

A generation of couch potatoes

Topic

Health, fitness, lifestyles

Aims

- To practise speaking skills
- To review vocabulary of fitness
- To practise reading skills
- To practise question formation
- To discuss and agree on ideas for a fitness campaign

Age group

11 – adult

Level

B1 / B2

Time

60-90 minutes

Materials

1. A generation of couch potatoes student worksheet
2. Internet links:
 - <http://kidshealth.org/kid/> - site for younger students about kid's health
 - <http://www.livestrong.com/article/377585-a-healthy-lifestyle-for-teens/> - Livestrong website for teens
 - <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/health/negative-attitude-teens-promotes-sedentary-2051425> - article about how negative attitudes to teens lead them to a sedentary lifestyle.

Introduction

This lesson is about health and fitness and young people's lifestyles. If any of your students have health problems you may want to adapt these materials before you use them.

Introduce this topic by writing couch potato on the board. Pre teach this expression if necessary. Does anyone know what it means? What types of behaviour could be described as lazy? Students can complete their questionnaire individually and/or in pairs. Do a quick round up of their responses around the class. Who watches the most TV? who walks the most? Anticipate the meaning of the words fit/unfit/sedentary.

Procedure

Task 1 – Questionnaire: How active are you	<p>This first task gets students to think in a non-judgemental way about their own lifestyles and will provide material for them to reflect on in later activities. You could get the students to interview each other in pairs and try to decide which has the most active lifestyle.</p>
Task 2 – Your health	<p>This task follows on from the previous one and gets students to look more closely at which activities are healthy. You can get the students to do this in pairs or small groups.</p>
Task 3 – Reading	<p>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? Elicit examples round the class for their grandparents before they work in pairs or groups, to read the text and answer the questions.</p>
Task 4 – Talk about lifestyles in your country	<p>This task gets the students thinking about their lives and the lives of their grandparents. You could start by using one of the headings and giving some examples about yourself and your grandparents. Then get the students into small groups to continue the activity. Finish with some open class discussion. You could base this on the statement 'Our grandparents had better lives.' and see how many agree or disagree.</p>
Task 5 – Do a fitness survey	<p>Give guidance on questions using the two models in the questionnaire. Elicit further examples and put prompts on the board. Feed in more adverbs (sometimes, not often, hardly ever) and practice time expressions like twice a week, once a month etc. Each pair can think of one question. Put all the class questions on the board. Students use their questions to interview each other. Be aware that this activity could last a long time and you need to hold a feedback session to assess the results. Do they think their class is fit?</p>
Task 6 – Fitness campaign	<p>Elicit a couple of suggestions before groups/pairs start. Artistic students could design a poster to encourage a more active lifestyle or to raise awareness of keeping your heart healthy. Ask the class if there are adverts in their country to encourage healthy habits/diet. Are they effective? This discussion is best with higher level groups</p>
Task 7 – Discussion: Attitudes towards lifestyles and healthy living	<p>In this task students have the opportunity to compare their own beliefs with those of the statements. You could put students into pairs and tell one to argue 'for' and the other to argue 'against' each of the statements or they could just defend their own opinions. If you prefer you could do this as an open class debate.</p>

Contributed by

Clare Lavery