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46. Тюрьма - самое лучшее наказание для преступника, но некоторые считают, что есть другие варианты наказания. Ваше мнение
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### **1. Автомобили. За и против**

There is no doubt that the invention of the car completely changed the way people thought about travelling causing the development of many other means of transport. However, the drawbacks of cars make people think that we should stop using them.

In my opinion, cars are necessary in today's world. To begin with, they help us transport goods to places that cannot be reached by other means of transport. In addition, cars are the main way of transportation for people who live far from their workplaces, especially now when public transport is frequently lacking. It is even more difficult to use public transport if you have children with you or heavy goods to carry. Finally, cars are the best way of travelling because you need not buy tickets and you can stop wherever you like.

Nevertheless, cars are often criticized because they cause air pollution. Another argument against using cars is that people are turning into legless creatures and inactivity leads to serious diseases. I cannot agree with these views because nowadays all cars are to be equipped with special control systems to reduce their exhaust fumes and new environmentally friendly cars are being developed. Moreover, with cars, people have better opportunities to reach sports facilities and therefore spend more time doing sports.

To sum up, I would argue that although cars have certain disadvantages people would not be able to survive without them. However, I believe that we should improve cars to lower their harmful influence on people's health.

### **2. Богатые - только они успешные. Согласны ли вы?**

Does one's success depend on the amount of money a person earns? This question has always worried people and the answer to it is not simple.

In my opinion, being rich does not necessarily mean that you are successful. First of all, if you only work for money, you will not get satisfaction from your job. What is more, while making your fortune, you may not have enough time for your family so you are bound to have problems in family relationship. Finally, lots of money can worsen your character because rich people are often greedy and arrogant so you are unlikely to have any true friends.

Unfortunately, most people view success in terms of money. They believe money will bring happiness because they will be able to buy luxurious things, travel around the world and realize their dreams. However, there are a lot of millionaires with personal problems and they are often very unhappy. You can buy houses and cars but money will not help you to buy love, friendship and good health, which are the most valuable things in life. What is more, being wealthy is often a powerful predictor that people spend less time doing pleasurable things and therefore feel stressed.

In conclusion, I would argue that being rich is not the only way of being successful in life. From my point of view, it is more important to have an interesting job, good friends and a happy family. Other people make you happy, not money!

### **3. Будущее. Больше плохо будет или хорошего. Ваше мнение**

People have always been intrigued of what the future will look like. That is why there are a lot of futuristic books and films, both optimistic and pessimistic. But what does the real future holds for us? Will life in the future be better, worse or the same as now?

As for me, I am optimistic about the future. We have already seen major technological advances over the last fifty years and the next fifty years are going to be equally exciting. For example, in fifty years' time scientists will have created robots that will be doing all dangerous and difficult jobs. In addition, medicine technology will have conquered many diseases including AIDS and

cancer. As for entertainment, I believe we will get it from the Internet and television will probably disappear.

However, some people feel pessimistic about our future. They worry about the activity of terrorists and the possibility of nuclear wars. Another problem is our environment, which is in a sorry state. I am sure that people will be able control their weapons because everybody understands what disastrous consequences nuclear wars may have. We will also take care of our environment and in the future people will drive petrol-free cars, drink purified water and recycle their rubbish.

To sum up, I believe that we will finally solve all our problems and will live happily. History shows that people can make the right choices. That's a good reason to be optimistic about science and humanity.

#### **4. Внешний вид. Многие представители молодежи уделяют очень много внимания внешности, взрослые против этого. Ваше мнение**

What people wear says a lot about who they are and what they do. It is not surprising that teenagers are so concerned about their clothes. However, their parents think that following fashion is a waste of time.

From my point of view, it is important to look smart and attractive. We cannot go through life with the same hairstyle or make-up. I believe it is also necessary for teenagers to follow fashion. When you are up with fashion, you feel confident. Nevertheless, I feel that looking clean and tidy is even more important than looking stylish. What is more, everyone should find their own style to express their individuality. I hate when people dress alike. As for me, I prefer hand-made or designer clothes and try to look stylish.

Many adults do not understand why teens spend so much time and money on their clothes. Moreover, they are often quite old-fashioned and do not accept modern trends in clothing. They say that fashion comes and goes but classical style remains: I cannot agree with them because teenage fashion is quite specific. Nobody likes to dress in styles that are too old for them, and it is no fun being teased because of it.

In conclusion, I would argue that modern lifestyle forces us to look stylish because people judge us by our clothes. It is especially important in business where your look can actually make or lose you money. Therefore I think we should learn how to look nice.

#### **5. Все школьные предметы одинаково важны. Согласны ли вы с этим**

People have various preferences so it is natural that school students want to study the subjects they are interested in. Yet many teachers are against this, arguing that students must learn all subjects equally.

In my opinion, students should be allowed to choose the subjects they want to study because in this case they will probably be more enthusiastic about their school work. In addition, if students are forced to study all subjects obligatorily, they can easily lose interest in education. What is more, if all subjects are compulsory for studying, students will not have enough time to learn all of them properly therefore they will be constantly under a lot of pressure.

On the other hand, most teachers believe their subject is of great importance and they will not let it be optional. Moreover, teachers claim that students must be well rounded so they need to study all subjects equally. I am afraid, however, that when we learn a variety of subjects, we get very poor knowledge and we are not able to get an idea of what our interests are. Besides, some subjects can be of no use for us in the future and we will forget everything we learned at school.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that being free to choose what to study is an effective form of education. Nevertheless, I must admit that we should not completely reject all the other subjects. Instead, teachers must find an easier form of teaching them.

#### **6. Генетически измененное продовольствие. За или против**

Genetically modified crops have made a big splash in the news lately. For example, in Honduras farmers are encouraged to produce genetically modified (GM) crops although many people dispute about harmful effects of genetic technologies.

On the one hand, genetic technology is one of the best solutions to the problem of world hunger. GM crops are faster and cheaper to grow therefore it will be possible to increase production and lower the cost of food. Besides, these crops could be grown in areas suffering from drought and salt. More than that, many people rely on genetically modified foods for medicines, for example insulin for diabetics.

On the other hand, there is a possibility that introducing a gene into a plant may have an unexpected and negative impact on human health, for instance, it may create a new allergen and cause an allergic reaction in susceptible individuals. In addition, since some crops are modified using the DNA from viruses and bacteria, we may encounter new diseases. Moreover, GM crops may also pose a health risk to animals that eat them as they may be poisoned by built-in pesticides.

In conclusion, I would like to say that many people feel that genetic engineering is the inevitable wave of the future and that we cannot afford to ignore a technology that has such enormous potential benefits. However, we must proceed with caution to avoid causing unintended harm to human health and the environment as a result of our enthusiasm for this powerful technology.

### **7. Город или Деревня**

Nowadays lots of young people tend to move to cities in search of better life. On the contrary, many adults consider such a lifestyle quite dangerous for their children. Who is right? Is the life in the city really as harmful as it may seem?

On the one hand, city life has lots of advantages. For example, it is often easier to get prestigious education and to find a well-paid job. Besides, there is a wider choice of shops, sports facilities and health centers. What is more, if you live in the city, you can eat in good restaurants, visit museums, and go to theatres or concerts. All in all, city lifestyle is full of variety so you will never feel bored.

On the other hand, we must admit that city life is rather unsafe as there is a lot of crime and violence. What is more, transport and industry are the main reasons for all kinds of pollution therefore city dwellers often have more problems with their health. Last of all, young people living in cities are likely to acquire such bad habits as smoking, drinking alcohol or even taking drugs.

In conclusion, I think that city life has its pros and cons. However, if we try and solve the problems of crime and pollution, then living in the city will be really enjoyable. As for me, I would prefer to live in the city because I am keen on visiting theatres and don't mind noise and pollution.

### **8. Граффити. За и против**

Art has lots of different forms. However, its evaluation has become especially problematic since the twentieth century when controversial art forms such as graffiti became popular. Although graffiti is often regarded as a new form of art worthy of display in galleries, its value is still highly contested.

On the one hand, works produced by graffiti artists demonstrate a broad spectrum of personal and cultural expression therefore it is the way for people to express their talent. In addition, graffiti like any other art work takes vision, planning as well as lots of efforts. What is more, in many ways viewing graffiti art is very much like viewing contemporary art in a gallery and it is appreciated by many people.

On the other hand, graffiti is often seen as vandalism because instead of canvas graffiti artists choose train cars, bridges or public walls, which makes our cities look really ugly and run-down. Moreover, most of the graffiti you see on walls is a collection of swear words, gang names or just silly drawings. For many people graffiti is often associated with crime and violence.

To sum up, graffiti can be called an art form as long as artists get permission from those whose property might be used as canvas. In my opinion, people paint on public things because they have nowhere else to express their talent. I strongly believe city authorities should create special places for graffiti artists where all people will be able to appreciate this wonderful art form.

### **9. Дальнейшее обучение после школы. За и против**

Many roads are open before school-leavers therefore it is not easy for them to make the right choice. Some students believe that it is necessary to get higher education whereas others prefer to earn money.

On the one hand, it is better to continue our education and get the necessary knowledge for our future profession. At universities we learn how to learn so that we can make use of this ability in other more practical areas later on in life. Besides, if we have good qualifications, we will be able to find a highly paid job because every company needs well-qualified employees. Moreover, while studying at university, we can make lots of new friends and university life is usually interesting and exciting.

However, many students take a gap year after school and start, working in order to find out what their interests are and choose their future career. Besides, they can get the necessary experience and it will be a useful introduction to the world of business. Many people nowadays follow the traditional start at the bottom and work your way up' approach. What is more, they will earn money and become independent of their parents.

In conclusion, I want to say that the final choice depends on the person's attitude to education. Personally, I think that further education is very important and it is easier to study when you are young. So after finishing school I am going to enter a college or university and to continue my education.

### **10. Диеты. Что вы делаете, чтобы оставаться в форме**

Nowadays many people think they are too fat even if their doctors disagree. They think the best way to improve their fitness is following a diet. But is dieting really so effective and healthy?

On the one hand, if you want to lose weight it is very important to keep your eye on what you eat. To begin with, you should cut out snacks and desserts, which add weight without boosting energy levels. Besides, you ought to cut down on fat as it is believed to be one of the major causes of obesity. Finally, you may count the number of calories you eat every day, which may substantially reduce the amount of food you eat and help to lose weight.

On the other hand, strict dieting may be dangerous. Firstly, the lower the calories eaten per day, the harder it is to get the daily requirements of proteins and vitamins. In addition, excessive dieting causes muscle loss and this loss may be from your heart with severe consequences. Moreover, dieting lowers your metabolic rate, so when you return to your normal food intake, you will put on weight even faster than before.

To conclude, I believe that to stay healthy everybody should follow a sensible, well-balanced diet that gives their body exactly what it needs. However, I think the best way of keeping fit is doing sports. If you do regular exercise, you can eat and drink whatever you want because you are burning it all off.

### **11. Единый язык для всей планеты. За и против**

No doubt that learning languages takes up a lot of time. That is why some people think that it would be better to have only one language on our planet. But will it be really beneficial for mankind?

In my opinion, the reduction of the number of languages is a disaster because it will totally destroy our great cultural heritage. With each loss of a language comes a loss of a culture, a loss of a way of life that deserves to be protected and treated as valuable. I also believe that leaving one language for communication will greatly reduce the linguistic diversity of our planet, which is the key to our survival. What is more, it will be rather difficult to choose which language to use and it may even lead to wars.

Many people think that if we have only one language, communication will become easier and there will be no need to learn foreign languages. I cannot agree with them because knowledge of foreign languages makes a person educated and well rounded. You cannot broaden your mind if you see the world only from the perspective of your own culture. Besides, people are a lot more helpful if you speak their language.

In conclusion, I would argue that we should try our best to preserve the linguistic diversity of our planet. I think that larger cultures should have a respect for minority languages, but first of all the younger generation must want to preserve their native language.

### **12. Животные в зоопарке. Как вы к этому относитесь. Справедливо ли это**

There are a lot of zoos in the world and millions of people visit them every year. But are zoos harmful or helpful to animals which are caged there?

I strongly believe that we should not keep animals in zoos because captivity is not natural for them and it is a constant stress to a wild animal. Keeping animals in zoos harms them by denying them freedom of movement and association. What is more, zoos are like prisons for animals as they live in small cages and do not get necessary food. In addition, animals become very aggressive and unpredictable as they get older and often attack zoo keepers and other people.

However, most people think that zoos help endangered species survive. But this is not true because most rare animals are extremely difficult to breed in captivity. Besides, in zoos, it is almost impossible to meet the animals' natural needs. Another argument for keeping animals in zoos is that people learn something new about these animals. Actually, zoos do not teach us much because animals do not act the way they would in the wild. I think we can learn more about animals by watching wildlife programs on TV.

In conclusion, I would argue that zoos do not seem to help endangered species and keeping animals behind bars only for the sake of our entertainment is not quite fair. In my opinion, people must create nature reserves, where wild animals will be able to live in their natural environment.

### **13. Запрещение машин в центрах больших городов. За или против**

There is no doubt that the invention of the car changed the world and nowadays we can hardly find a family without a car. Nevertheless, some people are against cars, especially in the centers of big cities.

In my opinion, cars should not be allowed into the city centers as they add to pollution and poison the air we breathe. We must also think about the people who live in the center and suffer from the noise made by cars. Moreover, the streets in the center are usually narrow therefore people are often stuck in traffic for many hours and, as a result, arrive late at their destination. Finally, with no cars in city centers, there would be no need for large ugly car parks, which would allow more space for parks.

However, many people believe we would not be able to survive without cars because most of the products for shops and other businesses are transported by cars. Besides, they are afraid that public transport would be overloaded. I am sure it is possible to solve these problems by introducing a reliable high frequency tram service as well as developing the underground. As for goods, we could use electric vehicles for their delivery.

To sum up, I believe that a clean, reliable and environmentally friendly public service would encourage people to use public transport and help smooth the transition to a car-free zone.

### **14. Изучение иностранного языка – лучшее, что может быть, изучать его в стране, где на нем разговаривают. Согласны ли вы**

Nowadays people spend lots of money in order to go to an English-speaking country to improve their language skills. But is it really the most effective way of learning a language?

In my view, studying in a foreign country has certain drawbacks. Firstly, this way is very expensive as the tuition fee for overseas students is rather high. Besides, when you study abroad, you have to adapt to a very different way of life, which can be quite stressful. What is more, English teachers do not speak Russian so if you don't know English well, you will not understand their explanation.

It is often assumed that it is better to study a language abroad because you can always use it speaking with native speakers. However, I doubt that we will have lots of opportunities to speak abroad as we do not know many people there. It is also believed that Russian teachers are not as qualified as those in England. I totally disagree with this opinion because Russian teachers can compare two languages and explain grammar rules better.

To sum up, I would argue that the best way to learn a language is to study it in your native country because you can always get the necessary help from your teachers. Moreover, today we have lots of opportunities to improve our skills such as communicating with English pen-friends over the Internet. I think that we should travel abroad so as to practise a language but not to study it.

#### **15. Иностранные языки. Сейчас в школах изучают по 2-3 языка. За и против**

Most people understand that without knowledge of foreign languages it is difficult to survive in the modern world. Therefore they send their children to schools where they can study two or even three foreign languages. However, is it good to study several languages simultaneously?

On the one hand, foreign languages are the main part of our culture so they help us to expand our outlook. We cannot broaden our minds if we see the world only from the perspective of our own culture. In addition, learning languages is a good exercise for the intellect. Moreover, if pupils know at least one foreign language, they learn new languages much faster.

On the other hand, many pupils find it confusing to learn two or three languages at a time, especially languages that are similar, because children usually mix up lots of words. Besides, some languages are tricky enough to learn. For example, in English there are more exceptions than rules. In this case, children can be overloaded with homework. More than that, some pupils do not know their native language well and learning several foreign languages could prevent them from mastering their own language.

In conclusion, I want to say that learning languages is extremely beneficial and I would like to know different foreign languages. However, I believe children should not learn too many languages at the same time so as not to get confused. They ought to get a solid base in one language before they start learning a new one.

#### **16. Интернет. За и против**

We live in the age of information technology and nowadays the Internet is nearly as common as the telephone. No doubt that it is a unique invention, which has influenced all areas of our lives. However, some people consider the Internet one of the greatest evils of our time.

On the one hand, the Internet is very useful, because it lets us access a world of facts, figures and knowledge. In addition, with the Internet, it is now possible to speak to friends and relatives anywhere in the world cheaply and quickly. Other services are also available through the Internet such as booking tickets or buying things. Moreover, the Internet allows a lot of talented people to show the world their achievements and makes it easier to find a job.

On the other hand, the Internet can become a disaster for our society, because people spend hours in front of their computers and neglect their everyday duties. Another worry is the activities of cybercriminals. For example, hackers can steal your money or even your property while cyberterrorists may 'attack' the world's computers, causing chaos, and making planes and trains crash. What is more, leaders of different terrorist or oppositional organizations can use the Internet to find new followers.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that despite the criticisms by some and the fears of others, the Internet seems to have changed our world to the better and we must try to make the best use of it.

#### **17. Клонирование. За и против**

Recent advances in genetic biology have led us to quite a doubtful situation. People all over the world argue whether human cloning research should be controlled by the government as solving problems connected with human cloning is definitely not a piece of cake.

In my opinion, human cloning experiments are extremely dangerous because there are huge risks of abnormalities in human clones. Moreover, if clones have been made, they will obviously have serious psychological problems connected with their unusual birth. Finally, there is no doubt that human cloning will change our perception of what is the value of a human life as we might change from having children to manufacturing them.

However, scientists claim that human cloning could be very beneficial as therapeutic cloning could provide stem cells for regenerative medicine and tissues for transplantation. Besides, reproductive cloning will probably give parents who are both infertile an opportunity to have children. I

am afraid that this technology is not safe enough to use on humans. It is also possible that clones will age quicker since the cell used in the cloning procedure has already been used in a real life individual.

To sum up, we must question whether human cloning is really worth it when weighed against the problems it raises. From my point of view, human reproductive cloning should be under the tight control of the government and the UN because it is dangerous to interfere with nature and the consequences can be really disastrous.

### **18. Книги или компьютеры. Кто победит в будущем**

The latest advances in information technology make people think that schools of the future will use computers instead of printed books. Although electronic books have not been widely accepted yet, they have certain advantages over traditional paper volumes. But will they be able to replace printed books?

In my opinion, students will be widely using computers for studying in the future. To begin with, computers can store lots of books in their memory and modern software allows us to find quickly the necessary information. Besides, with the interactive programs on computers studying will be much more exciting. What is more, electronic books will not degrade overtime like their printed counterparts.

On the other hand, lots of disbelievers argue that computers will not replace printed books because a printed book is better for human eyes than a computer screen. In addition, books are cheaper and easier to use since they do not need electricity or the Internet connection. I cannot agree with this because modern computer screens emit no radiation and allow us to read even in low light conditions. Of course we will have to pay for electricity but I think it will be cheaper than to pay for printed books, which are very expensive nowadays.

To sum up, I think computers and printed books will peacefully coexist for years to come, but in the future technological progress will make it possible for students to carry laptops or even palmtops instead of traditional bags with lots of heavy books.

### **19. Компьютерные игры. За и против**

People have always had different hobbies but technological progress has caused the appearance of computers and computer games, which can keep a child occupied for hours. However, adults consider computer games a complete waste of time.

As for me, I believe computer games are more than mindless entertainment. To begin with, computer games can teach people to achieve their aims as they regularly put obstacles and traps in the way of players which are necessary to overcome in order to progress through the rest of the game. Additionally, computer games can be a valuable source of accidental learning that can be applied to school, home, and social events. Moreover, teachers have also started to appreciate educational games as an opportunity to make their lessons more exciting.

Nevertheless, quite a few people are against this activity as they find it rather addictive and harmful for children's health. They argue that computer games make students neglect their school work. However, if we learn to control our computer use and play games for an hour just to relax after a hard day at school, this will not do us any harm. What is more, modern technology made it possible to eliminate the bad effect of computers on our eyes.

To sum up, I believe that computer games have more advantages than drawbacks. They make us persistent, develop our logical reasoning and help us to escape from everyday problems. The thing is to find a right balance between virtual reality and everyday reality.

### **20. Космос. За и против исследований в космосе**

Space exploration can mean a major leap for mankind. However, it is often criticized because the price for these space experiments is too high, especially while poverty still exists in many parts of the world.

On the one hand, space research is extremely beneficial as it advances technology. As a result of this work, we have lots of inventions, which have made our lives much more comfortable. In addition, through the exploration of space, we could find new elements, minerals or even discover new laws of physics and eventually learn more about ourselves. What is more, space exploration will



allow us to establish a human civilization on another planet as a hedge against the catastrophe that might occur on the Earth.

On the other hand, the benefits of space exploration are not self-evident, no matter how real they are. It costs billions of dollars to fund the projects of space science whereas this money should rather be spent on meeting the needs of the underprivileged. Besides, some of the technology we develop through space science can be used in a destructive manner if it is in the wrong hands. Finally, a travel to space can be dangerous as we may discover something that is extremely harmful for the living beings on Earth.

To conclude, I want to say that space exploration satisfies the human desire for adventure therefore most people are interested in space research. Nevertheless, I believe our governments should find the right balance between social and space programs.

### **21. Мобильные телефоны (за и против)**

There are lots of different ways of communication nowadays such as letters and telegrams, telephones and the Internet, but perhaps the most popular one is a mobile phone. While young people cannot imagine their lives without mobiles, adults are getting more and more worried about the consequences of their use.

On the one hand, we use mobile phones because they are very convenient. First of all, they are small enough to fit into our pockets so we can easily take them everywhere and always stay in touch. Besides, they allow us not only to phone, but to send small messages, which is very cheap. What is more, with new multimedia mobiles, we can log on to the Internet, pay for things, play games, interact with TV programs and take photos to send to friends.

On the other hand, some people believe that radiation from mobiles influences our health and can even lead to cancer. Besides, psychologists say teenagers are becoming addicted to mobiles. Surveys show that teenagers are reading less and mobile use is affecting the marks of secondary school students. What is more, some students can use mobile phones to cheat on tests, which of course is not honest.

To sum up, I want to say that virtually every technology has its pros and cons. I believe we should not reject mobile phones for the bad effect they have. On the contrary, we must learn how to make the best use of them.

### **22. Молодежь (современная). На самом ли деле она такая плохая, как некоторые думают. Ваше мнение**

It is often believed that today's teenagers are much worse than they used to be in the past. However, are they really as bad as they are thought to be?

To my mind, teenagers are criticized for no reason. To start with, nowadays more teenagers leave school with good qualifications and go to universities than ever before. There are millions of young people who achieve great things and become successful. In addition, lots of teens do household chores, look after their younger siblings or have part-time jobs. More than that, a growing number of teenagers take part in different sports competitions and win medals.

Many adults criticize teens for having bad habits like drinking or smoking. They also believe that modern teenagers are cruel and aggressive. I do not think it is fair that all teenagers are being labeled as problem. Not every teenager drinks and gets involved in fights. Very few of them think it is clever to go out and start fighting. Of course, there are some rebellious teenage subcultures, but they are opposed to the materialism in the society. In fact, most teens think about changing the world to the best.

To sum up, the main reason for such unjust attitude to teenagers is the generation gap. It is difficult for adults to admit that teenagers have the right to have their own fashion, music and habits. Of course not all teens are ideal, but by and large they are no worse than their parents.

**23. Молодежь. Наши дедушки и бабушки говорят, что их жизнь была более интересная. Но современная молодежь уверена, что сейчас жизнь на много лучше. Ваше мнение**

There is no doubt that the present way of life differs much from the one people had in the past. However, while young people appreciate the advantages of the modern lifestyle, it is often criticized by older people.

In my opinion, nowadays young people are offered many more life opportunities than in the past. To begin with, due to technological progress teenagers can travel around the world and expand their outlook. In addition, the Internet allows talented people to show their achievements and to find a job in any part of the world. What is more, new technology has made our everyday lives easier therefore we can spend more time on our education and leisure activities.

However, our grandparents think young people today are in greater danger because of drugs, new viruses and violence. I would not say that because nowadays teenagers are aware of the bad effects of drug addiction and take care of their health. Besides, most dangerous diseases can now be cured whereas in the past people died of incurable illnesses. As for violence, crime has always existed in the world but today we have better ways of protection.

In conclusion, I want to say that the old days were not as good as some people think they were. Of course, we still have lots of problems but, nevertheless, I find modern way of life more attractive as it allows me to make the most of my abilities.

**24. Мыльные (soap) оперы. За и против**

Several years ago, nobody could have predicted that soap operas would have taken over most of TV prime time. Yet there are quite a few people who consider watching soaps a complete waste of time.

As for me, I am not a die-hard fan analyzing every episode but I certainly enjoy watching soaps. The prime reason is that they help me to release tension and to escape from the pressures of everyday life. Another thing that attracts me to soaps is the presence of suspense. They always keep me guessing about the characters and their fate and I want to know what is coming next and how it all ends up. Finally, watching soaps has become part of my daily routine and I always look forward to watching another episode.

Admittedly, there are people who dislike soaps claiming that they have boring scripts and unbelievable story lines. I do not think it is correct to blame soaps for being unrealistic. On the contrary, the reality of the problems portrayed in soaps make them so recognizable to the viewer. I also disagree that all soaps are boring and predictable as people involved in watching them are usually captivated by their story lines.

In conclusion, I want to stress that despite the criticisms we cannot escape from the fact that soap operas are one of the most popular genres on television. Whatever the reason for watching them, soaps possess an incredible magnetic attractiveness and power that must never be underestimated.

**25. Насилие по телевизору должно быть запрещено. Ваше мнение**

Over the last fifty years we have seen a huge rise in TV violence and a corresponding rise in the crime rate. Many people are sure this is not coincidence and blame television for the negative influence.

In my opinion, those who think that TV violence accounts for the rise of crime in society get the situation the wrong way round. Television just reflects the increase in violence and crime in society. Besides, crime programs can actually stop people from breaking the law as they usually show that crime doesn't pay. Moreover, programs where real life crimes are re-enacted get people to ring in with information and eventually help to catch criminals.

It is supposed that violence on TV has a negative influence on children as they become more aggressive after watching violent shows. There is also an opinion that young people tend to imitate crime techniques watched on TV and therefore are likely to be arrested for criminal acts as adults. However, lots of people watch violent crimes on TV without wanting to commit similar crimes themselves. That is why I believe that the main reason for committing crimes is poverty and bad education, not television programs.

To conclude, I do not think it is necessary to forbid all crime programs because television should tell people the truth about the world they live in. I strongly believe we should concentrate on what people experience in their daily life before we worry about what is on TV.

## **26. Наука или поэзия. Что важнее?**

People often argue about the role of science and poetry in the development of our civilization. This question seems rather controversial as both of them contributed to our society and without them mankind seems impossible to exist.

As for me, I consider science to be of higher priority as it helps to make our lives more comfortable. Most of the things we use nowadays are the results of scientific research. What is more, due to the improvements in medical science many of incurable diseases can now be cured and people live longer. However, the importance of science does not only derive from its use in technology or medicine. It is a vital tool in expanding our knowledge about the world and, consequently, about ourselves. Without science we are unable to reveal our past and to predict our future.

On the contrary, some people argue that poetry is more important as it helps to tell good from evil and teaches us to be sympathetic and honest. They doubt the necessity of science blaming it for the appearance of chemical weapons and nuclear bombs. In my opinion, without mistakes, no development is possible, and the humanity has learned quite a lot from this sad experience. I am sure that science can be as rich a teacher as poetry although it differs in technique.

To sum up, I believe that science has been more beneficial to mankind. Nevertheless, we should not underestimate the importance of poetry as it advances our understanding of beauty.

## **27. Некоторые представители молодежи мечтают быть богатыми, в то время как остальные считают это очень опасным. Ваше мнение**

No doubt that everybody wants to earn as much as possible so as to be able to do whatever they want. However, a lot of young people are afraid of being rich. Why?

As for me, I do not see any drawbacks in being rich. On the contrary, with lots of money you can get a prestigious education, travel around the world and support your family. Besides, if you have a large income, people think you are very successful and respect you more. Finally, being rich means you can help poor people. For instance, if I had a lot of money, I would give some to cancer research or donate to charities.

Many teenagers are afraid of becoming rich because they think someone will rob or even kill them. Moreover, they consider rich people to be criminals who have made a fortune by committing crimes. However, this is not true at all. There are many millionaires who are absolutely honest, for example, Bill Gates. He has taken a tiny software company and turned it into, a multi-billion dollar powerhouse. Now Bill Gates is one of the -wealthiest people on the planet and yet he is a noted philanthropist who has donated a lot of money to non-profit educational organizations.

In conclusion, I want to say that money is power, and having money means having the power to make positive changes. Personally, I would like to be a millionaire so as to be able to help people who are in need.

## **28. Обучение на расстоянии (on-line education, distant learning) За и против**

Due to recent technological advances a growing number of people give up the classroom environment and choose to study online. Moreover, some people claim that distant learning will completely substitute traditional ways of education in the not too remote future. But is online education really so effective?

At first glance, online learning provides an easier and more comfortable way of obtaining education because there is no need to attend classes and to spend a lot of time getting to and from school. In addition, students have greater flexibility in their schedule and can work at their own pace, taking time when they need it and speeding through courses that are easy. What is more, when students study online, they can specialize in courses they are most interested in. Students take responsibility for their education and become self-motivated and self-reliant.

However, online education lacks interactive classroom setting, which promotes the open exchange of ideas and makes it easier to master the subject. Besides, certain subjects like Maths or Physics may be hard to learn without a direct help of a teacher not to mention difficulties connected with the use of computer equipment. Moreover, most online programs don't have the fun of traditional school and isolate students from each other, which has a bad influence on their character.

In conclusion, I can say that the real effectiveness of online education has not been evaluated yet. I believe that the best teaching method will be a combination of online and classroom learning.

### **29. Обучение обязательно, школа нет. За и против домашнего обучения**

In most countries children can be educated at home by their parents and home schooling is becoming more and more popular. However, this way of education has both advantages and disadvantages.

On the one hand, home education is ideal for children who suffer from 'school phobia' or do not fit in with the school environment. They are unhappy and often play truant. On the contrary, when children are educated at home, they study in an atmosphere of love and understanding. Moreover, this way of education will perfectly suit gifted pupils, who are bored by the traditional school lessons. In this case, parents can make studying more fascinating by choosing an individual curriculum. Finally, home educated children have more flexible schedule and can study at their own pace.

On the other hand, parents are usually not qualified enough to teach their children therefore they may not receive an appropriate level of education. What is more, home education is very challenging for students as they have to work harder without a direct help of a qualified teacher. In addition, children lack the opportunity to exchange ideas with their peers, which restricts their intellectual development. They may also miss their friends as they meet only in the evenings.

To conclude, I think although the idea of home education is becoming more popular, it might not suit every child and every parent. As for me, I would rather choose school education because it makes me more organised and provides profound knowledge in all subjects.

### **30. Ответственность за свое здоровье. Должны ли люди застраховывать себя. Ваше мнение**

In the USSR almost all medical care was guaranteed by the state and was free of charge. Nowadays only a small part of it is covered by state insurance. In other cases people have to pay for their medical expenses or to buy private health insurance. Is it right?

In my opinion, the government should have overall responsibility for people's health. Firstly, those people who work pay enough taxes for the government to ensure sufficient health care for everybody and the authorities should provide money to keep medical service at a proper level. In addition, disabled people who do not work and have no money to pay for their treatment should not be underprivileged. Finally, medications are getting more and more expensive that is why not all people can afford to pay for the required medical care.

However, there are people who think private health insurance will provide better health care than state insurance. I think the quality of health care does not depend on who pays for your expenses but depends on the development of medicine in the country. What is more, private insurance companies may go bankrupt and people will not get any medical help at all.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that in a democratic society everybody should have the right to health insurance. Of course, people ought to be responsible for their health and avoid bad habits or do sports; But if they need medical help, the government must provide them with proper treatment and medications

### **31. Праздники. За и против**

Holidays are an essential part of our culture but not all people understand the importance of their celebrations. They consider any celebration as a waste of time. Are they right?

To my mind, we should celebrate holidays because they help to keep up our traditions and to preserve our culture. I also think it is a good chance to bring the family together and to meet all your friends and relatives. What is more, there is a special atmosphere behind each holiday and it is a good opportunity to make people happy.

Yet not all people enjoy celebrations. They are not interested in ancient traditions and think that holidays are just an excuse for spending money or making it. I do not think they are right because it is very important that traditions do survive in the country as they help to define who people are. Of course people spend lots of money on presents. However, it is not only the present that counts, but also the fact that people greet each other and share the joy of the day.

Personally, I enjoy celebrations. For me, a holiday is not just a day off but a special occasion and I usually prepare for it beforehand. I like the spirit of a holiday and always try and keep the traditions connected with it. To conclude, I want to say that holidays are a very important part of our lives because they help to bring generations together.

### **32. Путешествия расширяют кругозор. Согласны ли вы**

Modern life is impossible without travelling. People travel the globe to see modern cities and ancient towns, to enjoy picturesque places, or just for a change of scene. But does travelling really broaden our minds?

On the one hand, it does because when you travel you are exposed to things which you would probably never experience if you stayed at home. To begin with, travelling gives us an opportunity to explore the country and learn about its customs and traditions. In addition, it is a good chance to try national food and take part in national festivals. Moreover, travelling is the best way to practise foreign languages and to make new friends.

However, there are people who travel to 'all inclusive clubs. It does not really matter to them which country they are in as long as they have an opportunity to relax. They do not bother to practise a foreign language and even if they go on excursions, they only take pictures and do not get any useful information. In this case travelling does not broaden their mind. Besides, when people travel on business, they are usually too concerned about their problems and have little time to explore the place they travel to.

To sum up, travel can expand people's outlook if they travel in order to gain new experiences. On the contrary, if tourists are too lazy, they will not benefit from their journeys. So we may say that travel broadens the minds which want to be broadened.

### **33. Работа. Для многих представителей молодежи главное чтобы их будущая работа была высокооплачиваемая, а некоторым главное самодовлетворение от работы. Ваше мнение**

Nowadays young people have various job opportunities. No wonder that it is difficult for them to choose their future occupation. They often have to make a choice between money and job satisfaction.

I believe that the major concern when choosing a job should be our interests and talents. To begin with, a future career should fit our personality; otherwise it is not going to be very fulfilling. Besides, it is unlikely that a job will be done properly unless we are interested in it. Our attitude will surely have a negative impact. So I think it is better to choose a profession that suits our interests.

It is natural that many teenagers want to have high salaries to be able to buy everything they want. In their opinion, the more money they get, the more they will be respected. However, countless surveys show that money does not necessarily lead to job satisfaction. What is more, if you only work to earn money, your life will soon become extremely boring. On the contrary, if you really enjoy your job, you will achieve success and get the reward and respect that you truly deserve.

In conclusion, I want to stress that while salary is important, teenagers should not consider earnings as the primary factor when choosing their future occupation. Personally, I enjoy travelling therefore I want my career to be connected with tourism. I cannot say that I am indifferent to money but the most important thing for me is job satisfaction.

### **34. Работа. Должна ли молодежь работать на временной работе. Ваше мнение**

Most teenagers today are given some pocket money by their parents. However, they often feel this is not enough for their needs. As a result, the question of whether they should have a part-time job often comes up.

In my opinion, young people should be allowed to work part-time if they want to. First of all, it will give them a useful introduction to the world of work. By earning money, teens can learn how a

business works from the inside out as well as get some working experience. Besides, a part-time job will teach teenagers the value of things and make them more responsible and careful about money. They will understand that money does not grow on trees, it has to be earned. Finally, having extra money will make young people more independent of their parents.

Many parents say that teenagers are too young to work and that they should concentrate on their school work. Although this is true, I think that there are jobs for teenagers that will not take up too much time or can be done at weekends, for example, delivering newspapers or babysitting. In addition, young people can ' find a holiday job during the summer and earn money for something special.

In conclusion, I want to stress that teenagers will really benefit from having a part-time job. Nevertheless, they should not forget that their main task is to get education therefore their part-time jobs must not distract them from studying.

### **35. Работа на дому. За и против**

With recent advances in technology, lots of people have a chance to work at home instead of going into the main office every day. This work style is a mixed blessing, though.

On the one hand, if you work from home, you can structure your day to suit your personal needs. You can work as much, or as little, as you like and no one will look over your shoulder. Besides, you do not have to commute long distances to and from work and pay for your travel expenses. What is more, if you are married, you can spend more time with your kids, playing with them or training them.

On the other hand, working from home takes a phenomenal amount of self-discipline to start work when you know you do not have to be at the office by 9 a.m. In addition, there is no outside pressure to be busy so you must be entirely self-motivated. Moreover, there is a danger of putting in too many hours or overworking because there is no one to tell you that your working day is over. Finally, you will not be able to communicate with your colleagues so you may feel cut off from the rest of the world.

To sum up, working from home can be a great solution for certain people. However, like everything else in life, this work style has both pros and cons. That is why everyone should make a choice according to their preferences.

### **36. Реалити шоу. За и против**

Reality shows have become an inalienable part of TV programs. However, while lots of people admire them glued to their TV screens, there are more skeptical viewers who doubt the quality of these shows.

On the one hand, reality TV is great fun and it is one of the best ways of entertainment, which helps people to unwind after a long day at school or at work. Another reason for its success is interactivity. Most people enjoy reality shows because they have an opportunity to participate so they feel in control of the participants' destiny. Finally, we can watch how contestants react under pressure thus imagining how we would behave under the same circumstances. It can be really instructive.

On the other hand, not all of these programs are made in good taste. It seems like TV producers are running out of ideas because all of them are exactly the same. What is more, many of them are actually a fake because participants are made to rehearse their performance so we cannot trust them. Finally, people who win shows like *X Factor* or *Pop Idol* are not real celebrities because they become famous for a little while and then disappear.

In conclusion, I can say that no matter whether we like reality TV or hate it, it is here to stay and it reflects our life. Personally, I think it is a good way to relax and a wonderful opportunity for people to boost their careers.

### **37. Реклама. За и против**

These days we all are exposed to a continuous chain of advertising messages. Sometimes advertising may be entertaining and sometimes it may disgust us. But does it really do anything to us? Can advertising be a positive force in society, or does it deserve to be avoided?

On the one hand, we cannot imagine our world without any advertising. It would be impossible to learn about new products, films or travel options. Besides, advertisements help people get the best value for their money as they have access to price information, availability of products, and improvements being made. On the other hand, clever and informative advertisements help companies sell their products and develop their business. Many TV companies also get most of their money from advertising.

But it cannot be denied that advertising does have its drawbacks. Some advertisements show life unrealistically and give untrue information. In adverts all people seem to be happy consumers, all kids seem to be healthy and well off. But this is not true at all. In addition, adverts do not talk about products defects. What is more, advertising increases prices for consumers and put pressure on them making them buy things they don't need. I also think that we should not advertise alcoholic drinks and cigarettes as these products are really harmful.

In conclusion, I'd like to say advertising is very important in our society nowadays. We need advertising, but it needs to be done correctly. Otherwise it will mean annoying consumers and wasting money.

### **38. Родители дают деньги за хорошие оценки. За и против этого**

Many parents see pocket money as a way of encouraging their children to do well at school. It cannot be denied that money oils the wheels of the world. But can pocket money really improve school performance?

On the one hand, getting pocket money for good school grades teaches pupils that money does not grow on trees and develops a sense of how much has to be done to earn it. Besides, children become more interested in good results at school and try to study better. What is more, for many students studying is really hard work so they consider it fair to be rewarded for their efforts just like adults.

On the other hand, it is normal to expect pupils to do their homework properly because it is their duty as are household chores. Another argument against this practice is that children get upset when they do badly at school not because of their poor knowledge but because they will get no money. Finally, getting pocket money may become their main target and students may start cheating so as to get good grades.

To sum up, I think that this practice has more bad than good sides. That is why I strongly believe that parents should not give their children any money in order to encourage them to study better. Pupils should be ready to learn for learning's sake. Of course they may be rewarded but for extra work, not for their duties.

### **39. Семьи с одним ребенком или многодетные. Ваше мнение про семьи с одним ребенком**

One-child households have doubled over the last two decades making it one of the fastest growing family units in most European countries. But is it really beneficial to be an only child in a family?

On the one hand, if you are an only child, you don't have to share your room with anybody else. As a result, these children may have friends to stay over on a regular basis. Besides, they have more privacy and no one disturbs them while they are studying. What is more, parents give all their love and care to their only child. Such children also benefit from having the family financial resources focused upon them.

On the other hand, if you have a sibling, you have someone to play with or to talk to, and you'll never feel bored or lonely. And if you get into trouble, you have someone to give you a helping hand or at least some advice. Moreover, children in large families are usually not overindulged by their parents. Kids learn at the very early age that the world doesn't revolve around them and that they have to share their possessions or wait for their turn.

In conclusion, I want to say that one-child families have their pros and cons. Personally, I believe that having a brother or a sister is an amazing feeling, because no matter what happens in life, you will not be lonely and you will always have someone to share your thoughts and feelings.

#### **40. Смертная казнь - справедливая казнь для убийц. За и против**

At one time capital punishment was used in almost every part of the globe, but over the last few decades many countries have abolished it. However, many people consider the death penalty to be the best punishment for murderers.

There are several arguments in favour of capital punishment. First of all, the death penalty acts as a deterrent. In other words, people are afraid of committing crimes as long as the death penalty exists. Besides, the punishment should fit the crime therefore the appropriate punishment for murder is death. Finally, capital punishment is truly cost effective when compared with the cost of life imprisonment.

On the other hand, killing a person is inhumane and society should show how much it values a life by never killing anybody, even murderers. A second argument against capital punishment is that sometimes innocent people are found guilty. If they are imprisoned, they can be released. This cannot happen if they have already been executed. What is more, criminals can have different reasons for murder so it is unjust to apply capital punishment to all murderers.

To sum up, there are several good arguments both to support and oppose capital punishment. Although it seems reasonable to apply death penalty to the most violent criminals, we ought to do it with great caution. I personally believe that people should focus on the reasons of crimes rather than on their punishment.

#### **41. Современная молодежь не такая здоровая (healthy) как молодежь 50 лет назад.**

##### **Согласны ли вы**

We often hear a statement that the health of modern teenagers is much worse than that of their counterparts who lived fifty years ago. But is it really so?

In my opinion, nowadays young people are not as healthy as they used to be. To begin with, young people today eat lots of genetically modified and junk food, which is definitely harmful. Besides, modern teenagers often smoke, drink alcohol and take drugs, which leads to serious diseases. What is more, lots of teenagers are addicted to computers or watch TV all day long instead of walking and doing sports. As a result, many young people are overweight and suffer from heart diseases;

However, many people ignore these facts claiming that teenagers' health is steadily improving due to modern health care and better nutrition. Of course, young people do not die today of such diseases as pneumonia and tuberculosis but their health is definitely getting worse because they breathe polluted air, drink polluted water and eat food with different harmful additives. Additionally, teenagers usually ignore their parents' advice to eat healthy food and eat what they want or even skip meals. What is more, we must admit that today we are threatened by such incurable diseases as AIDS or hepatitis.

In conclusion, I want to say that our society should pay more attention to the health of younger generation because they are the basis of our future development. I strongly believe that teenagers should be actively involved in various health projects.

#### **42. Спорт. За и против**

Sport is one of those things that make our lives really worth living. In one way or another, everyone is involved in sports, whether they play or watch it, or just know someone who does either. Although a lot of people seem to be interested in sports, not all of them consider it useful.

On the one hand, we must admit that sport takes a lot of energy and time and it can be really exhausting. Sportsmen train all day long and have to follow a diet, which does more harm than good. Besides, some sports such as snowboarding or rock climbing can be rather dangerous. As a result, people often have serious injuries. Moreover, sport makes you unhappy when you lose, which can lead to psychological problems.

On the other hand, sport helps us to keep fit and to stay healthy. Among the benefits of regular exercise are a healthier heart, weight control and less susceptibility to illnesses. In addition, sport helps us to overcome difficulties and gives a chance to acquire self-confidence. What is more, sport makes us more organized and better disciplined in our daily activities. It is also a good way to spend free time and to make friends.



To sum up, I would argue that sport is very important for people's health. However, it is not necessary to become a professional sportsman. If you go in for sports just for pleasure, to stay in good shape or to relax, then sport is definitely useful.

#### **43. Телевидение. За и против**

A lot of people learn about the world from TV because it is the easiest way of getting information as well as an ideal way of relaxation. Despite this fact, some people believe that TV is not really worth watching.

On the one hand, television helps people to expand their outlook as it reflects our world. It gives us an opportunity to travel<sup>4</sup> around the world, to see different people and learn about their customs and traditions. Besides, watching TV is the best way to be in the know of everything. TV news and current affairs programs keep you informed about your country and the rest of the world. Moreover, there are lots of educational channels such as *Discovery* or *Animal Planet*, which help people to broaden their mind.

On the other hand, there are TV addicts who watch TV for hours without choosing programs and spend time in front of television which they could spend studying. In this case, television makes them really waste time. In addition, there are a lot of commercials on TV, which are often misleading and unhelpful. More than that, not all TV shows are made in good taste and some of them are really boring.

To sum up, television has both good and bad points and people should learn how to make the best use of it. If you watch TV for an hour a day to find out what is happening in the world or to relax, then television is really useful.

#### **44. Телевидение - многие родители думают, что дети смотрят слишком много телевизор. Согласен ли ты**

Most kids plug into the world of television long before they enter school. No wonder that their parents are worried about the consequences of excessive TV viewing.

In my opinion, nowadays children are too addicted to watching television. On average, kids spend several hours in front of a TV screen every day. As a result, TV can get in the way of studying, exploring, playing and interacting with parents and friends. In addition, excessive TV viewing can result in obesity as kids are inactive and tend to snack while watching TV. What is more, there is a lot of violence on television and TV characters often depict smoking and drinking, which can set a bad example for children.

On the other hand, kids need entertainment and they consider TV one of the best ways of spending their free time. They also say that TV helps them to learn about the world. Although TV can be an excellent entertainer and educator, there are lots of active ways of entertainment such as playing games or doing sports, which are actually much healthier. Moreover, we should not forget about the educational value of reading a good book.

To sum up, I agree that television, in moderation, can be a good thing. However, if children watch TV all day long without choosing programs, then it is really harmful. That is why I believe parents should set viewing limits to ensure their kids do not spend too much time watching TV.

#### **45. Туризм. За и против**

It goes without saying that tourism can bring economic gain to the development of all countries. Nevertheless, some people think that the price for this development is too high. So is tourism a blessing or a curse?

On the one hand, tourism is extremely beneficial as it provides people with jobs and brings substantial profit for the country's economy. In addition, most of the money from tourism is spent on schools, roads, cultural development and maintenance of architectural sights, which otherwise would be in a sorry state. What is more, travelling is a part of people's education and it is a good way to broaden our minds. We may say that tourism brings cultures and people closer.

On the other hand, we must admit that tourism does have some disadvantages. To begin with, most popular resorts are polluted and litter has become a major problem. Besides, many ancient monuments are being destroyed by unstoppable march of tourism. To make things still worse, the

historic centers of many great European cities, such as London or Rome, are fast becoming occupied by tourists with clicking cameras and left by all local residents except for the souvenir sellers.

In conclusion, I want to say that the problems caused by tourism are not something that cannot be solved or prevented. In my opinion, tourism should be given a humanistic direction. Personally, I am for tourism that minimises its own environmental impact, respects local cultures and human rights as well as promotes knowledge and understanding.

#### **46. Тюрьма - самое лучшее наказание для преступника, но некоторые считают, что есть другие варианты наказания. Ваше мнение**

There is a lot of violence in the modern world. Although prisons keep us safe from dangerous criminals, they do not completely solve the problem of crime.

In my opinion, people should find more effective punishments for criminals than prison because imprisonment in fact works adversely against crime. First of all, prisoners face horrible conditions such as inadequate medical care or abuse by guards, which, coupled with an environment of criminal peers, often make prisoners more violent than when they went in. In addition, some criminals learn in prison how to commit worse crimes. What is more, they are released with only a few rubles in their pockets and a perspective of being unemployed. As a result, most ex-prisoners commit a crime again.

Yet some people consider prisons to be the most effective punishment for criminals. They also believe that prisons protect people from those who might harm us. Although murderers and other violent criminals deserve being sent to prison, a vast majority of prisoners are locked up for non-violent crimes such as low level property crimes. In this case they only need help finding jobs. Moreover, some people who commit crimes are mentally ill and doctors can help them much more than prisons.

In conclusion, I believe that prisons are necessary for criminals who are a real danger to society. It may be better if less dangerous criminals receive different punishments, such as community service or a fine. Rehabilitation programs cost far less and are more effective than prisons.

#### **47. Фастфуд. За и против. Еда, которую ты предпочитаешь**

Fast food restaurants are becoming increasingly popular nowadays, especially among teenagers. But have you ever stopped to think how fast food affects your health?

On the one hand, fast food is very convenient, because you do not have to wait for a long time until your food is prepared. It is especially useful for people who do not like to cook. In addition, fast food is rather inexpensive, which is very important for teenagers who usually do not have much pocket money. What is more, there are a lot of fast food restaurants such as McDonalds all over the world so you may be sure that you will have good quality meal in almost every country.

On the other hand, this kind of food is not nutritious because it is high in fat, which is believed to be one of the major causes of obesity and heart disease. Besides, it is loaded with calories because fries, burgers, nuggets and other items you can find at fast food establishments are usually three times larger than the amount you should be consuming. Moreover, fast food may be addictive as the high levels of salt and sugar content found in most fast food items cause the brain to seek them out.

As for me, I think that fast food is rather harmful to our health so I prefer home-made meals. In conclusion, I want to say that everybody should make their own choices whether to eat junk food or healthy food.

#### **48. Школьная форма. За и против**

Although wearing school uniform is not compulsory any more, it continues to be a subject of heated debate between teachers and schoolchildren.

On the one hand, it is believed that pupils who wear school uniforms perform better academically in school. It is true because children are often so focused on their wardrobe that it distracts them from learning. In addition, experts claim that teenagers who wear school uniforms behave more appropriately in the school environment. What is more, lots of pupils are often teased

because they do not wear expensive designer clothes to school. So those students whose parents cannot afford stylish clothes will feel more comfortable.

On the other hand, children hate wearing the same clothes all the time because it stifles their self-expression and remove their individuality. Besides, most school uniforms are formal and rather uncomfortable, especially in hot weather, whereas children need to feel comfortable in order to maximize learning. Uniforms can therefore deter academic success. Moreover, although school uniforms cost less than trendy children's clothing, they increase the amount of clothing parents will have to buy for their children.

To conclude, when both sides of the argument are looked at, I would argue that the best solution would be to design a cheap comfortable uniform that allows children to wear individual items so as to express their individuality. Personally, I do not mind wearing a uniform because it gives me a sense of belonging and makes me feel a bit different from students of other schools.

#### **49. Экзамены - это самый справедливый путь оценивания учеников. Согласны ли вы**

Every year thousands of students take important exams which can decide their future. For example, students have to pass exams with excellent grades in order to get a place in a university. However, are exams the ultimate solution to judge one's knowledge?

On the one hand, exams seem fair because the questions are the same for all students. Besides, the exams are marked according to a strict scheme and usually by more than one examiner. Furthermore, students do exams at the same time and under the same conditions. If the examination procedure is strict, students have no opportunity to cheat, that is why the results of exams are quite objective.

On the other hand, exams do not truly reflect the knowledge students hold. Despite some students deserving to pass, they might be so nervous on the big day that they make a mess of the exam. In addition, there may be other reasons, such as illness, which affect a student's performance in an exam. Moreover, exams do not judge your intelligence. What is really evaluated is your self-confidence and your short term memory.

To sum up, exams are not the ideal way of testing students therefore the idea of assessing students' work over a longer period is becoming more popular. In my opinion, the best system would be a mixture of exams and course work, in which students will be able to show their creative abilities.

#### **50. Экстремальный спорт. За и против**

There is no doubt that extreme sports are becoming more and more popular nowadays. Nevertheless, these sports are considered rather dangerous and it is quite difficult to understand why people put their lives at risk.

As for me, I can understand people who are addicted to risky sports. First of all, they try extreme sports for the thrill and excitement. They just want a new experience and new emotions to conquer. For them extreme sport is an antidote to our safety-first, shrink-wrapped world. Besides, risky sports enable people to confront fears and to satisfy their curiosity. Finally, young people are likely to take risks because they want to look daring and outrageous.

However, parents are often against extreme sports because of the possibility of injury. They are also afraid that young people will become addicted to taking risks. As a matter of fact, many extreme sports are even less dangerous than traditional ones. Improvements in equipment allow the reduction in risk and if you do not take things to the edge, extreme sports are rather safe. In addition, risky sports help people to relax and to find new friends who share the same passion. In my opinion, it is much better than drug addiction.

To sum up, I strongly believe that extreme sports are as beneficial as traditional kinds. They offer the opportunity to carve your own path and find out where your limits lie. Personally, I am not a risk taker but I respect people who go to extremes.