend more time commuting, sitting in front of a computer, watching television, playing video games, and generally exercising less. In 1960 50% of jobs required moderate physical activity compared to just 20% of jobs in 2011; the other 80% in 2011 required little or no physical activity. This shift represents 120-140 fewer calories burned per day, which closely aligns with the nation's overall weight gain trends. Men expended 142 fewer calories daily and weighed 32.8 pounds more in 2003-2006 than in 1960-1962, while women expended 124 fewer calories daily and weighed 25.13 pounds more in 2003-2006 than in 1960-1962.