

THE NAUGHTY BOY OF EUROPE

If generalizations were not so dangerous, we could say that there is something delinquent about British youth. According to statistics, British teenagers are worse behaved than others in Europe. They take drugs more often than others and only Danish teenagers drink as much alcohol. More teenage girls in Britain are more likely to get pregnant than any others in Western Europe. And so on.

Some people think that teenagers in Britain have been a problem for a long time. But the truth is that it was not always like that. In the past decade, school exclusions among teenagers have rocketed¹. The proportion of 14-17-year-old boys breaking the law rose by 14% between 1993 and 1999; girls are increasingly participating in violent crime. And the suicide rate among British males aged 15-24 has doubled over 30 years.

Some of these problems can be solved by simply thinking about them in a more rational way. Under-age drinking and cannabis smoking, for instance, are generally harmless, even if they are illegal. Teenage pregnancy statistics are not really so alarming: more British teenagers got pregnant 30 years ago. The only difference is that then they tended to be (or get) married, so they were not a burden² to the taxpayer. The problem that is definitely expensive is delinquency because it tends to anticipate similar problems in later life.

Some people say there are two major causes that explain all these problems among teenagers. One explanation is economic and the other is familial. The decline of British industry has meant that poorly educated men, in particular, have fewer job opportunities. So more children grow up in families where parents are unemployed. The weakness of this explanation is that many of the problems in teenagers affect the entire social scale, not just the poorer families. The other explanation emphasizes the growth of divorce and the long hours that British parents are at work away from home.

Because familial instability and poverty often accompany each other, it is difficult to say which one has a greater influence on teenagers' behaviour. But one way in which the government can make a difference is to keep more children in school: fewer children continue studying after the age of 16 than in most comparable countries, and more teenagers leave school before they finish secondary education than in most other EU countries.

There is, however, a less pessimistic explanation of these problems among teenagers. Even if it is true that a minority of young people are getting too little education, most of them are getting more education than their parents did. This prolongation of education may be causing an unwanted side effect³ because teenagers get their first job later in life. This means that adolescence persists longer and the assumption of adult responsibilities takes place later in life than it previously did. During this prolonged adolescence, British teenagers tend to get less support from their families than adolescents in other countries and this may be the real cause of most of their problems. Britain's unruly⁴ teenagers are probably the price of progress.

(From the press. Adapted)

¹*to rocket*: ascendir fortament / subir vertiginosamente

²*a burden*: càrrega / carga

³*side effect*: efecte secundari / efecto secundario

⁴*unruly*: incontrolable, desobedient / incontrolable, desobediente

PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION

Answer the following questions according to the information in the text *The naughty boy of Europe*.

[Questions 1, 2 and 3: 1 point each. Questions 4 and 5: 0.5 points each]

1. For some people, unemployment is one of the main causes of problems among teenagers but the author of the article is not so sure. Why?

2. According to the author, what should be done to fight against delinquency and other problems among teenagers?

3. Why is teenagers' problematic behaviour in Britain considered 'the price of progress'?

4. The author believes that one of these problems is more serious than the others. Which one?

- Teenage pregnancy.
- Breaking the law.
- Drinking.

5. One of these sentences is true. Which one?

- Young people in Britain have as many problems as those in other European countries.
- Problems among British teenagers have increased in the last few years.
- In Britain boys are more of a problem than girls.

PART TWO: WRITING

Choose **one** topic. Write about either 1 or 2. Minimum length: 100 words.

[0-4 points]

1. Imagine you are a psychologist who writes for a magazine. Write a letter to parents of teenagers and give them suggestions about how to bring up¹ their children.
2. Write a short essay about the main problems teenagers have in Catalunya. Describe them, explain their cause(s) and suggest possible solutions.

¹to bring up: educar, pujar algú / educar

PROVA AUDITIVA

SLOW FOOD INTERVIEW

In this radio programme you are going to listen to the following words. Read and listen to them. Make sure you know what they mean.

Cool: que mola, guai / que mola, guay

Mass-production: producció en sèrie, a gran escala / producción en serie, a gran escala

Small-scale farm: explotació agrícola familiar / explotación agrícola familiar

Taste: tastar, gust / probar, saber a, gusto

Ready?

Now read the questions on the next page.

Read them carefully before listening to the radio programme.

SLOW FOOD INTERVIEW

ANDREW: Peggy Burton is a journalist for *The New Yorker*. Slow Food is a movement and Peggy Burton has just published a book about it. The title of the book is "*Slow Food for all*". It's rare for a book about a movement to make your mouth water. But then again, it's rare for a movement to be about things as delicious as crepes cooked in a real wood-burning fire and served with home-made strawberry jam. Or simply about apples that taste like apples!

[Now listen to the rest of the interview]

QUESTIONS

Choose the correct answer. Only one answer is correct. Look at number 0 as an example.
[0,25 points each correct answer]

0. Peggy Bacon is a ...

- small-scale farmer specialised in apples.
- journalist specialised in Slow Food.
- cook specialised in crepes and home-made jam.

1. Slow Food is a ...

- new philosophical movement.
- campaign organised by dentists to teach people to eat slowly.
- reaction against fast food restaurants.

2. Peggy says that many young people ...

- are fascinated by fast food restaurants and their style of life.
- are starting to think that fast food restaurants are not trendy any more.
- think that the best fast food restaurants are in Buenos Aires, Melbourne, Tokyo and Barcelona.

3. In Peggy's book there are, at least, photos of ...

- delicious peaches.
- cows on a farm.
- a cheeseburger-type of cheese.

4. The interviewer suspects that the Slow Food movement is ...

- too idealistic and a bit elitist.
- big business.
- a passing fashion.

5. The *Ark of Taste* is a project that tries to ...

- help farmers who emigrate to start a new life.
- start a new specialised magazine.
- catalogue and preserve endangered foods.

6. *Slow Food Presidia* project ...

- promotes endangered products in restaurants around the world
- helps financially the farmers and food makers that work with endangered products.
- tries to find important cooks who use endangered products in their recipes.

7. The *Slow* magazine is published in five languages. Two of them are ...

- Japanese and French.
- Spanish and Dutch.
- German and Italian.

8. What is special about the course "Master of Food"?

- Weekend homework consists of tasting home-made products.
- Some lessons take place over long delicious meals.
- Only top students are accepted.

TALES OF YOUTH AND AGE

It is a story as old as boy meets girl ... who become man and woman ... who become father and mother ... who grow old ... and who become more and more resentful about the behaviour of the younger generation. Yet that story is developing today some new twists¹. They arise from science, from economics and from society. For, in a very broad sense, the conflict between youth and age could be one of the defining issues² of the 21st century.

Maybe it is too early in the century to make such a risky claim. Demography, however, is a predictable tendency. Remember that even in 1900 one thing was clear: that industrial and social change was shifting³ millions of people into the cities and the factories. The political and economic consequences of that were unpredictable, but the rise of urban working classes did indeed prove to be one of the 20th century's defining issues.

Today, the twists and turns of youth and age are pushing in all sorts of different directions. Statistics show clearly that science, combined with the better diet that comes with money, is making almost everyone outside the AIDS-afflicted areas of sub-Saharan Africa live longer. The conventional worry is that rich countries will, by 2025, have too little youth and too much old age. Those countries will be divided between taxpayers and benefit-consumers, just as they are divided today between those with children (who consume public services) and the increasing number of those without (who think they pay for the services).

Even in the developing countries, a time comes, perhaps nearer 2050, when that same problem will arise. And, unless they are by then much richer, battles between the young and the old could come to dominate politics in the same way as battles between workers and bosses, rich and poor, did in the past.

Yet in the rich world, the latest transformations have been paradoxical and opportunities for the young have been proliferating. The companies of the 1990s became less hierarchical, seniority counted for less, initiative and creativity for more; and when technology conspires today to benefit those who are able to exploit it, the balance shifts distinctly towards the young.

But who are the young? Another twist brought by science is that people now feel young and look young and social customs allow them to express that feeling, in dress or behaviour. Last Christmas the top-selling disc around the world was another compilation of the greatest hits of that timeless youth phenomenon ... The Beatles. The line between youth and age has become blurred⁴, and is likely to get even blurrier. If governments allow for it, the line between work and retirement should also fade, as more people choose to carry on working, either full- or part-time, into their 70s or even 80s.

These are long-run⁵ forces. But, as a famous economist once said, in the long run we are all dead. Think now of the short-run forces, like war and economic depression, that changed the demographic trends in the 20th century. Will they do it again?

(From the press. Adapted)

¹*twist*: gir (en direcció oposada) / giro (en direcció opuesta)

²*issues*: qüestions, problemes fonamentals / cuestiones, problemas fundamentales

³*shift*: desplaçar (v.), desplaçament (n.) / desplazar (v.), desplazamiento (n.)

⁴*blur*: desdibuixar, fer borrós / desdibujar, hacer borroso

⁵*long-run*: a llarg termini / a largo plazo

4. One of these sentences is true. Which one?

- There has never been such a good understanding between the younger and the older generation.
- Changes in demographic direction cannot be predicted but their economic results can.
- Economists fear that both rich and developing countries may soon have more consumers than producers.

5. One of these sentences is true. Which one?

- In the new economic organisation, maturity is becoming more important than youth.
- We ask ourselves if in this century war and recession may cause changes in the predictable demographic tendencies.
- We can state that in the near future conflict between generations will be a thing of the past.

PART TWO: WRITING

Choose **one** topic. Write about either 1 or 2. Minimum length: 100 words.

[0-4 points]

1. Write a short essay about an aspect related to age differences (examples: qualities and weaknesses, advantages and disadvantages of the older and the younger generation, the way people change, ...).
2. Write a short text in your diary. You are looking for a job. You are preparing some job interviews. You express your hopes, fears, professional ambitions, ...

PROVA AUDITIVA

AN INTERVIEW WITH SUCCESS

In this TV programme you are going to hear the following words. Read and listen to them. Make sure you know what they mean.

Kindness: amabilitat / amabilidad

Achieve: aconseguir / conseguir

Down to earth: amb els peus a terra, realista / con los pies en el suelo, realista

Ready?

Now read the questions on the next page. Read them carefully before listening to this interview.

AN INTERVIEW WITH SUCCESS

INTERVIEWER: Welcome to “Stairway to the Sky”. One of our most popular television programs these days is “Mission: Success”, a talent-search contest similar to “American Idol” in the US or to the British show “Pop Idol”. Young people perform on television every week trying to get the votes they need to stay in the music Academy. Only three of them will be the winners and represent our country in the next Eurovision contest.

Our guest tonight is Jimmy Stevens, one of the six semifinalists. He is very talented. He has thousands of young supporters, and many people think he could win.

INT.: Good evening, Jimmy. Thanks for visiting us tonight. We know how difficult it is for you to leave the Academy.

JIMMY: Yes. Producers are not very willing to allow contenders out of the Academy, but I’m delighted to be here.

[Now listen to the rest of the interview]

QUESTIONS

Choose the correct answer. Only one answer is correct. Look at number 0 as an example.
[0,25 points each correct answer]

0. Giving interviews to the media is very difficult for participants because...
- The Academy is too far from the main Television production centres.
 - Producers don't want to let them leave the Academy too often.
 - Their families don't want them to have interviews.
1. Jimmy Stevens decided to take part in the contest because...
- he had always wanted to work as a pop singer.
 - he didn't have a job and he needed the money.
 - he had a lot of free time after finishing university.
2. How did his parents feel about the whole idea?
- His father wasn't happy at first, but later Jimmy's mother convinced him.
 - Both believed he wouldn't be able to see Jimmy until two weeks before the end of the contest.
 - His father convinced his mother that she could only see him after two weeks.
3. What was it like when the selected contestants moved into the Academy?
- They felt friendly and comfortable since the beginning.
 - They didn't feel comfortable because not everybody was friendly.
 - They were friendly but they didn't know each other very well.
4. When they know the name of the next person selected to leave...
- They feel relieved because they are staying.
 - They feel sad because they can be the next one to leave.
 - They feel sad about their friends.
5. Contestants see one another as...
- people who are fighting against each other fiercely.
 - people who have the same goal.
 - potential competitors.
6. Does Jimmy agree with the idea that participants are like runners competing in a single race?
- No, they run different races because their interests are different.
 - No, he thinks they help each other to win the contest.
 - No, they run together, but the finish line is to become a pop singer, not only to win the contest.
7. Jimmy sees popularity as...
- something difficult to understand at first, but he has got used to it in the end.
 - something necessary for promotion and success.
 - a constant surprise when people come to you and ask for an autograph.
8. Does Jimmy think he has a chance to win?
- No, he thinks he will be the next contestant to leave.
 - Yes, but he wouldn't like to lose at all.
 - Yes, he has the feeling he can get to the end of it.