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**Кафедра иностранных языков № 2**

**Методическая разработка  
для развития навыков устной речи по английскому языку  
для студентов 1-го курса ФКСиС и ФИТУ  
дневной формы обучения**

**Topical Materials for Creative Presentations**

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М 54 **Методическая** разработка для развития навыков устной речи по английскому языку для студентов 1-го курса ФКСиС и ФИТУ дневной формы обучения / Сост. И.И. Ершова, Л.С. Карпик, Н.Г. Касперович и др. – Мн.: БГУИР, 2003.-50 с.

Методическая разработка предназначена для развития навыков устной речи на английском языке у студентов 1 курса ФКСиС и ФИТУ. Содержит оригинальные тексты по устным темам.

Цель разработки — способствовать развитию навыков говорения и активизировать лексический минимум. Каждая тема представлена комплексом речевых упражнений и типовыми ситуациями.

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## UNIT 1. Student's Profile

### Pre-reading task

1. Read the title of the text and say what it is about.
2. Try to predict which sentences best describe student's profile.
3. Write 5-7 questions you are sure will be answered in the text
4. What do you think a typical day for students is? What about you? Look at the activities below and fill the time you spend in each activity.

**Sleep... exercise...; work... watch TV...; study... do housework...**

5. What does student's life differ from other people's life. Match the occupation with the texts: **student waiter businessman postman**

1. I start work at nine. I finish at about seven. I often work late, and I sometimes work at home too. I usually have lunch in a restaurant because my company pays. I always wear smart clothes like a suit, to work. I go to work by train. I never go by car there's too much traffic.

2. My job is an evening job. I start at six o'clock in the evening and finish at about two o'clock in the morning. I have a break at about ten and I always eat in the kitchen. I wear a uniform, of course.

3. I go in when there are classes. They sometimes start at nine. Sometimes at ten. I usually have lunch in the cafeteria, but some days I don't have lunch. In the evening I often work in the library. I go to everywhere by bicycle. I usually wear casual clothes like jeans.

4. I start early – at five o'clock in the morning and I usually finish at about one o'clock in the afternoon, so I always have lunch at home. I wear a uniform at work.

### Reading

1. Read the text and underline the words you still don't know.
2. Look through the text and find the sections which contain the answers to your questions.

### STUDENT'S PROFILE

Valerie Morton is a student of Heriot – Watt university (Edinburgh, Scotland). She is training to be an engineer. When she arrives home after her summer vocation she finds the following letter waiting for her.

L. Beda str.  
Minsk, Belarus.

Dear Valerie,

I expect you will be somewhat surprised to receive a letter from a complete stranger, but Mr. Pavlov whom you met when he was visiting Edinburg last summer gave me your address and told me something about you. He said you were interested in corresponding with a Belarusian boy or girl, preferably a Computer-Control Engineer, it would no doubt be of mutual interest if you could communicate.

But first of all I'd better introduce myself, at least briefly. My name is Victor Bogdanovich. I'm eighteen years old. I was born in Vitebsk where I grew up and attended high school. Last year I was admitted to Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics.

I have always wondered if there are some differences between British and Belarusian students.

To answer this question I would like to describe my student's life to compare it with yours. I usually get up at about half past six. That gives me a time to go jogging in the park near my hostel before breakfast. I don't normally have a big breakfast – just a cup of tea and some toast and honey. The thing is that I always have a sandwich and coffee in the university cafeteria at about 11.30, when we have a break after lectures.

I leave for the university about twenty minutes to eight – it only takes me about twenty minutes to get there, so I'm there in time for the first lecture. You see, I have quite a varied timetable, but on a normal day I have two hours of lectures, then two or three hours in the laboratory, and I spend the rest of the time in the library.

During the term I'm usually busy studying, but I do have time for some things other than work. I mean, in the afternoon, after lunch, I play basket-ball. I'm a member of the University basket-ball team. Sometimes I play tennis or go swimming. In the evenings, I go out with friends, so I don't usually get home much before half past nine or ten. I often read. I've already said about reading. You know, Valerie, I was six before I could read. I learnt to read during the three weeks. And thirst for reading was fantastic. I joined the library and the local librarian used to interrogate me on the contents, convinced that I was showing off: during the school holidays I had been reading 3 books a day!

Most adults were suspicious about my passion for books. "Your brain will burst" was a common warning, one that I took seriously when reading, I half expected my head to explode and hit the ceiling. My favourite place to read was on my bed, lying on a pink cotton counterpane, and if I had a bag of sweets next to me, I was in heaven.

I've always feel, a great sadness on finishing a book I've enjoyed, and a strong reluctance to actually close the book and put it on a shelf.

Except reading I like watching television as well. Firstly I like some of the anuvicont detective series. They are very entertaining though, I must admit, they are rather repetitive and you can always tell when the series writers are running short of

ideas, because the final episodes of these series tend to be the noisiest and the most violent.

And of course my great passion is computers. I am lucky because I have many friends who are interested in computers too. And we often spend time together studying and playing.

You know that in the world of computers there is a special slang, just as in any other profession. For example we usually say comms instead of communications, Big Blue instead of IBM, gremlin instead of an unexplained fault in a system, meg instead of megabyte and etc. I will appreciate you writing some more slang words.

Now I'm preparing for my exams. To be quite frank, it is something of a nightmare. I and my friends do our best to pass them successfully. Nikita is my best friend. We live in the same hostel. He is an extremely intelligent boy. I admire his delightful sense of humour. After my exams I will be able to relax and forget about everything. That's my ideal holiday to go camping somewhere wild, to the remote park, and I enjoy that too if the weather is O.K...

And things like mountain biking canoeing swimming fishing. At night you can enjoy great campfires, join in the singing and hear excellent stories. Enjoy carnivals, picnics and festivals...

Also I am fond of travelling. Now any student can spend his summer holidays in Europe or America, working as an au pair helping with disabled people, washing dishes in restaurants, etc.

Well, I hope, I've given you a fairly clear idea of the way in which I live. I'm looking forward to hearing about your life.

Best wishes,

Victor Bogdanovich

1. Ask your partner about his habits. There are some questions and expressions to help you.

A. What time do you get up?  
B. At half past seven.

A. Where do you study?  
C. At University

A. What do you wear?  
B. Casual clothes.

A. When/Where do you eat?  
B. At University/ At home /In a cafe.

Write five sentences comparing your day with your partner's:

I always get up at half past six, but Steffi usually gets up at eight.

2. Many British students take "time off" (usually a year) before going into higher education. Here are some examples of what they could do. What would you choose to do? Tell your group:

work in industry

travel around Europe or the world

work as a volunteer with young people  
 work on a farm  
 help with disabled people in local centres or hostels  
 visit sick people in hospitals  
 help on a project in Africa  
 work abroad (washing dishes in restaurants or any job you can find)  
 work as an au pair in Europe or America

### 3. Hobbies and interests

#### 1. In your free time

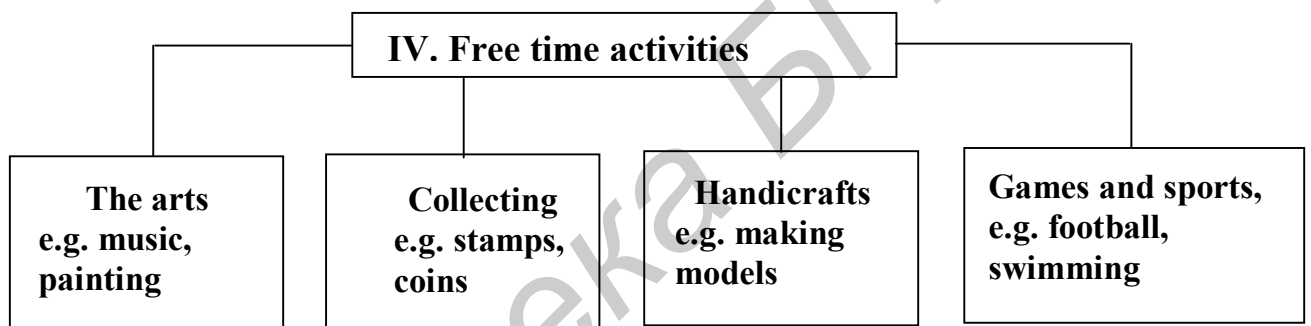
What hobbies or interests do you have?

What do you like to do in your free time?

Tell the class.

#### 2. Types of free time activities

There are many different kinds of free time activities. We can put most of them into one of four different areas:



Which area are you most interested in? Which areas are other people in your class interested in?

#### 3. Some more hobbies and interests

In which area would you put these free time activities?

Drama    computer graphics    computer games    singing    making furniture  
 mountain climbing

### Writing

Prepare a profile of yourself. First make notes about the subjects you are taking at University, your language skills, other skills, work experience, interests, hobbies and what you plan to do in the future. Then write a composition.

I am in my ... year at the university.

I am studying ... .

My best subjects are ...

Last summer I had a summer job in a hotel.

I worked in Reception and ... .

Next year I plan to ... .

## I. Chat rooms

1. Can you explain what a chat room is? If not, read the text below. In your own words, explain to a partner what a chat room is and how to enter one. How would you explain what a chat room is to someone who a) doesn't own a computer b) lived 100 years ago?

### MAKE FRIENDS

Are you lonely tonight? Then why not enter a chat room? If you've got a computer and Internet access, then millions of people all over the world are just waiting to hear from you. If you haven't visited a chat room before, it is very easy. Your server may have its own, in which case, just click on chat. Alternatively, use a search engine such as Yahoo and click on chat. From there you will have the choice of hundreds of different chat room topics.

Going into a chat room is a bit like going to a huge party where you don't know anyone. You walk into the room and panic. After you have given your personal details and chosen your password, just wait for a while to see what is going on before you start to take part. Remember this is live. It is happening in real time. When you type in a message, the other people can read it virtually immediately.

If you don't like what is going on or you can't understand it. It's probably because there are too many children just playing around. Choose another topic you are interested in and try that room. There are few rules. Just remember to watch your language and DONT SHOUT. Typing in capitals means shouting and is considered rude. There are a few abbreviations which can help shorten your message and which you will need to understand. Here are some of the most common:

brb: be right back (if you have to go to the loo for a minute)

btw: by the way

cu: see you

lol: laughs out loud

myob: mind your own business

newbie: new user

pvt: private

rofl: rolls on the floor laughing

You never know - one evening you might find the person of your dreams.

You won't be the first person to fall in love with someone they first met in a chat room.

## 2. Talking point

Have you ever taken part in a chat room? Is there a chat room which you visit regularly? What nationalities are the people you chat with? Have you got to know anybody through a chat room? Have you ever tried to meet them? Would you consider starting a friendship - even a romance - with someone you first met in a chat room?



### 3. Collocations

Look back at the text on chat rooms to complete these collocations:

1. This laptop comes with Internet..... .
2. You can either ..... or ..... a chat room.
3. Which ..... engine do you prefer?
4. You don't need to take ..... if you don't want to.
5. What password have you .....?
6. It's dead easy. Just..... on chat.
7. You may have to give some personal..... .
8. The chatting happens in ..... time.

#### II. So what shall we do tonight?

1. Read the dialogue and compose dialogues of your own.

Dan: So what do you feel like doing tonight? Any ideas?

Helena: Well, I'd quite like to see a film, or, I don't know, see if there's any good bands around, if you're into bands.

Dan: Yes, that's an idea. What kind of music do you like, then?

Helena: Oh, all sorts, really, you know, a lot of pop and I quite like blues and jazz and things like that.

Dan: Oh, really? I'm more into dance music myself, so maybe a film?

Helena: Well, we could always go and see a film. I like really scary things.

Dan: What? You mean like *Halloween*?

Helena: Yes, that kind of thing, and I also like action movies, you know, car chases, guns, bombs, anything that's fast and exciting.

Dan: Oh, right. To be honest with you, I'm not really keen on violent films.

Helena: You're kidding! And I thought this was going to be the perfect relationship!

Dan: So did I! But it doesn't sound like we've got all that much in common, really, does it?

Helena: Oh come on, there must be something we can do!

Dan: Let me think. Well, I suppose we could go clubbing.

Helena: What? Somewhere like Paradox?

Dan: Is that the new place that's just opened?

Helena: Yes, just last week. Right, so are we going clubbing, then?

Dan: OK. Why not? Do you go much yourself?

Helena: No, not very much actually. A couple of times a year, I guess.

Dan: Oh, me too now, but I did a lot more when I was younger - almost every weekend. The thing was, though, it just got to me after a while, staying out dancing all night and then having to go to work early in the morning. I'm getting a bit too old for it now.

Helena: Oh, well, that's that off the menu then! So, what shall we do then?

Dan: I don't know. Let's get a video, and a curry, and have a nice quiet evening in in

front of the telly?

Helena: Oh, you've got to be joking! We're not in our graves yet. I mean, that's the kind of thing my parents are probably doing most of the evenings! Look, it's not what I'd normally do on a Monday night, but let's give clubbing a go! It might be a laugh.

2. Do you and your friends ever have problems trying to decide what to do in the evenings? At what age are you too old to go clubbing? 25? 30? 40? Never?

3. Not really keen

If we do not share someone's interests, we often soften the way we express this. Notice how *really* is used in the following:

I really love classical music and opera.

- Oh, do you? I'm not really very keen on it myself.

or It's not really my kind of thing, I'm afraid.

or > I don't really like things like that.

Without *really*, these statements would sound quite strong and even rude. Match the following two-line conversations. Then practise in pairs.

1. I love nearly all winter sports.
2. Going out with a crowd of friends and having fun, that's what I really like doing.
3. I'm really interested in politics.
4. I'm really into older music, you know, before 1967.
5. My favourite kind of things are comics and cartoons.
6. I'm really into roller-blading. It's a bit like roller-skating.
  - a. Oh, it's not really my kind of thing, I'm afraid. I don't really understand what makes all the parties different. They all seem the same to me!
  - b. Really? I'm not really very keen on them, myself. I once broke my leg skiing and it put me off - for life!
  - c. Are you? It's not really my kind of thing. I'm always worried I might get hurt.
  - d. I don't really like things like that myself. I don't see the point of them. I prefer a good novel - the longer the better!
  - e. Are you? I'm not really that keen on anything before 1980.
  - f. Do you? It's not really my kind of thing, I'm afraid. I prefer to go out with just one or maybe two people. I hate crowds.

## UNIT 2. Youth Problems

### Pre-reading task

1. Read the title of the text and say what the text is about.
2. Read the text and say how many of the predictions in the text were the same as yours.

### Reading

#### THE YOUNGER GENERATION KNOWS BEST

Old people are always saying that young are not what they were. The same comment is made from generation to generation and it is always true. It has never been truer than it is today. The young are better educated. They have a lot more money to spend and enjoy more freedom. They grow up more quickly and are not so dependent on their parents. They think more for themselves and do not blindly accept the ideals of their elders. Events which the older generation remembers vividly are nothing more than past history. This is as it should be. Every new generation is different from the one that preceded it. Today the difference is very marked indeed.

The old always assume that they know best for the simple reason that they have been around a bit longer. They don't like to feel that their values are being questioned or threatened. And this is precisely what the young are doing. They are questioning the assumptions of their elders and disturbing their complacency. They take leave to doubt that the older generation has created the best of all possible worlds. What they reject more than anything is conformity. Office hours, for instance, are nothing more than enforced slavery. Wouldn't people work best if they were given complete freedom and responsibility? And what about clothing? Who said that all the men in the world should wear drab grey suits and convict haircuts? If we turn our minds to more serious matters, who said that human differences can best be solved through conventional politics or by violent means? Why have the older generation so often used violence to solve their problems? Why are they so unhappy and guilt-ridden in their personal lives, so obsessed with mean ambitions and the desire to amass more material possessions? Can *anything* be right with the ratrace? Haven't the old lost touch with all that is important in life?

These are not questions the older generation can shrug off lightly. Their record over the past forty years or so hasn't been exactly spotless. Traditionally, the young have turned to their elders for guidance. Today, the situation might be reversed. The old – if they are prepared to admit it – could learn a thing or two from their children. One of the biggest lessons they could learn is that enjoyment is not 'sinful'. Enjoyment is a principle one could apply to all aspects of life. It is surely not wrong to enjoy your work and enjoy your leisure; to shed restricting inhibitions. It is surely not wrong to live in the present rather than in the past or future. This emphasis on the present is only to be expected because the young have grown up under the

shadow of the bomb: the constant threat of complete annihilation. This is their glorious heritage. Can we be surprised that they should so often question the sanity of the generation that bequeathed it?

1. Read the text and find the sections which contain the answers to the True/False sentences.

- a) the young are worse educated
- b) no one new generation is different from the one that preceded it
- c) what the young reject more than anything is conformity
- d) traditionally, the young have not turned to their elders for guidance
- e) the old can learn nothing from their children
- f) enjoyment is not a principle one could apply to all aspects of life and is always sinful.

2. Look through the text and give the main idea of it. Choose the sentence of the given 4 to express the main idea.

- a) the young should be grateful to older generation
- b) every generation is different
- c) The older generation is too soft and kind with the young
- d) Live in the present, not the past or the future.

### **Speaking**

Discuss in pairs the advantages and disadvantages of being young nowadays. Give your arguments and counter-arguments.

Maladies of the 21st century.

### **Pre-reading task**

1. You are going to read about the maladies of the 21st century.
  - What do you think are the main maladies?
  - Why are they dangerous?
2. Read the text to see how close your predictions were.

### **Reading**

## **MALADIES OF THE 21st CENTURY**

We entered the 21st century with such maladies as heart and vascular system diseases, environmental diseases, cancer, AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). The risk factors causing these diseases are poor environment (especially

after Chernobyl disaster), constant stress and bad habits. We witness more and more cases when people suffer from such environmental diseases as food allergies, chronic fatigue syndrome, asthma, thyroid gland. They all have a huge impact on the quality of life, darken our prospects for future. Alcohol, drugs, smoking, AIDS have also become the reality of our life, especially among young and middle-aged people. Today we'll read the texts about the diseases which have come as result of people's ignorance and lack of healthy habits.

Smoking is very dangerous. Most young people smoke because their friends pressure them to do so. They may be copying their parents who smoke, or other adults they respect. At one time this would have been accepted as normal. But in the past 30 years attitudes about smoking have changed. Smoking is now banned in many places so that other people don't have to breathe in smokers' shocking tobacco smoke.

Passive smoking, when you are breathing someone else's smoke, can damage your health just like smoking can. Smoking becomes addictive very quickly, and it's one of the hardest habits to break.

What is it in cigarette smoke that is harmful? A chemical called nicotine is a substance that causes addiction. It is a stimulant that increases the pulse rate and a rise in the blood pressure. Cigarette smoke also contains tar – a major factor for causing cancer.

Gases in cigarette smoke increase your blood pressure and pulse rate. This can contribute to heart disease. Smokers as twice as non-smokers are likely to have heart trouble.

If you've ever watched an adult try to give up smoking, you know how hard it can be. It's easier, healthier and cheaper never to start.

Another poison of many young people is alcohol. Remember, alcohol is a drug. It can make you sick, and you can become addicted to it. It's a very common form of drug abuse among teenagers. Don't let anyone at a party pressure you into drinking if you don't want to, especially if you're legally under age.

For years we have been told not to drive after we have drunk alcohol, which weakens our sense and clouds our judgement. And yet people still do. Young people, who are drunk are less likely to wear their seat belts, and are less experienced when a problem occurs. The alcohol makes them think they are brilliant drivers and can take risks without getting hurt. But, more importantly, they become a risk to other drivers and pedestrians – potential killers.

Alcohol is a drug. In fact, is a mild poison. It is absorbed quickly into the bloodstream, within four or 10 minutes of being drunk. Absorption is slower if there's food in the stomach. Once inside the body it passes through the bloodstream to the liver, where poisons are digested. But the liver can only process 28 grams of pure alcohol each hour.

This is a small amount – just over half a glass of beer. Anything else you drink is pumped round the body while it waits its turn to enter the liver.

When alcohol reaches your brain, you may immediately feel more relaxed and light-hearted. You may feel you can do crazy things. But after two or three drinks,

your actions are clumsy and your speech is slurred. If you over-drink, you might suffer from double vision and loss of balance, even fall unconscious, hangover.

In fact, all medicines are drugs. You take drugs for your headache or your asthma. But you need to remember that not all drugs are medicines. Alcohol is a drug, and nicotine is a drug. There are many drugs that do you no good at all.

There's nothing wrong with medicinal drugs if they're used properly. The trouble is, some people use them wrongly and make themselves ill. Most of the drugs are illegal, but some are ordinary medical substances that people use in the wrong way.

People take drugs because they think they make them feel better. Young people are often introduced to drug-taking by their friends.

Many users take drugs to escape from a life that may seem too hard to bear. Drugs may seem the only answer, but they are no answer at all. They simply make the problem worse.

Depending on the type and strength of the drug, all drug-abusers are in danger of developing side effects. Drugs can bring on confusion and frightening hallucinations and cause unbalanced emotions or more serious mental disorders.

First-time heroin users are sometimes violently sick. Cocaine, even in small amounts, can cause sudden death in some young people, due to heartbeat irregularities. Children born to drug-addicted parents can be badly affected.

AIDS is a sickness that attacks the body's natural system against disease. AIDS itself doesn't kill, but because the body's defence system is damaged, the patient has a reduced ability to fight off many other diseases, including flu or the common cold.

It has been reported that about 10 million people worldwide may have been infected by the virus that causes AIDS. It is estimated that about 350 thousand people have the disease and that another million (!) may get it within the next five years. Africa and South America are the continents where AIDS is most rampant, although in the States alone about 50 000 people have already died of AIDS.

So far there is no cure for AIDS. We know that AIDS is caused by a virus which invades healthy cells, including the white blood cells that are part of our defence system. The virus takes control of the healthy cells' genetic material and forces the cell to make a copy of the virus. The cell then dies and the multiplied virus moves on to invade and kill other healthy cells.

The AIDS virus can be passed on sexually or by sharing needles used to inject drugs. It also can be passed in blood products or from a pregnant woman with AIDS to her baby.

Many stories about the spread of AIDS are false. One cannot get AIDS by working with someone who's got it, or by going to the same school, or by touching objects belonging to or touched by an infected person. Nobody caring for an AIDS patient has developed AIDS and, since there is no cure for it at present, be as helpful and understanding as possible to those suffering from this terrible disease.

1. Look through the text and note down:
  - a) the reasons for smoking, drinking and taking drugs;

- b) harmful consequences of these hard habits;
  - c) the most likely diseases caused by smoking;
  - d) the examples showing the effect of drugs on a human being;
  - e) the way the virus that causes AIDS can be passed on.
2. Here are some answers about hard habits. Ask the questions.
- a) Why \_\_\_\_\_? Because their friends pressure them to do so.
  - b) What \_\_\_\_\_? A chemical called nicotine causes addiction.
  - c) Why \_\_\_\_\_? Because they become a risk to other drivers and pedestrians.
  - d) When \_\_\_\_\_? Absorption is slower if there's food in the stomach.
  - e) How \_\_\_\_\_? You may feel you can do crazy things.
  - f) Why \_\_\_\_\_? People take drugs because they think they make them feel better.
  - g) How many \_\_\_\_\_? About 10 million people worldwide may have been injected by the virus that causes AIDS.
  - h) What \_\_\_\_\_? AIDS is a sickness that attacks the body's natural system against disease.

### Speaking

1. Discuss in group. Express your attitude towards the habits you have learnt from the text and prove your arguments.
2. Speak on the topic.  
"Young generation and its problems".

### Pre-reading task "The younger generation knows better"

1. Read the title of the text and say what the text is about.
2. Read the text and say how many of the predictions in the text were the same as yours.

### Reading and speaking

1. Read the text and find the sections which contain the answers to the True/False sentences.

Look through the text and note down

- a) the reasons for smoking, drinking and taking drugs;
- b) harmful consequences of these hard habits;
- c) the most likely diseases caused by smoking;
- d) the examples showing the effect of drugs on a human being;
- e) the way the virus that causes AIDS can be passed on.

## UNIT 3. My University

### Pre-reading

#### *1. Discussion Point*

- 1) Is it important to get higher education nowadays?
- 2) Do you think it is easy to study at university?
- 3) Do you have any of the following study problems? Discuss them with the group.

#### In class

- It's difficult to concentrate
- You can't follow the lesson
- You don't like the subject
- Other students are much better than you
- Other problems (What ?)

#### Outside class

- You have nowhere quiet to study
- You lack self-discipline
- It's difficult to begin studying
- You don't have enough time
- Other problems (What?)

#### *2. Presentation*

George had problems with studying, so he wrote to a magazine problem page for advice. Find out what his study problems are and tell your partner about four of them.

Dear Marjorie,

I'm having problems with my studies at University. I find it difficult to get down to work in the evenings and I can't concentrate on anything at the moment. I spend most of my time listening to records or playing computer games instead of getting ready for my tutorials. The other students of my group are much better than I am and I have difficulty in keeping up with them. I sometimes have problems with following the lectures as well. I can't always take down the important things my lecturers say because I write so slowly I usually hand in my laboratory works late because I put off doing it until the last minute. So I often have to invent silly excuses to explain why I haven't done the work. I'm sure I'm not going to get through my exams. I scraped through the exams last February with 54 % -- all the other students passed with flying colours. I'm now so far behind that I don't know how I'm going to catch up with them. What do you suggest I do?

Yours desperately  
George

- 1) Work with your partner. Find out the multi-word verbs in the letter and try to work out what they mean.
- 2) Match the multi-word verbs in A with the definitions in B.



- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. to get down to doing something       | A. to be behind with something, not at the level expected     |
| 2. to keep up with someone/something    | B. to start work on something                                 |
| 3. to take something down               | C. to postpone, to decide to do something at a later date     |
| 4. to fall behind (with something)      | D. to pass an exam or test                                    |
| 5. to hand something in                 | E. to check that something is correct, to examine something   |
| 6. to put something off                 | F. to reach the same standard or position as someone else     |
| 7. to get through (something)           | G. to give something to someone in a position of authority    |
| 8. to scrape through (something)        | H. to remain at the same standard or position as someone else |
| 9. to catch up (with someone/something) | I. to record in writing what someone is saying                |

### 3. Idiomatic expression

What does *the other students passed with flying colours* mean?  
How would you say the same thing in your own language?

### Reading

1. Speak about some rules you have to follow to survive your first university year. Read the text and say whether you agree with the author of the article.

#### HOW TO SURVIVE YOUR FIRST UNIVERSITY YEAR

Andrew England offers a simple guide

As universities sparkle back into life, an influx of naive new students eagerly awaits the boozing partying good times that are expected to go hand in hand with the three or four years of study that lie ahead.

«The best years of your life,» so the worn-out cliché would have you believe, and after my expensive first year, I tend to agree. But and it is a big but – it is far too easy to fall into the trap of believing that the first year, often a foundation year, and not part of the degree, is going to be a breeze. This perception, buoyed by boastful tales from postgraduates about how little work they did, can easily lead to a too relaxed approach, poor attendance and finally panic. The realisation that failure could be imminent and the awful prospect of retakes can make the final weeks a harrowing period.

Even if you are not complacent, there are numerous reasons for missing the occasional lecture or seminar. The hangover is the classic. After a night in some grotty night-club which charitably allows you to drink to excess at knockdown student prices, a hot stuffy lecture theatre can appear a daunting prospect in the early afternoon.

Embarrassing memories of the night before, which vaguely filter through a thumping head, can also act as a deterrent. How do you face that poor girl who suffered at the hands of your slobbering sweaty drunken advances?

Boredom studying modules that appear to have no relevance to your eventual degree can also create problems of motivation. On my course, it was methodology which was quite simply a nightmare. My friends and I still have little understanding of it. Unfortunately, it still has to be passed and to those who failed, methodology, with its boring lectures, was the greatest stumbling block.

The thing to remember is that when exams eventually come around you do need notes to revise from. Other people's notes *are* notoriously hard to make sense of, and suddenly you have huge regrets about missing that vital lecture.

It is also important not to forget that *in* certain subjects you are awarded a mark towards your final assessment for seminar performances, it means that just by having a reasonable attendance record you can gain a crucial percentage that may make the difference between success and failure.

Attendance can be invaluable. A friend of mine, who is studying engineering at the University of the West of England, has a weakness with maths and, consequently, just failed a retake. However, as a result of his good participation during the course, he was given another chance and allowed to continue. He is no boring bookworm and thoroughly enjoyed his first taste of university life.

He went on to complete his second year and is now working for the Vauxhall touring car team in his placement year, The hard work paid off and an ambition to work for a top motor-racing team is being realised.

At the other end of the scale, another friend who took a very relaxed approach to his first year failed and had to pay his own fees to be able to retake the year. Leopards don't often change their spots. He failed the year again and is prematurely confronting the job market fully aware that he is solely responsible for his predicament.

First-year failure leads to the indignity of having to go through the whole induction course again with those «annoying school leavers» you should have left behind. An extra year's debt, and an extra year's study while your friends are enjoying graduation. It is something to be avoided.

You must and will enjoy your time at university and remember extracurricular activities on your CV are as important to an employer as the degree you leave with. Achieving the compromise between work and play. Is the successful to take.

2. Answer the questions. Write down numbers that show your fear ( 1 – no fear at all... 10 – total panic), count up your total score ( the lowest total – the highest fear).

Are you afraid of ...

1. Problems with doing homework/laboratory work?
2. Worries about the exams
3. Low level of your knowledge
4. Lack of progress
5. Debts
6. Tutors
7. Problems with learning English

- 1) Can you say why you are frightened.
- 2) Think of a few steps to help people with their problems.

3. Read the text given below and answer the questions. Speak on the differences in the systems of higher education at British universities and at universities of our country.

### **LECTURING AND ASSESSMENT IN HERIOT-WATT UNIVERSITY (EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND)**

All of the courses given in the University at undergraduate level rely on lectures given in fifty-minutes periods throughout the three terms in the early years of the courses. Each subject will normally have at least two lecture hours per week with an additional tutorial hour. The latter can consist of small groups with one tutor, or larger groups with several tutors, for example, in mathematics tutorials.

Additionally for many of the science and engineering subjects one or more afternoons per week may be devoted to laboratory work, at which experiments are conducted to back up lectures.

Most subjects are assessed at the end of each term in the first year of a course although the end of session examination contributes most to final achievement. Final examinations are normally held in May of the final year.

It should be noted that each student has a mentor or tutor who keeps an eye on his progress throughout his university career is available to advise the student who experiences difficulties with his academic studies.

Questions:

1. How many terms does the academic year at Heriot-Watt consist of?
2. How long does a lecture last?
3. What other classes do University students have in each subject besides lectures?
4. How and when are many of the subjects assessed?
5. When are final examinations normally held?
6. What are the duties of a tutor?
7. What is the difference between the systems of lecturing and assessment at Heriot-Watt University and at yours?

4. Read the text “Oxford”. Find out the answers to the questions.

- 1) On what basis are Oxford students selected and why is it said that teaching at Oxford is “pleasantly informal and personal”?
- 2) What is so dreadful about “Finals”?
- 3) How is the research done by Oxford post-graduates?

## OXFORD

What is it like, being a student at Oxford? Like all British universities, Oxford is a state university, not private one. Students are selected on the basis of their results in the national examinations or the special Oxford entrance examination. There are many applicants, and nobody can get a place by paying a fee. Successful candidates are admitted to a specified college of the university: that will be their home for the next three years (the normal period for an undergraduate degree), and for longer if they are admitted to study for a post-graduate degree. They will be mostly taught by tutors from their own college.

Teaching is pleasantly informal and personal; a typical under-graduate (apart from those in the natural sciences who spend all day in the laboratories) will spend an hour a week with his or her “tutor”, perhaps in the company of one other student. Each of them will have written an essay for the tutor, which serves as the basis-for discussion, argument, the exposition of ideas and academic methods. At the end of the hour the students go away with new essay title and a list of books that might be helpful in preparing for the essay.

Other kinds of teaching such as lectures and seminars are normally optional: popular lectures can attract audiences from several faculties, while others may find themselves speaking to two or three loyal students, or maybe to none at all. So in theory, if you are good at reading, thinking and writing quickly, you can spend five days out of seven being idle: sleeping, taking part in sports, in student clubs, in acting and singing, in arguing, drinking, having parties. In practice, most students at Oxford are enthusiastic about the academic life, and many of the more conscientious ones work for days at each essay, sometimes sitting up through the night with a wet towel round their heads.

At the end of three years, all students face a dreadful ordeal, “Finals”, the final examinations. The victims are obliged to dress up for the occasion in black and white, an old-fashioned ritual that may help to calm the nerves. They crowd into the huge, bleak examination building and sit for three hours writing what they hope is beautiful prose on half-remembered or strangely forgotten subjects. In the afternoon they assembly for another three hours of writing. After four or five days of this torture they emerge, blinking, into the sunlight, and stagger off for the biggest party of them all.

Postgraduates (often just called graduates) are mostly busy with research for their dissertations, and they spend days in their college libraries or in the richly endowed, fourhundred-year-old Bodleian library.

5. Match the definitions below with one of the words given

- 1) Someone in charge of a school.
- 2) Someone who is still at university studying for their first degree.
- 3) Someone who has successfully completed their first degree.
- 4) Someone responsible for courses in a private school.
- 5) Someone in the same class as you at school.
- 6) Someone who teaches at a college or university.
- 7) *Someone responsible for teaching a small group of students.*
- 8) Someone with the highest academic position in a university.

tutor

lecturer

professor

Undergraduate

classmate

Head teacher

Director of studies

graduate

6. Read the following text and find English equivalents of the following words and word combinations in it: радиотехника; преподавательский состав; лабораторное оборудование; жизненная необходимость; возможности; стипендия; курс обучения; изучение иностранных языков; большое внимание; степень; получать стипендию; выполнять исследования, в заключение.

## THE BELARUSIAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF INFORMATICS AND RADIOELECTRONICS

“The Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics, the former Minsk Radioengineering Institute, was founded in 1964. In 1964 2,5 thousand students began studies at two faculties, those of radioengineering and automatics and computer science separated from the Belarusian Polytechnic Institute.

Today this University trains engineers 18 specialties and 26 specializations in the field of computer science, microelectronics, radioengineering, communication,

computer-aided systems of information processing, electronic instrument-making, broadcasting, medical electronics, economics.

The overall number of students is more than 8 thousand. The teaching staff consists of academicians, Corresponding members of the Belorussian Academy of sciences, professors, assistant professors and experienced teachers.

The students study at 7 faculties; the Faculty of Radioengineering and Electronics; the Faculty of Information Technologies and Control, the Faculty of Computer Systems and Networks, Faculty of Telecommunication, The Economic Faculty, of Computer-aided Design and the Evening and Correspondence Faculty. The University has all the necessary facilities for teaching. A number of computer classes are equipped with modern computer owing to the support of world-known companies, such as PHILIPS, INTEL, IBM and their Belorussian partners.

A large library with reading halls is at the disposal of the students.

Different subjects are taught at the University depending on the faculty and the course. The first-year students study physics, higher mathematics, descriptive geometry, technical drawing, social sciences. Later they acquire profound knowledge in electronics, cybernetics, computing machinery, etc. Special attention is given to such subjects as impulse technique, analog and digital computers, theoretical fundamentals electroengineering .

Four foreign languages are taught at the University. Professionally-oriented teaching of English, German, French and Spanish is carried on by two departments with the use of advanced teaching methods and introducing intensive technique.

The University presents its latest developments at Belorussian national expositions as well as at world-famous fairs and exhibitions in Germany, China, India, Iran, Egypt, Vietnam, United Arab Emirates, Syria.

Over 1300 professors and students of the University went abroad on exchange programs, and over 270 of them went on scientific probation.

The course study at University lasts five years. The academic year is divided into two terms. The students financially covered by the government are granted studentships. Students from other cities lodge in the halls of residence of total capacity of 2100 people.

The University teams regularly win the leading positions of student sports in athletics and keep-fit activities. Belorussian best athletes had their trainings in gymnasiums of the University, among them the Olympic Champion, basketball player I. Edeshko and vice-chairman of the National Olympic Committee of Belarus, three times Olympic Champion, seven times World Champion.

The Student Club of the University organizes parties, discos, festivals of amateur art. The University takes special pride in its brass band, vocal group "Tutashiee", the ballet dance group, the group of acrobatic rock-n-roll, the bard song club, etc.

1. Read the texts about the University of Informatics and Radioelectronics and answer the following questions.

- 1) When was the Minsk Radioengineering Institute was founded?
- 2) When was the Minsk Radioengineering Institute granted the status of University?
- 3) How many students study at the University?
- 4) What faculties are there at the University?
- 5) What subjects are taught at the University?
- 6) How long does the course of study last?
- 7) When are terminal exams held?
- 8) Where do the students from different cities lodge?
- 9) What does the students Club organize?
- 10) Does the University have the right to be proud of the graduates? Why?
- 11) What way is the University's cooperation with foreign colleagues realized?
- 12) Where does the University present its latest developments?

### **Post-reading**

#### ***1. Pair-work***

- 1) Convince your friend who doesn't believe in University education that University is the best place to study law, history...
- 2) Interview your friend about his University experience.
- 3) Your friend believes that teaching will soon be done by computers. Challenge the statement that a teacher can't be replaced by machines.

#### ***2. Develop the following situations***

- 1) Your friend who takes humanities at the University that studying electronics is rather boring. Explain why he is wrong.
- 2) You have just come back from Great Britain where you took a course of lectures at one of the British universities. Tell your group-mates about the differences, that you noticed, in the educational systems of England and Belarus.
- 3) Your friend hates English, he thinks it is not important for his future job as an electronics engineer. You try to persuade him that he is wrong.

## **UNIT 4. Belarus**

1. What do you know about Belarus?
  - a) write down some associations coming to your mind when you hear the word 'Belarus'.
  - b) Compare your ideas with a partner.
  - c) Read the text and check your ideas.

## COUNTRY IN THE HEART OF EUROPE

The Republic of Belarus (the short name is Belarus) was founded on January 1, 1919. It was included in the body of the USSR beginning with December 30 1922. On July 27 1990 the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Belarus adopted the Declaration of state sovereignty of the Republic of Belarus. The Declaration clearly defines its goal: to make republic the neutral state and its territory – a non-nuclear zone.

After the World War II Belarus became one of the founders of the United Nations Organization. Now it has economic and political relations with 120 countries in the world.

Belarus is the presidential republic. The state power in the Republic is realized in three structures – legislative, executive and judicial. The President of the Republic of Belarus is the head of the state. The executive body is the Soviet of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus, headed by the Prime-minister. Local government and self government are carried out through local deputy Soviets, executive and managing bodies, bodies of self-government.

Belarus is situated in the eastern part of the European continent. It covers an area of 207,600 square kilometers. According to size, Belarus takes the 13-th place in Europe. The distance from North to South is 560 kilometres (3450 miles), from East to West – 650 ( 403 miles). In the North and East it borders on Russia, in the south-East –on Ukraine, in the West – on Poland and in the North-West—on Latvia and Lithuania. The borders of Belarus are primarily land-borders, only partially they match with rivers: the Boug – on the Polish border, the Dnieper – on the Ukrainian border and the Sozh – on the Russian border.

The capital of Belarus is the city of Minsk. The distance from Minsk to Warsaw is 500 kilometres, to Moscow – 700 kilometres, to Berlin – 1060 kilometres, to Vienna – 1300 kilometres.

For the most part, the territory is a lowland. The major rivers are: the Dnieper, the Western Dvina, the Pripyat and the Neman. Belarus lies in the zone of mixed forests which cover one third of the territory. The predominant soils are: dernovo-podzol semi-clay soils. The melioration has allowed to achieve the significant increase in their quality.

The inalienable feature of Belarusian scenery are forests which cover about 40% of all the republic territory and marshes (13%) that have very important climatic and hydrologic meaning.

The climate is moderately continental, wet, the average temperature in January –6 degrees C (20F) and in July +18 (64 F). The annual precipitation rate is 550-700 millimetres (22 - 28 inches).

The overall population of the Republic is 10 million people. The main ethnic groups are: Belarusians \_78%, Russians – 13%, Polish – 4%, Ukrainians – 3%, Jews – 1%, other – 1%. Approximately 69% of the population are urban. The average family –3.2 people, the average life expectancy is 71 years ( women – 76 years, men – 66 years ).



The state languages are Belarusian and Russian.

Belarus has 6 regions with centres in Minsk(about 2 mln residents), Brest(277,000), Vitebsk(365,00), Grodno(278,000), Mogilev(363,00) and Gomel(509,000)

One can count 118 districts and 102 towns in the republic, including 12 cities with population over 100,000 people and more.

The most developed industries of the republic are: machine building, metal-processing, chemical and petrochemical industries, wood-processing, manufacturing of glass and porcelain as well as light, food and pharmaceutical industries.

Today Belarus produces motors, tractors, bicycles, trucks, chemical fibres, TV-sets, electrical instruments, automatic production lines, watches, household refrigerators

Agriculture of Belarus is known for its dairy and beef farming, pig raising, growing potatoes, wheat, rye, barley, flax, sugarbeets, vegetables and fruit.

Belarus has a developed transport infrastructure including railways, motorways, waterways ( as well as oil and gas pipelines ). Its territory is crossed by major roads connecting the former USSR states with European countries.

Our state possesses a network of airports with air-lines to more than 100 cities and towns of the CIS; the international airport Minsk-2 operates regular flights to cities and towns of Europe and North America.

The first place belongs to railway transport –90% of freight and 57% of passengers is transported by rail.

Belarusians are one of the most peace-loving nations in the world, toleration is their inalienable quality. However, due to its geographical position Belarus was the arena where stronger neighbours sorted their relations out;tiffs of feudal lords, forced introduction of Christianity, raids of crusaders, Mongols and Tatars, alternative inclusion into the Great Lithuanian Principality, Rzecz-Pospolita and Russian empire – Belarusian land remembers thousands of bloody battles, fierce fights and wars. The wars remained in history, - castles and palaces remind us about the stormy past of Belarus.

THE CULTURE of any nation, its cultural environment defines its level of development. Now a lot is being done in Belarus to revive material and spiritual culture of the nation by the government as well as by the wide public circles. This includes cultural traditions, environment, public relations, material and cultural valuables that are traditional to the Belarusian lifestyle. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Belarus there were a lot of beautiful parks, county estates, castles, churches and cathedrals closely linked with Belarusian history. Nowadays their reconstruction has started. It has a great significance for the revival of national self-consciousness of Belarusians. Nesvizh, Mir and Lida Castles are among them. Not visiting worldwide famous Nesvizh Castle (XVI century) when staying in Belarus will be a regret. It combines medieval architectural features, styles of late Renaissance, the Baroque and original stylish research of local masters. Nesvizh Castle was founded on a hill on the right bank of the Usha river with water level risen by means of a dam. Being circled with water the castle was in fact an island as the

only road to it led through a long wooden bridge which could be easily disassembled in case of danger.

Mir Castle ( situated 30 km away from Nesvizh ) built in the first quarter of XVI century is called “the most fascinating medieval flower”, - it is the combination of late Renaissance and Gothic styles. A lot of tourists visit these castles as well as those situated in Zaslavl, Snov, Polotsk, Grodno, Pinsk and the bigger cities of the republic.

People say a castle cannot be built on sand. However, it was sand that Lida Castle was built on. In spite of its insteady base the castle has been standing for 7 centuries. The castle protected its hosts throughout dangerous medieval epoch of intestine fights, resisted assaults of crusaders and raids of Tatars. Even after having been destroyed by the Swedes during North War the castle sheltered rebels headed by Tadeusz Kosciuszka.

We are proud of the famous people who made up the glory of our country: T. Kasciuszka, F. Skaryna, Efrosiniya Polotskaya, V.Bykov, P.Masherov, M.Savitskiy, Z.Shemelyov, Z.Azgur, - the list is far from being completed.

Belarus is a country with a high education level. In Belarus there are 40 higher educational establishments including Universities, 149 specialized comprehensive educational establishments, 51 thousand various schools including primary and secondary ones. Among the secondary schools there are grammar schools, lyceums and colleges.

## **MINSK**

Minsk is the capital of Belarus. Its history goes back to . More than 900 hundred years ago on the banks of the Niemiga and Svisloch rivers there appeared the city of Minsk or Mensk as it was called at that time. Minsk was first mentioned as a town in the Principality of Polotsh in a chronicle in 1067 but in 1569 it was renamed into Minsk. Minsk has a great and eventful history. It has lived through many hardships, it was burnt and ruined many times but every time it was rebuilt lovely in all seasons of the years and nowadays Minsk is a big growing city.

The most striking impression of old Minsk can be given by a tour to the historical centre of the city. The historical centre consists of Verkhniy gorod, Rakovskoye and Troyetskoye predmestie.

Verkhniy gorod is the present Svobody Square and the blocks of old buildings limited by the river Svisloch from east, by the streets Romanovskaya Sloboda and Gorodskoy Val from west, by the street Niemiga from north and by the street Internatsionalnaya from south.

Rakovskoye predmestie is the area of streets Rakovskaya, Vitebskaya, Osvobozhdenia, Dimitrova and Zamkovaya. By the way the oldest part of the city – so – called Minskoye zamchishche is situated in the territory of Rakovskoye predmestie. (beginning of Masherov avenue).

Francisk Skorina avenue is the highway of Belarusian capital-city. Its length is more than 11 kilometres.

During the Great Patriotic War Minsk was almost completely ruined and many architects and builders even thought it was impossible to restore the city. But with the help of the people from other Soviet republics it was built anew. Nowadays Minsk is the largest industrial center of Belarus. Over one fourth of the country's industrial personnel is employed by its over 150 factories.  $\frac{3}{4}$  of industrial output of the Minsk region and  $\frac{1}{4}$  of industrial output of Belarus is produced in the city. The leading role in Minsk industries belongs to mechanical engineering

There are 20 universities and 24 colleges operating in the city. The Belarusian Academy of Sciences is situated here. Cultural institutions are represented by 9 museums, 11 theaters, a circus, 6 concert halls a TV-station and a botanic garden.

Victory Square (up to 1954 called 'Kruglaya') is a sacred place in Minsk. The 40 metres high monument was erected here in honour of the Victory over fascist Germany and in the memory of partisans and soldiers who perished in the Great Patriotic War. The Eternal Flame was set at the foot of the monument on July 3, 1961.

Minsk has a developed public network system including buses, trolley-buses, trams and Metro. The daily service runs from 5-30 a.m. till 1-00 a.m.

Minsk Metro is clean and comfortable – now it has 20 stations.

1. Read the text again and speak on the following aspects: official name; area population; language; currency; largest city; capital; political structure; head of Government; head of State; main sources of income

Which piece of information is not in the text? Can you provide it?

2. Find these things in the text:
  - a) facts that show the structure of the population
  - b) type of climate Belarus has
  - c) things that show the favourable geographical situation of the republic
  - d) the most developed industries
  - e) things that tourists might see in Belarus (in Minsk; in your native town)

3. Percentages and numbers

a) find these numbers in the text: 500; 40%; 10 000 000; 1067; 120; 2 000 000; 207,600; 78%.

b) Complete the sentences from the text:

The Republic of Belarus was founded ...

The head of the state is ...

Belarus covers an area ...

It is situated ...

The climate is ...

The main ethnic groups are ...

The state languages in our republic...

Belarus is one of the founders of ...

Our republic has a developed ...

Today Belarus produces ...

Our state possesses a network of ...

Agriculture of Belarus is known for ...

Now it has economic and political relations with ...

4. Discussion points

- a) What do you think is the most interesting piece of information about Belarus on these pages? What important things are left out?
- b) What do you know about the origin of the name 'Belarus'?
- c) Many people have their favorite places in their native towns – what about you? Why do you like this place (street, square, etc.)?
- d) What places in Belarus would you like to visit? Give your reasons.
- e) If you decided to make a tour to the historical centre of Minsk, which route would you take? (You have= 2 hours at your disposal for the walk – Verkhniy Gorod, Troyetskoe or Rakovskoe predmestiye (or others).
- f) Which – in your opinion – is the most impressive building in Minsk?
- g) What has been done and is being done to restore the historical places of our capital?
- h) Let us consider the values of representatives of different nations (traditions, cultural life, traits of character, attitude to others, etc.). For example

British values	Scandinavian values
(as seen by people of other nations) individualism traditionalism moderation respect for others	Modesty individualism attachment to nature concept of 'just enough' respect for children

What are – in your opinion – Belarusian values?

5. Writing

Use the information from the table in ex.2. Write a paragraph about Belarus. Start like this: the official name of Belarus .... Its area is ...

6. Reading

a) complete the text with these words:

to found	huge	significant	centre
sovereignty	source	government	trade
to border	inhabited	administrative	manufacture
temperate	population	cultural	historical
area	recent	developed	famous

b) offering to help

Study these expressions

Would you like me to

} Take you to the Natural History Museum?

Shall I

### **To accept an offer we can use these expressions**

Yes, please; I'd be very grateful.

To refuse an offer politely: No, thank you.

There's no need, thank you.

## **HOLIDAYS AND TRADITIONS IN BELARUS**

There are several holidays that are celebrated all over the world. Besides there are the holidays which are national only.

As for our Motherland, people of Belarus mark and celebrate; The New Year Day. On this day we see off the old year and meet the new year. Children and grown-ups always wait for this holiday. It is traditionally family holiday. All members of the family try to gather together at home to have a N.Y. party. On N.Y. Eve everything is rush and bustle. The cities are decorated with coloured lights across the streets. The trees are decorated with tinsel and a lot of toys and coloured lights. Children usually decorate their flats with pictures, flags, paper snow flakes. Everyone is very busy on these days. We help our parents about the house, clean the flat, do shopping and help mother to prepare (cook) delicious dishes for New Y. Supper. At 12 o'clock we are at the table and when the clock strikes we will congratulate each other with N.Y. and wish be happy, healthy, wealthy. We hope our wishes be fulfilled during the coming year.

On the 8-th of March all the women celebrate the International Women's Day. Husbands, brothers, grandfathers, children make presents for their wives, mothers, sisters. Men give them flowers (a ring, necklace, perfume (scent), chain, books, etc) with smiles. All women become more beautiful and kind on this day.

On 1st of May, merry spring holiday with flowers, songs, dances, is the holiday of Labour and Solidarity, which came from America and is marked by working people. Nowadays people go to the squares. They speak about their problems and demand from the government solving the problems.

Traditionally people of the countries, which fought for victory over the fascist armies and won the great Victory, celebrate one of the most important holidays - the 9-th of May. People put flowers at the bottom of Monuments of the heroes. We are proud of citizens of our country who spared no efforts and even lives for our freedom and independence.

People in our Republic mark religious Holidays according to church Calender which gives exact date for every Orthodox or Catholic holiday.

On the 25-th of December (for Catholics) and the 7-th of January (for Ortodoxes) we celebrate the Christmas Days. It is the birthday of Christ. Churches have Christmas Eve services which usually begin just before midnight on Christmas Eve and end early Christmas morning.

Another religious holidays in Belarus are Easter and "Radawnitsa".

Easter is celebrated as resurrection of Jesus Christ. Some old traditions are observed. People paint the shells of boiled eggs and bake Easter pies. Churches have their services. Those who trust in God come to the church to pray. In days after Easter the next religious holiday takes place. It is the day when people remember their dead relatives. All people try to be at the cemetery to put the graves in order. They go to Churches, light candles in their memory.

"Dzyady" so called holiday in our Republic is usually marked on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November. When the harvest season is over and our ancestors are pleased with our work in the fields. People think of their great grandfathers, of those who are dead. At the cemeteries there are also special ceremonies with eating and ever drinking.

The 27<sup>th</sup> of July is the Day of Independence. On this day people do not work, they have a rest with their families, go to the square of Independence, put flowers to the monuments.

On the 3<sup>d</sup> of July we celebrate the day when Minsk was liberated from German fascists and when victorious march of Soviet soldiers across western borders began.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of July people in Belarus mark Kupala Holiday. On that day young girls decorate themselves with flowers, make wreaths, put candles in side and throw them into the water of lakes and rivers. They think of their future husbands and if the candles remain burning and the wreaths do not get drown their dreams will come true.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of April we mark "All Fools Day". We can play tricks, Jokes, tell various lies and we are not punished for that.

Every holiday is good and people feel more enthusiastic after it they perceive better the value of every day of our life.

## **UNIT 5. English as a world language**

### **Pre-reading**

#### **1. Discussion Point**

Answer the questions using the list below.

- 1) Which language in the world is spoken by most people?
- 2) Which language has the largest vocabulary?
- 3) Which is the oldest written language?
- 4) Which sub-continent has the largest number of languages?
- 5) Which language has no irregular verbs?
- 6) Which language has the most letters in its alphabet?
- 7) In which language is the largest encyclopedia printed?

Is it ... Spanish - Cambodian – English – Egyptian – Esperanto - Mandarin Chinese – Indian ?

2. Work in pairs. Do you think the following statements are true or false?

- 8) English was already an important world language four hundred years ago.
- 9) It is mainly because of the United States that English has become a world language.
- 10) One person out of seven in the world speaks perfect English.
- 11) There are few inflections in modern English.
- 12) In English, many words can be used as nouns.
- 13) English has borrowed words from many other languages.
- 14) One-third of the world's population speaks English.
- 15) German is a promising language in the world.
- 16) In the future, all other languages will probably die out.

### **Reading**

1. Skim reading. Read the article on “English as a World Language”. Find out the answers to the true/false statements.

### **ENGLISH AS A WORLD LANGUAGE**

English is one of the major languages in the world. In Shakespeare's time, though, only a few million people spoke English, and the language was not thought to be very important by the other nations of Europe, and was unknown to the rest of the world.

English has become a world language because of its establishment as a mother tongue outside England, in all the continents of the world. The exporting of English began in the seventeenth century, with the first settlements in North America. Above all, it is the great growth of population in the United States, assisted by massive immigration in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, that has given the English language its present standing in the world.

People who speak English fall into one of three groups: those who have learned it as their native language in the US, Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa; those who have learned it as a second language in a society that is mainly bilingual: in more than 70 countries, such as Ghana, Nigeria, India, Singapore and Vanuatu; and those who are forced to use it for a practical purpose – administrative, professional or educational. One person in seven of the world's entire population belongs to one of these three groups. Incredibly enough, 75% of the world's mail and 60% of the world's telephone calls are in English.

Although estimates vary greatly, some 1.5bn are thought to be competent communicators in English. That's a quarter of the world's population.

So, can English be a global language when three out of four people don't use it? Given the areas of world influence where it has become to have a pivotal role, the answer has to be yes. Evidence suggests that English is now the dominant tongue in international politics, banking, the press, news agencies, advertising, broadcasting, the recording industry, movies, travel, science and technology, knowledge management and communications. No other language has achieved such a widespread profile – or is likely to in the foreseeable future.

Other languages have an important international presence, of course. Both Mandarin Chinese and Spanish have more mother-tongue speakers than English, according to a 1999 survey. Although there is uncertainty about statistics, Spanish is growing faster than any other language, especially in the Americas.

The reason for the global status of English has nothing to do with its number of first-language speakers. Three times as many people speak it as a second or foreign language, and this ratio is increasing.

Old English, like modern German, French, Russian and Greek, had many inflection to show singular and plural, tense, etc., but over the centuries words have been simplified. Verbs now have very few inflections. Without inflections, the same word can operate as many different parts of speech. Many nouns and verbs have the same form, for example **swim, drink, walk, kiss, look, process, smile, record**. We can talk about **water** to drink and **to water** the flowers; **time** to go and **to time** a race; **a paper** to read and **to paper** a bedroom. Adjectives can be used as verbs. We **warm** our hands in front of a fire; if our clothes are **dirtied**, they need to be **cleaned and dried**. Prepositions too are flexible. A sixty-year old man is **nearing** retirement; we can talk about **a round of golf, cards, or drinks**. This involves the free admission of words from other languages and the easy creation of compounds and derivatives. Most world languages have contributed some words to English at some time, and the process is now being reversed. Purists of the French, Russian, and Japanese languages are resisting the arrival of English in their vocabulary.

Once a language is so widely spoken, it ceases to have a single centre of influence. Changes taking place in the way English is used in such places as South Africa, India, China and Singapore are outside anyone's control. Not even a World English Academy could affect them.

Standard English is the chief force, existing as an international reality in print, and available as a tool for national and international communication. Its position is being reinforced by new technologies. Satellite television is beaming standard English down into previously unreachable parts of the world, thereby fostering greater levels of mutual intelligibility. And the Internet currently has a predominantly (80%) English voice – though this figure is falling as other languages come online.

But nothing is entirely predictable in the world of language. At the start of the millennium, it would have been hard to believe that few would know Latin 1,000 years later. It takes only a shift in the balance of economic or political power for another language, to move centre stage.



### Who speaks English ...

... as a first language (m)	... as a second language (m)
US.....226.7	Nigeria.....43.0
UK.....57.2	India.....37.0
Canada.....19.7	Philippines.....30.0
Australia.....15.3	US.....30.0
South Africa.....3.6	Palau.....16.3
New Zealand.....3.4	Pakistan.....16.0
Irish Republic.....3.3	South Africa.....10.0
Jamaica.....2.4	Cameroon.....6.6
Trinidad & Tobago.....1.2	Canada.....6.0
Guyana.....0.7	Malaysia.....6.0
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Total.....375.0	Total.....375.0

2. Look through the list of the countries and say why not all the countries mentioned in the text are included in the text. Find the countries mentioned in the text on the map.

3. Read the text in more depth and write down the key sentences for retelling.

### Post-reading

1. Read some amazing facts about English today, fill in the gaps with suitable numbers.

- 1) One billion people speak English today. That's ... of the world's population.
- 2) ... million people speak English as their first language. For the other 600 million it's either a second language or a foreign language.
- 3) The number of Chinese people learning English today is bigger than the population of the USA.
- 4) There are more than ... words in the Oxford English Dictionary.
- 5) ... % of all information in the world's computers is in English.
- 6) Nearly ... % of all the companies in Europe communicate with each other in English.
- 7) English is just one of over ... languages in the world today.
- 8) ... % of all international letters and telexes are in English.
- 9) ... % of all English vocabulary comes from other languages.
- 10) When the American spaceship "Voyager" began its journey in ... it carried a gold disc. On the disc there were messages in ... languages.

Before all of them there was a message from the Secretary General of the United Nations — in English.

- 11) It is said that William Shakespeare used about ... words in his works.
- 12) An average English-speaking person uses several thousands of words; a poorly educated person can do with as little as... words in his everyday life.

a) 1,000	b) 29,000	c) 400	d) 55	e) 15%	f) 500,000
g) 80%	h) 1977	i) 50%	j) 80%	k) 3,000	l) 75%

2. Read and say why English has become an international language of scientific publishing.

### SCIENTIFIC PUBLISHING

English is now the international currency of science and technology. Yet it has not always been so. The renaissance of British science in the 17<sup>th</sup> century put English-language science publications such as the “Philosophical Transactions” instituted by the Royal Society 1665, at the forefront of the world scientific community. But the position was soon lost to German, which became the dominant international language of science until World War I. The growing role of the US then ensured that English became, once again, the global language of experiment and discovery.

Journals in many countries have shifted, since World War II, from publishing in their national language to publishing in English. Gibbs (1995) describes how the Mexican medical journal “Archivos de Investigacion Medica” shifted to English: first publishing abstracts in English, then providing English translations of all articles, finally hiring an American editor, accepting articles only in English and changing its name to “Archives of Medical Research”.

This language shift is common elsewhere. A study in the early 1980s showed nearly two-thirds of publications of French scientists were in English. All contributions in 1950 to the “Zeitschrift fur Tierpsychologie” were in German, but by 1984 95% were in English. The journal was renamed “Ethology” two years later.

3. Read the article and match suitable topic sentences with the paragraphs of the text.

- a) *lawyers must be trained to understand legal agreements written in English*
- b) *lingua franca provides joint ventures with internationally recognised terms, obligations and rights*
- c) *a newly established company headquartered in any country of the world needs specialist with the skills in the local language*

- d) *joint ventures tend to use English as an international language*
- e) *importing and exporting processes of a joint venture requires English-speaking personnel*
- f) *a transnational corporation uses English for external trade*

## **WHY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ENCOURAGES ENGLISH**

1. Although an incoming company may not be headquartered in an English-speaking country, it will typically establish a joint venture with a local concern. Joint ventures (e.g. Sino-Swiss and German) tend to adopt English as their “lingua franca”<sup>1</sup>, which promotes a local need for training in English.

2. Establishment of joint ventures requires legal documents and memoranda of understanding. International legal agreements are written in English because there exists international consensus about the meaning of terms, obligations and rights. This activity may create a demand for specialist English language training for lawyers -- the case in China where new courses are being established.

3. A newly established company will be in most cases involved in international trade –importing raw materials and exporting finished goods. This will create a need for back-office workers, sales and marketing staff with skills in English.

4. Technology transfer is closely associated with English, largely because most transfer is sourced by a transnational corporation (TNC) which either is English speaking or which uses English for external trade. Technology transfer is not restricted to the enterprise itself, but may extend to associated infrastructure expansion such as airports, railways and telecommunications. In central China, engineers in local steel factories learn English so that they can install and maintain plant brought from Germany and Italy. The predominance of English in technology transfer reflects the role of TNCs more than the fact that much leading-edge technology derives from the US.

5. Establishing joint ventures creates incoming demands from international visitors who require supporting services, such as hotels and tourist facilities. The staff of secondary enterprises also require training in English for these visitors.

6. Jobs in the new enterprises may be better paid and more attractive than those in the public sector. English qualifications may become an entry necessity, or have perceived value in access to jobs – even if the job itself does not require English.

4. Read and say what languages compete for the title of the “lingua franca” in Europe.

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<sup>1</sup> ”Lingua franca” – language used between peoples whose main languages are different. It may originally be made up of parts of several languages.

## ENGLISH IN BUSINESS

1. International trade is often a complex cross-boarder business: goods are taken from one country, refined or given added value by a second, sold to a third, repackaged, resold and so on. Such multilateral trade brings with it greater reliance on lingua francas.

2. In Europe there is growing evidence that English has become the major business lingua franca. A study conducted in 1988 for the Danish Council of Trade and Industry reported that English is used by Danish companies in over 80% of international business contacts and communications. A more recent investigation in small and medium-sized businesses in peripheral areas of Europe found that although English is probably the most used language of business across Europe, German is used extensively in particular areas, especially for informal communication:

“German is, understandably, in more widespread use than English in European regions bordering on Germany, thereby undermining a common misperception of English as the sole lingua franca of international business. This is apparent in the Dutch and Danish samples, where German is ahead of English in the use of oral-aural skills, though this order is reversed for reading and writing.”

3. However, the use of German and French is almost exclusively confined to trade within Europe: German companies generally use English for trade outside the European Union. This is apparent from recommendations made by German Chambers of Commerce to members on which languages should be used for trade with each country in the world. English is recommended as the sole language for 64 countries. German is recommended as the exclusive language of trade only with one country – Austria – though German is suggested as a co-language for up to 25 countries, including Holland, Denmark and those in eastern Europe. French is recommended for 25 countries and Spanish-- for 17. English is thus the preferred, but not the sole, language of external trade for European countries. Japan and the US also use English widely for their international trade.

5. Read the article again and say what these numbers refer to in the text.

a)80	b) 64	c) 1	d) 25	e) 25	f)17
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## CONCLUSION

***Say why English is a world language. Use the following questions:***

1. When did the English language begin to serve as the international language?
2. What contributed to the development of English as a world language?
3. Why did people begin to speak English more widely after World War II?
4. Do you personally feel that you need English? What are your reasons?
5. What language do you think might be used as a lingua franca if not English?

## KEYS

### 1. Discussion point

- 1) Mandarin Chinese is spoken by 700,000 people (70% of the population of China). English is the most widespread, with 400 mln speakers.
- 2) English has the largest vocabulary with approximately 500,000 words and 300,000 technical terms.
- 3) The oldest written language is Egyptian, which is 5,000 years old.
- 4) India has the most languages, with 845.
- 5) There are no irregular verbs in Esperanto, an artificial language invented in 1887.
- 6) Cambodian has 72 letters.
- 7) The largest encyclopedia is printed in Spanish.

### 2. Amazing facts

1-e, 2-c, 3-..., 4-f, 5-j, 6-k, 7-k, 8-l, 9-g, 10-h,d, 11-b, 12-a.

## UNIT 6. Ecological problems

### 1. Environmental Quiz

*Answer the questions in the quiz. How much of the information did you already know?*

1. Choose the words, which define the term “conservation” correctly:  
the protection of a) land; b) energy; c) books; d) animals; e) paintings; f) plants.
2. What species can be called endangered:  
a) being killed by people; b) rare; c) on the brink of extinction; d) wild and aggressive.
3. Rain forests:  
a) are able to survive adverse conditions, like cold, drought, disease and pests.  
b) produce about 50% of the world’s annual production of oxygen.  
c) contain at least half of the Earth’s species.  
d) chemically active.
4. The greenhouse effect refers to:  
a) a global temperature increase due to the number of greenhouses being built;  
b) a natural process which keeps the Earth warm enough for life to be possible;  
c) the increased amount of carbon dioxide and other gases that humans have emitted in the last 100 years, which contribute to global warming;  
d) the ozone layer, which allows heat to pass through to the Earth, but not to escape.
5. Extra greenhouse gases are produced through the following activities:

- a) animal waste which lets off methane
- b) burning coal and petrol
- c) cutting down of rainforests and other forests
- d) the usage of greenhouses

6. Acid rains can be caused by: a) chemical fertilizers; b) industrial wastes; c) smog; d) pesticides; e) exhaust fumes; f) oil spills.

## 2. Ecovocabulary

1. Give your own definitions to the following terms:

conservation      ecology      ecosystem      endangered species      environment

2. Match the words from exercise 1 with the appropriate definition:

- a) an ecological concept which helps to explain the relationships and interactions between one or more living organisms and their physical, biological, and chemical environment
- b) the protection and preservation of the Earth's resources (e.g. plants, animals, land, energy, minerals) or of historical objects (e.g. books, paintings, monuments) for the future
- c) plant and animal species which are in danger of becoming extinct
- d) the study of living organisms with their physical, biological and chemical environment
- e) the conditions and influences of the place in which an organism lives

3. Divide the words given in the box between the following entries:

air pollution;	global warming;	deforestation;
congestion;	contamination;	water pollution;

Damage to the wildlife; depletion of ozone layer; oil spills; exhaust fumes; temperature rise; traffic jams; pesticides; lack of oxygen; dumping; smoke from factories; cutting down tropical rainforests; aerosol cans; greenhouse effect; rubbish dumps; sewage; chemical fertilizers; power stations; smog; acid rains; litter.

## 3. Ecoproblems

*Explain why environmental problems may be considered to be an example of human activity?*

*What measures could be adopted to control the emission of pollutants?*

## CLIMATE CRISIS

**Holes in the sky.** The satellite photographs showed the hole in the ozone layer and it is getting bigger. The main cause of the depletion of the ozone layer is chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) in the atmosphere which comes from aerosol cans (30%), fridges and air-conditioning (30%), and the manufactures of some plastic products (34%).

The ozone layer stops some of the ultraviolet radiation from the sun. This radiation causes a suntan. Too much ultraviolet causes sunburn and skin cancer.

**The Greenhouse Effect.** The atmosphere's made up of layers of gases. They're mostly natural (e.g. water vapour) and make up a kind of thermal blanket over the earth. The sun rays naturally warm the planet passing through the earth's atmosphere. Some of them are reflected back out to space again. This lets keep the earth at the right temperature for animals, plants and humans to survive (60°F/16°C).

So some warmth is good. But during the last 100 years burning coal, oil, petrol, gas and wood, cutting down huge areas of unique rain forests we have produced an incredible amount of carbon dioxide, which works like the glass in a greenhouse. It allows heat to get in but not out. So the thermal blanket gets thicker and too much heat is kept in the earth's atmosphere. That's when warming's bad.

**Global warming**, the rise in temperature of the earth's atmosphere, is one of the major environmental issues of our time. Though the evidence is still uncertain, it seems that the planet is heating up. What's more, it seems that this increase in average global temperature is due in large part to humans polluting the atmosphere. A combination of economic growth and population increase has meant that more and more pollutants are being discharged from fires, power stations, motor vehicles and factories.

Such temperature changes can bring to the water expansion and rise of sea level due to the melting of the glaciers and sea ice. As a result cities on coasts or even the whole countries may be flooded. Places that usually get lots of rain and snowfall might get hotter and drier. Lakes and rivers can dry up. Agriculture will face droughts making hard to grow crops. Less water will be available for drinking. Some plants and animals might become extinct because of the heat. Hurricanes, tornadoes and other storms, which are caused by changes in heat and water evaporation may get more common. And these are only the foreseeable consequences.

**Deforestation** is when many trees are cleared from a large area. People deforest because wood is a necessity to humans. We need paper, wood for houses and other buildings because of increasing urbanization in some areas. We need wood for commercial and industrial use as well.

But trees absorb carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and give out oxygen into the air. In this respect the Amazon rain forests are chemically very active and produce about 50% of the world's annual production of oxygen. According to climatologists, if the destruction of the forests continues at the same rate, two things are likely to happen: there will be serious effects on the world's climate, and the air will lose some of its oxygen causing the difficulties of breathing. Besides, when trees decompose after

they have been cut down, they release that CO<sub>2</sub> back into the atmosphere (increasing the greenhouse effect, therefore accelerating global warming). Deforestation has also killed hundreds of thousands of species by taking away the habitat that those species were living in and were adapted to. Soil erosion, silting of lakes and rivers, desertification are some other results caused by the destruction of the lungs of our planet.

**Acid rains.** Imagine rainwater more acid than lemon juice! The sources of such rains are the burning of fossil fuels – whether this is in industry, in cars, or in boilers for heating – and chemical fertilizers and pesticides used in agriculture. Acid rain affects aquatic plants and animals entering lakes, streams and rivers increases their acidity until fish and other species cannot survive. Trees and vegetation are damaged as well. The acidic chemicals have been found to interfere with processes in plant leaves, affecting water loss and the exchange of gases by the leaf. Eventually photosynthesis ceases and the plant dies. Acid rain reduces soil fertility. Ions in the rain displace metal ions from the clays and humus in the soil. The metal ions are then transported elsewhere. The removal of calcium, potassium and magnesium ions from the soil deprives tree and vegetation of minerals, and stunts their growth. Besides, toxic metals get into drinking-water sources. Acid rain has been detected in many countries, from the USA to eastern Europe, and from Austria to Japan and China.

*Check and correct (if necessary) your answers to the Environmental Quiz.*

#### **4. Wildlife**

1. What is your attitude to hunting animals for sport; for their fur; for food?
2. Read the text and answer the questions.

The seas are in danger. They are being filled with poison: industrial and nuclear waste, chemical fertilizers and pesticides, sewage. The Mediterranean is already nearly dead; the North sea is following. If nothing is done about it, one day soon nothing will be able to live in the seas.

*Which of these sources of poison is **not** mentioned in the text?*

*Factories; lavatories; atomic power stations; oil tankers; farms.*

The tropical rain forests, which are the home of half the earth's living things (including many rare animals and plants), are being destroyed. If nothing is done about it, they will have nearly disappeared in twenty years. The effect on the world's climate – and on our agriculture and food supplies – will be disastrous.

*Do you know any places where rain forests are being destroyed?*

*Do you know why the world's climate will be affected?*

3. Read the texts and put in the given words. You may have to make some small changes.

OPERATION TIGER

create

left

remain

save



Fifty years ago there were 100,000 tigers in the wild. Today there are not more than 5,000 \_\_\_\_\_. In 1972 the World Wildlife Fund launched "Operation Tiger" to \_\_\_\_\_ the tigers that \_\_\_\_\_. Nine tigers' reserves have been \_\_\_\_\_ in India and three in Nepal.

THE SEAS MUST LIVE      chemical      death      fur      hunt  
in danger      international      nuclear      poison      whale

In 1976 the WWF launched its biggest \_\_\_\_\_ campaign, "The Seas Must Live". The seas are polluted by \_\_\_\_\_ pesticides, \_\_\_\_\_ waste and other \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ are being hunted to extinction. Turtles are killed for their meat, shell and oil, crocodiles to make handbags and shoes, walrus for their ivory. Seals are beaten to \_\_\_\_\_ to provide \_\_\_\_\_ coats. Many species of these animals are \_\_\_\_\_ of dying out. The WWF is working to provide sea sanctuaries where whales, dolphins and seals cannot be \_\_\_\_\_.

4. Work in groups of three or four. Imagine that each group is a wildlife conservation organization in the year 2500. You have enough money to save several, but not all, of the following from extinction: the lion, the rabbit, the sheep, the cat, the dog, the horse, the golden eagle, the bee, the cobra, the rose. Draw up a list of priorities: three things that you will certainly save, four more left over, and four that you will not try to save.

#### 5. Questions and answers.

*Why can some environmental problems be called international? Bring some examples.*

*Think over the possible obstacles to the solution of such problems. Discuss your ideas in the group then read the article and check your reasons.*

### INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

**Why are they hard to solve?** Global warming, overwhaling, acid rain, the thinning of the ozone layer and the pollution of the seas: all these are international environmental problems (IEPs). In other words, they are problems, which are caused by and affect people in several different countries. There are several reasons why IEPs are hard to solve.

**The number of countries involved.** This varies from one IEP to another. In general, the fewer countries involved the easier it is to reach an agreement over how to solve the problem in question. But many contemporary IEPs involve dozens of countries. Global warming is the most obvious example. Practically speaking, it is extremely difficult to get over 160 governments to agree on a common action plan to tackle this problem. Which is one reason why there is currently no legal global agreement on global warming.

**Problem recognition.** An IEP cannot be solved unless all the relevant countries agree that there is a problem in the first place. Global warming is, once again, a good example. Scientists can certainly measure the rise in greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere. But they find it much more difficult to measure the effects of this increase upon global temperatures. Since the atmosphere is a large and complex system it is not at all easy to assess the likely impacts of increased emissions of carbon dioxide and other pollutants. Indeed, some scientists believe that a cooling might result from these emissions. Because of this scientific uncertainty, many countries are currently unwilling to spend money finding alternatives to the burning of fossil fuels.

**Wealth inequalities between countries.** Levels of wealth and development between countries remain as uneven as ever. While countries such as the USA and Japan are phenomenally rich and others such as Taiwan and Mexico are fast developing, some countries are desperately poor and will remain so for the foreseeable future (e.g. Ethiopia, Burkina Faso and Burundi). For many of these poorer countries protecting the environment is an expensive luxury. For instance, though the burning of wood releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, it is also an essential means of cooking food and keeping warm for many poor people in the less developed world. After all, a country like Ethiopia can hardly afford the technology to replace woodfuel with wind or solar power.

**Monitoring problems.** Even where all the relevant countries sign up to an international environmental agreement or action plan, it is often hard to monitor which country is doing what to the environment. For instance, while the UK has a highly sophisticated system for measuring carbon dioxide emissions, a country like Zimbabwe does not. How can carbon dioxide pollution be controlled if we do not always know how much carbon dioxide is being discharged by particular countries?

## **6. Belarus: Environmental effects**

*Think over the environmental effects after the Chernobyl explosion. Then read the text and express your opinion on the facts given in it.*

The whole world is aware of the tragedy happened in the Ukraine on the 26<sup>th</sup> of April 1986. But 17 years after the disaster surprising news has come from Oxford, England. Nick Middleton, a professor in Physical Geography, claims that despite the terrible consequences, there do appear to be some aspects of the environment that have actually benefited from such a devastating human-induced catastrophe. Although local wildlife suffered from the severe irradiation immediately following the accident, the long-term impacts so far seem to be beneficial, mainly thanks to the forced depopulation of farms and villages. Human occupation of this exclusion zone is still banned for medical reasons. Although the area has been subjected to some of the worst radioactive contamination in history, wildlife has proved to be remarkably resistant to the known biological effects of radiation such as mutations. No less than 48 species listed in the international *Red Book* of endangered animals and plants are now thriving in the Chernobyl exclusion zone. The surprising resilience of the local

ecology has led to calls for the exclusion zone to be designated a permanent nature reserve where endangered plants and animals can be free to breed as the land reverts to its original forested state thanks to the absence of human interference.

## 7. Positive future

1. *What are the main sources of energy today (the cheapest, safest, most efficient)?*
2. *What are the alternatives for power production? Consider their drawbacks as well.*
3. *What alternative sources of energy are available in your country? Which of them are safe, cheap, environmentally friendly?*

The choices in electricity we make today affect the lifestyle we lead tomorrow. We are all consumers of electrical power. We use it in most of the things we do, whether it's lighting our homes, listening to music, washing our clothes, refrigerating our food or running our PCs.

Traditionally, electricity has been generated by the burning of fossil fuels – oil, gas, coal. Laterly, the nuclear energy has become the major source of power. Now, due to technological advances in the industry, that choice is made broader. We can also produce our electricity from renewable sources.

**Nuclear power.** At present around 15% of the energy we use comes from nuclear power. The specialists say that nuclear power is essential in supplying our energy needs. They claim that it is safe, environmentally friendly, economically efficient and brings no health hazards such as cancer, leukemia, etc. But the environmental groups regard nuclear power as: “A totally unnecessary and extremely expensive way of dealing with the greenhouse effect with untold safety problems.” There have been leaks from various nuclear installations and whether or not these are dangerous. Besides, more and more radioactive wastes are being produced all the time.

**Wind power.** Wind power is the fastest growing energy source in the world and has clear advantages over other renewable energy technologies. One of the pros is that it is beneficial on price, and there literally thousands of sites where wind turbines could be built which are currently untapped. With wind turbines relatively easy and quick to erect, wind farms can be in operation in months – compared with as many years it would take for a new nuclear station to be built, for example. Wind energy is renewable, clean, and cheap. But critics still say turbines are an eyesore.

**Water power.** Harnessing water power was one of the great stimulators of the Industrial Revolution and today renewable water power generates up to 20% of the world's electricity without causing emission or pollution. Today there are three main technologies harnessing water power: wave, tidal and hydro. Campaigners say hydro electricity is greener because water can be stored behind dams and used to create electricity when needed most. On the other hand, wave technology is still experimental. Environmentalists worry about noise pollution from wave machines affecting plants and animals. It could also disrupt shipping navigation.

**Solar power** has a major part to play in the energy revolution. When used in conjunction with other renewable technologies it is proving highly profitable for those who invest. It's not hard to see its attractions. Photovoltaic energy depends on

light, not direct heat, so while best for the “sunbelt” countries, it is still suitable for countries, which may go for months with cloudy skies. It also not depend on a centralised national grid of power stations, transformers, power lines and cables so is the most economical option for many regions of the world which are either still without power or without the resources to build massively expensive power stations. It does still require improvements in battery technology and also lower capital costs before photovoltaics will be available for all. But its long-term potential, however, for businesses, governments and households to save money at the same time as reducing ecological pressures like global warming is appealing.

## **UNIT 7. Careers in the Computer Industry**

### **Pre-reading**

Make a list of the latest achievements in the field of IT. Compare your ideas with the groupmates.

### **Reading**

1. Read the text and decide on the best title for it.

When you are preparing for a computer career, keep one thing in mind: change, not continuity, is the norm. Throughout the ages, mankind has always managed to find the technology to achieve its goals. Whatever our personal views on the future might be, most of what is impossible today will no doubt become commonplace at some time in the future. New technological developments will give new opportunities, create new kinds of jobs—and make old ones obsolete. The scientific and technical revolution is sweeping the world.

Today, hardware and software technologies allow people to work and play together in interactive and immersive 3-dimencional environments. Technology is also offering us new ways of exploring both the real world and the ‘virtual’ world of Cyberspace. Technology is reducing the need for travel and transportation, enabling us to gather information from anywhere in the world within minutes, to cut down on the use of material resources and allowing us to perform many activities simultaneously. Time and space are becoming compressed as communication networks bring us closer together and enable the formation of ‘virtual communities’ where, for instance, colleagues around the world work together via their computers in shifts. This can result in an uninterrupted 24-hour activity.

Consider computer information systems (CIS) professionals. Twenty years ago, they worked in a central computing facility, where they wrote programs or designed systems. When the microcomputer came along, these professionals had to decentralize. They moved away from the central mainframe computer to microcomputers installed in the end users' area. Instead of writing programs, CIS

professionals installed software packages, customized those packages to work best for the user, and acted as resident computer experts for the user.

2. Match each type of specialists with the appropriate sphere of work. What specialists are in bigger demand in our workforce market today?

### NEW CAREER PATHS

Evolving technology has created new career opportunities in addition to altering traditional jobs. The microcomputer explosion has resulted in new jobs in repairing microcomputers, installing them, building communication links between them, and helping people when they have difficulties using them. The Internet has opened up new career opportunities such as Webmaster and network research specialist.

customer support technicians      Webmaster      network research specialists  
microcomputer specialists      telecommunications specialists

a) These specialists often work with end users, helping them purchase, install, and use their computers. They can also implement security and backup procedures.

b) Many computer software and hardware makers have help lines that people can call when they have a trouble. The people who work on these help lines are in great demand.

c) These specialists have found a growing job market. Now those companies have all these microcomputers on their desks, management is looking for ways to connect the computers with each other, as well as with minicomputer and mainframe computer systems. These people's job is to establish all the capabilities of communication within a company. Many companies that make international connections need these specialists' help.

d) The Internet is becoming an important path for a company to communicate with potential and current customers. This type of specialists is responsible for the visual layout, the written content, the links to other locations, and often the techniques to follow up on the customer's inquiry. Companies with large Internet business may have a staff of several such employees.

e) These people, also called information brokers, will conduct your research on the Internet and other online services and then write a report on the results. With online services growing at such a rapid pace and with so much information available, these specialists are filling an emerging need. Most of them currently work as independent contractors, but large companies, especially in the medical field, may be employing these specialists soon.

3. Read through different categories of computer careers and list their main distinctive features.

## CATEGORIES OF COMPUTER CAREERS

Traditionally, computer careers are divided into three areas: computer information systems, computer science, and computer engineering. These careers differ in the nature of the job, education required, and typical career path.

### Computer Information Systems (CIS)

Careers in the **computer information systems** (CIS) field involve jobs in the information systems department of an organization. The focus is on designing computer systems that will control the organization's information, process its data, support its procedures, and then keep the systems working smoothly.

CIS professionals typically major in business with a specialty in computers, programming, and systems analysis. Generally, a bachelor's degree is expected; however, some entry-level positions may require only an associate's degree and some experience or aptitude for programming. Higher-level programming jobs and systems analyst jobs usually require on-the-job experience and at least a bachelor's degree, and preferably a Master of Business Administration (MBA) or a Master of Management Information Systems (MIS).

The entry-level position, with a bachelor's degree in business and a specialty in CIS, is programmer. From programmer, three paths are often available: senior programmer and supervising programmer, systems analyst and project leader, and user liaison. The top management positions, such as chief information officer (CIO), are usually filled by CIS professionals within a company because they know the firm's business best.

### Computer Science

Computer scientists develop systems software and personal productivity software. The focus is on the relationship of hardware and software, as well as on developing software that makes the best use of hardware while enabling users to accomplish their jobs. Traditionally, computer scientists developed operating systems, database management systems, language translators, and artificial intelligence programs. Today, there are also opportunities in developing software packages that solve productivity problems. Opportunities are also available in developing software packages that increase productivity, such as word processing programs and communications programs. Applications outside business, such as medical applications or special computer graphics, are more likely to be developed by computer scientists than by CIS specialists.

At most colleges and universities, computer science programs grew out of mathematics programs. The training is highly technical and usually involves several semesters of higher mathematics such as calculus, as well as training in several programming languages and theoretical topics such as programming language structure and artificial intelligence. A minimum of a bachelor's degree is necessary, and a master's degree is valued.

Careers in computer science are less likely to lead to management positions, but such careers have more levels of expertise than CIS careers. The opportunities for promotion are in lead programmer, designer, or project leader in developing new systems. Senior computer scientists are highly paid, a fact that reflects the value of the special talent needed in this area.

### Computer Engineering

A computer engineer designs new computers and peripheral hardware. CIS and computer science careers are software-oriented, whereas computer engineers are hardware-oriented. Like all engineers, computer engineers use programming, but software development is not the primary thrust of their jobs.

Engineering is divided into many areas of specialization. Computer engineering and electrical engineering are the two fields most pertinent to the computer industry. Computer engineers develop hardware systems, and electrical engineers specialize in designing electronic circuitry (including microprocessors). Any engineering discipline requires a bachelor's degree and may take five years to complete.

Project leader and design leader are typical promotion paths for computer engineers. In an engineering-oriented company, managers often rise from the engineering staff as well.

4. Divide the following qualifications between the categories listed above and prove your choice:

computer-control engineer; system engineer; engineer-programmer; mathematician system programmer.

5. Read through the following list describing the basic responsibilities of various computer specialists and compare them with the ones listed above.

According to the Bureau of Labour Statistics, much of the growth in employment through the year 2010 will be the result of a rising demand for computer specialists. The following list describes the basic responsibilities of various computer specialists:

Data entry personnel key in data from source documents. Job opportunities in this area have declined as optical character recognition (OCR) technology has developed. OCR devices scan written or typed text and transform it into computer-readable form.

Computer operators keep computer equipment—whether minicomputers, mainframe computers, or network servers—functioning smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

Computer repair technicians deal with breakdowns in computers and related equipment.

Systems analysts look at the entire scope of a firm's information processing activities — the data, the people, the way the work is organized, and the information

to be produced. Systems analysts try to devise computer approaches to improve productivity and deliver better service to customers. Analysts may have programming skills, but programming is not their chief responsibility.

Programmers follow a systems analyst's recommendations. They create, test, and document custom computer programs that precisely meet organization's needs, as determined by the analyst.

Programmer-analyst jobs combine two functions. Software developers are programmers and analysts who develop software such as productivity tools or computer games.

Database administrators ensure that data is entered correctly, develop procedures for the analysis of data, and ensure database security. This job is an important one; the organization's ability to function may depend on it!

6. Think and suggest ways in which computer professionals can keep up with constant innovations in the computer field.
7. Do you think people in computer-related careers differ somehow from the general population. If yes, in what way?
8. Read the following information to see how close your suggestions are.

## **A LIFETIME OF LEARNING**

The biggest challenge to anyone in a computer-oriented career is to keep up with the rapid advancement of technology. Studies of personalities in various professions have found that people in computer-related careers are noticeably different from the general population. These people are more interested in learning new things than in having more responsibilities. Having this interest is an advantage because there is always something new to learn in computers.

Using an on-line information service is one way for users to learn about new advances in technology and associated career opportunities. Many on-line information services provide databases with career information. A growing number of people are using these databases.

The most common ways to keep up with the new technology are to take seminars, access on-line services, read computer periodicals, attend conferences, and shows, and join a professional association.

### **Seminars**

Computer-related seminars, usually lasting from one day to one week, are widely available. Typically, they are presented by the developer of a new hardware or software product or by a company specializing in training in a new technology. Most companies recognize the value of sending their staff to these seminars.

More extensive training may be required. Many colleges, universities, and training institutes offer a series of courses leading to a certificate. One example is the Novell Certificate, which was designed by Novell (a network software company) and is licensed by Novell to institutions which show that their staffs have necessary



training and equipment to train students in their software. Other software manufacturers offer certificate programs through institutions.

### On-line Services

The Internet and other on-line services have information concerning the latest breakthroughs in technology. When you need to be up-to-the-minute, accessing on-line services is the easiest and fastest way to get the information you have to know.

### Computer Magazines, Newspapers, and Journals

Many computer magazines, newspapers, and journals are published weekly, monthly, or quarterly. Some, such as *ComputerWorld*, cover the entire spectrum of computer issues. Others, such as *PCWorld*, *Datamation*, and *InfoSystems*, are aimed at a specific part of the computer industry—for example, microcomputers, technology management, or office automation. Over a hundred of these periodicals are now in print. If you have a particular area of interest, you can probably find a periodical that covers the newest and best happenings in that area.

### Conferences and Shows

One way to keep in touch with your profession is to attend conferences and trade shows. Trade shows are annual meetings in which computer product manufacturers, designers, and dealers showcase their products. COMDEX, for example, is an annual event held in various locations around the world. With over 1,500 exhibitors and over 150,000 attendees at a COMDEX show, several companies "roll out" their newest products. Besides displays and brochures about various products, many workshops and product demonstrations are offered at COMDEX. Trade shows can serve as a crash course in what is happening in the area of computer technology that interests you.

### Professional Organizations

Joining one of the many professional associations can help you keep up with your area of interest, as well as provide valuable contacts for your career. Some associations have local chapters, and most offer publications, seminars, training, and conferences for members. Here are some of the most important organizations:

Association for Computing Machinery (ACM). Focusing on computer science, this organization features many special-interest groups (SIGs) in such areas as databases, artificial intelligence, microcomputers, and computer graphics.

Data Processing Management Association (DPMA). This is the premier organization for CIS personnel and managers.

Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE). This is the premier professional society for computer engineers.

### **Critical thinking**

Answer the following questions:

1. What is the difference between a career in CIS and a career in computer science?
2. How does computer engineering differ from computer science?
3. How does the typical computer professional adjust to the constant change in the computer industry?
4. List some computer-related professional organizations and their areas of focus.
5. What are the negative effects that computers are having on general employment?  
questions.
6. What are three new career opportunities in the computer industry? What is the major focus of each of these?
7. List the most common ways for a computer professional to keep up with new technology.
8. What is the difference between a computer operator and a computer repair technician?
9. How do the educational requirements for the three traditional computer careers differ? How are they similar?
10. What are the differences between the job of a telecommunications specialist and database administrator?

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