

# A generation of couch potatoes

## Topic

Health, fitness, lifestyles

## Learning outcomes

- Practise discussion skills
- Review vocabulary of fitness and adverbs of frequency
- Practise reading for specific information.
- Practise question formation

## Age group

Aged 13-17 and Adult

## Level

B1 / B2

## Time

85 minutes + extension activities

## Materials

- Worksheet – 1 per learner
- If using Extension 1: Card and coloured pencils, examples of campaigns or adverts.

## Introduction

Learners consider their own lifestyle and categorise different activities into sedentary and active. They then read a text about British teenagers being couch potatoes and compare this to both their own lifestyle and their grandparents. They collaborate to write a fitness survey that they answer in pairs. As extensions they could make a fitness campaign poster or take part in a general discussion about fitness. This plan could be used over two or more lessons.

**Procedure**
**Lesson one (45 minutes)**

<b>1. Lead in (5 minutes)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write 'couch potato' on the board. Either elicit or gloss the meaning.</li> <li>• Ask, 'What types of behaviour could be described as lazy?'</li> </ul>
<b>2. Questionnaire (15 minutes)</b>	<p><b>Note:</b> This first task gets students to think in a non-judgmental way about their own lifestyles and will provide material for them to reflect on in later activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give learners the worksheet</li> <li>• Ask them to complete it for themselves</li> <li>• Ask them to interview each other in pairs, make notes, and try to decide which has the most active lifestyle.</li> <li>• Join 2 pairs to make a group of four. They share information about their partner and decide who is the most active from their group.</li> <li>• Monitor and support with language needed for reporting on their partner.</li> <li>• Get feedback from the groups.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> if learners need more support, you could elicit useful forms before the learners work in groups. E.g. My partner walks one kilometre about once a week.</p>
<b>3. Identifying healthy activities (10 minutes)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put students to do this in pairs or small groups.</li> <li>• Ask them to look again at question 3 of the questionnaire. They try to calculate how much time they spend doing each activity in a week.</li> <li>• Write the following questions on the board and check the meaning of sedentary (opposite of active):             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Which of the activities in the questionnaire might be good for your heart?</li> <li>2. Which activities can be called sedentary?</li> <li>3. Give other examples of sedentary activities.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Ask them to mark the activities with a G (for good for your heart) and S for sedentary.</li> <li>• Get feedback and brainstorm other examples of sedentary activities (reading, napping, phoning your friends, playing board games)</li> </ul>
<b>4. Reading (15 minutes)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead in to this activity by using the examples in the text: Are you allowed to walk back alone from school or stations? Were your parents or grandparents allowed more freedom outside?</li> <li>• Elicit examples round the class for their grandparents.</li> </ul>

- Put learners in pairs or groups
- Ask them to read the text individually (Task 2). Then work together to discuss the questions.
- Get feedback from some pairs/ groups

**Lesson two (40 minutes)**
**5. Lifestyles discussion (15 minutes)**

- Write the following on the board:
  1. Transport
  2. Diet
  3. Home
  4. Spare time activities
  5. Physical activities
- Give some examples about your life compared against your grandparents' life. For topic one. E.g. I drive to the supermarket once a week. My grandparents walked to the supermarket every day.
- Then get the students into small groups to continue the activity. Monitor and support with language.
- Get some feedback from the groups.
- Then start an open class discussion. You could base this on the statement 'Our grandparents had better lives.' and see how many agree or disagree.

**6. Writing a fitness survey (15 minutes)**

- Tell learners they are going to create their own surveys.
- Put them into pairs.
- Write the following on the board:
  1. How often do you....?
  2. When was the last time you...?
- Elicit a few example questions and write them on the board. Learners copy the questions into their notebooks.
- Feed in more adverbs (sometimes, not often, hardly ever) and practice time expressions like twice a week, once a month etc.
- Ask each pair to think of one question.
- Put all the class questions on the board for learners to copy.

**7. Pair survey (10 minutes)**

- Students use their questions to interview each other. Allow 5 minutes.
- Get feedback to assess the results. Do they think their class is fit?

**8. Extension 1  
Fitness  
campaign  
(30 minutes)**

- Put learners in groups and ask them to come up with four ways to encourage young people in their town / area to improve their fitness.
- Elicit or give some sentence starters. E.g.
  - I think we should...
  - It might be a good idea to....
  - Why don't we....
- Get feedback on their ideas and correct any language errors.
- Tell learners they are going to design a fitness campaign poster to encourage a more active lifestyle or to raise awareness of keeping your heart healthy
- Display some of the campaigns or adverts examples you've brought. Elicit why they are interesting. E.g. Catchy title, use of colour or images, interesting information., short sentences.
- Elicit a couple of sentence suggestions before groups/ start.
- Encourage groups to allocate roles, so all learners can achieve.
- Display the completed posters on the wall and ask the class to vote for their favourite.

**Tip:** The posters could be designed using an online app (see useful links). Groups could present their posters in the following lesson.

**9. Extension 2  
Discussion (25  
minutes)**

- Dictate the following statements:
  1. Young people are naturally fit and healthy and don't need much exercise.
  2. Eating fast food is OK if you don't eat it every day.
  3. Older people always say negative things about teenagers' habits.
  4. Sport is good fun.
  5. Teenagers don't have enough time to do sports because they have too much homework.
  6. Schools should make all students do at least 2 hours of PE a week.
- Check learners have written the sentences correctly by nominating learners to read aloud the sentences they've written down.
- Ask learners to look at the statements then decide if they agree or disagree with them.
- Put learners into pairs to discuss the statements and to give reasons for their opinion.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Get whole class feedback.</li></ul>
<b>Useful links and resources</b>	Online poster maker: <a href="https://www.designcap.com/poster/kids.html">https://www.designcap.com/poster/kids.html</a> Templates/ examples of health posters: <a href="https://www.canva.com/posters/templates/health/">https://www.canva.com/posters/templates/health/</a>

**Contributed by**

Clare Lavery; Edited by Suzanne Mordue