

# 老西口大范围精选 2015 年 5-7 月口语机经

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大范围五星级：

### Task1

1

**Describe a difficulty which you have overcome with the help of your family, friends or classmates. Explain how they helped you.**

During my **first month in college**, I seemed to have difficulty adjusting myself to campus life. I had enjoyed a life at home with all kinds of comforts and conveniences. But suddenly everything changed. I had to take care of everything on my own. At first I was a little lost, but fortunately I met Susan, a senior student who volunteered to help freshmen. She gave me her phone number the first day we met and said I could phone her whenever I met a problem. And I did phone her, many times. She would always patiently explain to me things like how to apply for a meal pass or where the nearest bus station is. Sometimes she would even come to my dorm and help me fix things there. With her help, I was able to survive my first month in college.

2

**What time of a year do you like the most? Explain why you like this time of a year.**

I think the **summer holiday** is the best time of a year because it is the longest vacation I can have during a year, often about 2 months. It means a complete getaway from school. I don't have to get up early. I don't have tests and quizzes. I can plan a long trip to places far away. So I feel like I am free to do whatever I want! What's more, the weather is usually good during summer holidays. Although summer is the hottest season of a year, in my city it never gets too hot. It has a most comfortable temperature and humidity, so I don't have to worry about what to wear. T-shirts, jeans and a pair of sneakers are my standard attire, both outside and indoors.

3

**Talk about a way that helps you to relax. Explain why this helps you to relax.**

When I need to relax, I often **take a warm bath**. I have a very big bathtub at home. When I feel stressed or tired, I will fill the tub with warm water, dim the lights, maybe light some candles, and then slightly submerge myself into the water. It makes me feel like I am completely cut away from the outside world. Physical or emotional pains, schoolwork, assignment, deadlines, they all seem to go away. During the bath I often turn on the music, soft music. It helps to soothe my mind even more. And after about 30 minutes' bath, I will go immediately into bed, hit the pillow, and fall asleep! It's so relaxing!

4

**Describe a skill you are good at. Explain why this skill is important to you.**

I would like to talk about my **cooking skill**. I am not a professional cook, but I can say that I am

better at cooking than most people of my age. I learned cooking from childhood, by watching my mom and dad cook. At about 15 or 16, I was able cook for myself, and since then I have been experimenting with different kinds of recipes. Most of the time I was very successful. I think the skill of cooking is quite important to me because it means I can eat more healthily. I can cook at home with fresh ingredients and avoid taking in too much calorie. Another reason is that cooking is really a useful skill when you want to impress somebody, like your boyfriend or girlfriend. Just imagine how sweet it is to cook for your loved one on Valentine's Day!

5

**What do you think is the most important quality of a working environment: good leaders, good colleagues, or flexible time?**

Friendly colleagues, a good leader and a flexible time schedule are all essential elements for an enjoyable and productive work environment, but if I had to choose between them, being able to **work flexibly** would be my first consideration because it gives me a sense that I am in control of my own life. I hate having to get up so early every day at the same time or squeezing myself into crowded public transportation. By working flexible hours, I can travel to and from work in non-peak hours, which will reduce not only travel time but also costs. Also, it enables me to rearrange my holiday /workdays so it might be possible for me to have a much longer vacation, like two or three months, when I can travel extensively and non-stop.

6

**Describe an important day in your life. Explain why it is important.**

When I was seven, I **took swimming lessons** during the summer at our local outdoor pool. I could swim okay, but was still petrified of the diving board. Multiple times, when class was over for the day, I stood on the end of the board and stared at the water, desperately wanting to jump-in. Finally, on the last day of swim classes, I was at the board once again. My heart was pounding, but I used that adrenaline to fling myself off the board. It was kind of awful! Water got up my nose and I sputtered, coughing, to the surface. Yet, I was so incredibly proud that I had jumped in the first place! My mom even bought me ice cream as a reward. I haven't jumped off a diving board since, but I'll always have the knowledge that I was brave enough to do it once!

7

**Among the following three types of professions, which do you think makes the most important contribution to society:  
primary school teacher, nurse, or artist?**

It is my considered opinion that of the three professions listed, **primary school teachers** contributed most to society and are therefore the most important. First of all, it is likely that a person may not attend college or even secondary school; however, most people attend primary school to receive basic education, so primary school teachers influence most people's lives. What's more, primary school teachers play an important role in developing a child's intellect and work habits. Primary school is the first time most children are in a strictly educational environment. While pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes do teach children some basic

skills and knowledge, such as shapes and colors, primary school immerses children in the educational environment they will be experiencing until graduation from high school.

8

**What are some important effects of the worldwide availability of the Internet on modern people's life? Use specific details and examples to support your response.**

The increasing use of the Internet has had both positive and negative effects on modern people. On the one hand, with the help of the Internet, **communication** among people is much faster and less costly. For example, Skype and Gmail enable us to communicate instantly with our friends, family members or business colleagues in almost any part of the globe where Internet service is available. But on the other hand, the Internet has created online games that can be addictive to children and young adults. This can take away precious time which otherwise should have been used for something more productive, like reading or exercising.

9

**One of your friends has suddenly received a large amount of money and has asked you for advice on how to handle this money. What advice would you give to your friend? Give reasons for your answer.**

I would advise my friend to **save most of the money** for a rainy day because the economy is really bad at the moment with students finding it very difficult to find jobs, and people are even talking about a recession in the USA and Europe. So the money could come in handy if she needed some money to fall back on at some point in the future. Another reason I would suggest saving the money is that she could put the money towards buying a flat. Property prices are rising all the time, so buying a house or flat would not only be a good investment, but would also ensure that she would always have a place to live, without paying extortionate rent.

10

**Which of the following three subjects would you choose to learn? Math, painting, science. Explain what you want to learn from this subject.**

If I could choose to study any area, I would choose to study **painting** for two reasons. First, since I admire the works of painters like Mary Cassat, I would like to learn more about her style of painting and the reasons for her paintings. I think that I would be able to appreciate her paintings even more if I understood the artist herself. Second, studying painting would give me a chance to develop my own skill as an artist. I would like to learn to paint portraits of children and mothers like Cassat did. Her work shows love and compassion toward the subject. It touches the heart. I would like to paint in that way. I would like my work to give a message of love and compassion. These are the two reasons that I would like to study painting.

11

**Among the following three activities, which do you think has the most benefits for students? 1. A field trip 2. A home tutoring**

### session 3. A presentation given by a local leader

**A presentation given by a local leader** would be the most beneficial for students to experience. For one thing, sometimes it is hard for young people to visualize career paths beyond high school. . Having a local leader come in and talk about their *specific* job, and the *specific* steps they took to get there, could be very useful and encouraging. For another, some students don't have any real role models. This leader could become a vital role model for them. The students could also ask any questions they want and maybe even find out about internships or volunteer opportunities at the local leader's office. The presentation would give them some helpful tools for success.

12

**What are the advantages and disadvantages of eating in a fast-food restaurant?**

**Fast food restaurants can be great when you go there on a whim.** Say you and your roommate have just seen a movie at the theater, it's evening, and you don't feel like immediately going home and cooking dinner. Fast food is perfect for moments like that! Your food will be ready in just a few minutes, it will be greasy and salty, and it will taste *delicious*. Getting fast food can be undeniably fun and enjoyable. But at the same time, it's not a perfect experience. The restaurant itself is usually devoid of any style or warmth. The seats and tables are hard plastic. The color scheme is too bright and clashing. Bad pop music plays on the radio. And the food, while tasty, is most likely full of chemicals and preservatives that you wouldn't find in a normal restaurant. That's why getting fast food, while fun, is best done only occasionally.

13

**Which of the following do you think is the best way to get to know a new school? 1. Joining a one-day campus tour 2. Spending a weekend on the campus play field 3. Auditing lectures?**

I think a **one-day campus tour** is the best way to get to know a new school. A campus tour can help you figure out how well a school runs. While a school may look good on paper, you might be in for a shock when you actually step on campus for the first time. Perhaps the freshman dormitories look like they should be condemned, or maybe the campus is even better than you expected. Also, by taking a campus tour, you can know many things about studying on this campus even without auditing the lectures. For example, you can see the actual sizes of a variety of classes, the format in which classes are run, and who is teaching the classes.

14

**If you can have a part time job at a university, what job would you choose: a lab assistant, a campus tour guide, or a library assistant ?**

I would choose to be a **campus tour guide**. I think a guided campus tour is the most needed service for new students. When students first enter the university, they can easily get lost. For

example, they can't find a classroom building or the library or the bus station. Also they are eager to know things like which cafeteria provides the best pizza, or which bookshop sells used books. If I can be a campus tour guide, I think I can give the best answers because I have lived on this campus for a couple of years and know these things like the back of my hand. Furthermore, I am good at communication. I am a good speaker and I'm sure I can explain things patiently and clearly to every student attending the campus tour guide.

15

**If you were to do a project, which of the following would you choose? 1. A recycle program 2. Teaching children about vegetable growing 3. Teaching children about healthy eating**

I think I would like to teach children about **healthy eating**. Recycling and vegetable growing are very useful things to know and both are helpful for the environment, but they're not necessarily urgent. If there are kids who don't know about healthy eating, however, that could start to make them sick very quickly. If they're not getting enough vitamins from fresh fruit and vegetables, they could become tired and sluggish. If they're eating too much sugar and fat, they could become overweight or even develop serious problems like diabetes. Kids need to learn good eating habits from an early age and stick to them! It's a very worthwhile thing to teach them about and I would feel I was doing a lot of good.

16

**Your school has a program that allows students to visit workplaces. What place would you choose to observe and learn about? 1. A science laboratory 2. A business office 3. A Television studio**

I would recommend **a business office**. I think in today's economic climate, most students would finally work in the office so by visiting a real office environment they can know what their future place of work would look like. They can also ask employees some questions like how to adapt yourself quickly to a new working environment, and how to say no to your boss if you think he is wrong or you think you can't finish a task in time. On the other hand, a science lab is only for a few of the most intelligent and a TV studio would only be for those who study media and broadcasting.

## Task2

1

**Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The most important influences that young adults have are from their families.**

**No.** I do not believe that families have the most important influence on young people. It is true that young people are influenced by their parents because they serve as important role models. But the problem is that young people nowadays don't spend much time at home. They spend most of their time either studying at school, or having fun with other young people when school is over. Even during the limited time they are at home, they are often busy with their homework or watching TV, or playing video games. They don't talk much with their parents or other family members. So in my opinion, young people are influenced more by their teachers or their friends than by their families.

2

**Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Having a relaxed or unhurried life is the best way of life for a person.**

I **agree** that having a relaxed or unhurried life is the best way of life. A life that is not too fast means you can work on things more patiently and more carefully. This is important especially in the workplace. If you are always working under stress and rushing against deadlines, you are very likely to make mistakes. Sometimes we need time to take a break to refresh our mind and body, so we can work more effectively. Also, a more relaxed life is also more beneficial to your health. Many young people nowadays begin to suffer from mental and physical illnesses, such as high blood pressure and depression, due to working excessively and stressfully. So for the sake of health, it's important for them to slow down and to unwind a little bit.

3

**Some people like to plan their free time. Others spend their free time without any plan. Which do you prefer? Explain why.**

I always **plan my free time carefully**. I think it's more and more difficult to have any free time nowadays, since every day we are busy with our work, study or family duties. So whenever we get the chance to spend a few days' leisure time, we should cherish such time by making good use of it, which means to plan it in the first place. Take myself as an example. I have just finished a 7 day long holiday, which is an important traditional Chinese holiday during which time you are supposed to visit every one of your close family members. To me it's like a mission impossible because I have a very big family. But with careful planning, I finally managed to visit every one of them by the end of the holiday!

4

**Do you prefer to study in the classroom or outside the classroom. Explain why.**

I think **it depends** on what you are learning. For example, if you are studying chemistry, and you are studying the properties of a particular chemical element, then there's really no need to go outside the classroom. It's better to stay in the classroom, look at the periodic table of elements (元素周期表), listen to the teacher's explanation, and maybe conduct an experiment in the laboratory. However, if you are studying subjects like geography or botany, then going on a field trip away from the classroom might be necessary. During the trip you can observe nature and collect samples. You will be able to associate abstract names in the

textbooks with what you really see in nature.

5

**Some students prefer to go to universities or colleges in their hometown. Others prefer to go to universities or colleges in new cities or towns. Which do you prefer and why? Include details and examples in your explanation.**

**Studying overseas** has a number of advantages. Firstly, it may give students access to knowledge and facilities such as laboratories and libraries which are not available in their home country. Furthermore, by looking abroad students may find a wider range of courses than those offered in their home country, and therefore one which fits more closely to their particular needs. Finally, students learn to be independent and more adaptable to a new environment. These are important qualities for future success. So I would say it is good for students to study in a foreign country.

6

**Some people prefer to live in one place most of their life. Other people prefer to move to different places. Which do you prefer and why? Use specific reasons and examples to support your response.**

I **prefer to move around** a lot instead of settling in one place because first of all I believe most people's growth comes with the changes in their lives. For example, after finishing my junior high school in China, I decided to go to Canada. This gives me an opportunity to be instructed in an entirely different manner. I've become a more independent thinker and learned how to look at things from different perspectives. If I were still studying in China, I quite doubt I would learn all this. Secondly, I think that by moving around, people are able to experience diverse circumstances which give them new experiences and broaden their views, and thus they can get more comprehensive understanding of the world, the society and life itself.

7

**Do you prefer to use e-mails to communicate with your friends and family members or do you prefer to use the telephone?**

When I want to talk with my friends or family, I **prefer to use the phone** for two reasons. First, the telephone lets me hear the actual voices of my loved ones. To hear the tone of love in my parents' voices or the laughter in the voice of my dear friend from college is too wonderful to describe.. No matter what words people try to use in emails, the words alone still can't convey the tone of the speaker. The second reason is that it allows for spontaneity of conversation. Emails tend to be silted and one sided since really they are just half of a conversation. The phone allows for the topic to wander and change as real communication takes place. Though both are useful, for real conversation with friends and family, nothing can be better than and nice, long, catch-up-on-the-news-chat with those we love..

8



**Do you prefer to live in an area that is noisy but close to shops or public transportation, or an area that is quiet but far away from shops and public transportation?**

If I had to choose between living in a quiet area that is far away from shops and public transportation or living in a noisy area that is close to these conveniences, I would definitely **choose living in the quiet area**. First, living in a quieter and more peaceful area is very important to me. After the stress of school or work, it is pleasant to leave the noise and activity behind for a little while. The quietness allows my body, mind, and spirit to relax. Second, living away from shops and public transportation usually means the area is less crowded. I like living where there are fewer people even if it is less convenient. I can always walk or cycle to the places I need to get to.

9

**Do you prefer to live in a residence where there are strict rules (such as rules against making loud noises at night), or do you prefer to live in a residence without strict rules.**

I would prefer to live in a residence area where there are **strict rules**. I think with necessary rules you are living with a sense of security and this is very important. For example, in the apartment building where I currently live, everyone is required to use their ID card to open the gate. This prevents unwanted intruders from coming into the building and everyone feels safe living in this building. Moreover, I think some strict rules are necessary if you want to maintain a clean and comfortable living environment. For example, there should be strict rules against littering and improper disposal of electronic goods.

10

**Some people consider going to the gym a priority in their life, while others go to the gym only when they have time. Which do you think is better and why?**

I think that prioritizing going to the gym is preferable to **only going to the gym when you have time**. Often, people become lazy and don't go to the gym nearly as much as they first intend to. Not only do they get out of shape, but they're throwing money away on barely used gym memberships. It's better to stay strict and make yourself go to the gym on a defined schedule. You'll feel healthier and more content with yourself. If you truly only want to exercise at random times, it's probably better to quit the gym altogether. You can go on runs or do yoga when you have time, and it won't cost you a thing!

11

**Which do you prefer: card game or computer game? Explain why.**

**I prefer card games!** Computer games are fine, but computers have already infiltrated our lives so much. We can work on them, write on them, watch TV on them....It's nice to just take a break and play a game that has nothing to do with computers. Even the feel of the deck of cards in your hands is such a welcome physical change from staring at a screen. And something about cards is so classic! You can sit on your front porch, playing a game of poker as the sun sets in the distance, and really feel like someone could have been doing the exact

same thing a hundred years ago. It's a very cool sensation and makes card games even more fun.

12

**Some students prefer to write their course papers a day or two before the paper is due. Other students prefer to start working on their papers much sooner, spending a little time each day to complete the paper. Which do you prefer? Explain why.**

I prefer doing the **work right away and a little bit every day**. This ensures I can finish the task in time. Writing a course paper requires a lot of research work, like research in the library or conducting interviews or surveys. It cannot be done just in two days. Another reason is that this ensures the best quality. You have to allow the extra time to re-edit and improve on what you have written.

13

**If you were given an empty piece of land, would you rather using it to build a garden or a playground for children?**

If I were given a piece of land, I would **build a garden** over this land. I think firstly, a garden can benefit everyone living in its neighborhood, whereas a playground can only benefit children, kids and their parents. Secondly, and I think it is more important, a garden brings people close to nature. Nowadays many people live and work in the big city. They commute by bus or metro between their office buildings and their apartment buildings. They don't really have the chance to go into the wild and enjoy nature. A garden close to where they live, however big or small, provides people with the space they need to breathe the fresh air, to smell the flowers, and to get relaxed.

14

**Do you agree or disagree with the statement? If you want to be successful in running a business, it is important to have a friendly and outgoing personality.**

**I agree** with this statement. I think that a successful business leader must be friendly and outgoing in personality. This is because as a business leader you have to communicate with a lot of different people, and being friendly and outgoing certainly contributes to effective communication. For example, if you are running a business, you may have a lot of employees working for you. If you can maintain a friendly relationship with them, they will like you better and work for you more happily. Similarly, if you are dealing with other businessmen, being friendly and outgoing may create the impression that you are a nice and straightforward person. The others will think that you must be a reliable partner to do business with.

15

**Do you agree or disagree with the statement? Parents should give more pressure on their children for doing well at school.**

I **don't think that parents should place more pressure** on their children because children already have too much burden at school. They have many subjects to study and endless assignments to do. They face competition from peer students for awards and scholarships. Many of them live far away from school so they have to get up every early in the morning and as a result they often lack sleep and the necessary time for exercise and fun. So I believe that giving them more pressure is only going to make the situation worse. I think on the contrary, parents should help students to reduce stress, by for example, telling them that doing well at school is only one criteria for success.

16

**Which do you think is more important for someone to be successful: taking risks or making safe decisions?**

I think **taking risks** is more important than making safe decisions. Firstly, competition is highly intense in every segment of the commercial market nowadays. This means if you want to achieve success, you have to come up with something new, something creative, something that others have not tried before. And this often means taking risks. Secondly, when managing your personal finance, it is also necessary to take some risks. For example, depositing all your savings in the bank is undoubtedly a safe decision, but the interest rate will not even outrun inflation. A better option is to take some risks by putting some of your money in the investment markets such as stock markets or foreign exchange markets.

17

**Some people speak out in class. Others prefer to listen and quietly observe. Which do you think leads to greater success at school?**

To me, **listening and observing carefully in class is key** to success at school. I think nowadays students are becoming increasingly impatient. They think textbooks are too easy. They think that teachers are teaching too slowly. They think that they know everything! But the fact is that they are over-confident about themselves. Just look at their exam papers! You'll know how many simple mistakes they are making and how much common sense knowledge they are lacking! So I think that students need to be more patient in class, carefully listening to what is said and quietly observing what is shown. Take some time to process and to digest what they learn, and then speak out if they feel that they need to make a comment or to present a different opinion.

18

**Suppose you are to choose between two jobs with equal amount of time and pay. One job requires you to work with other employees in a group and the other requires you to work individually. Which do you prefer?**

I would prefer to **work with others** in a team rather than alone. I think when you are working in a group, you have the sense that others are around you, and that they are there to help you in case you run into any problems you can't handle. This sense of reassurance and security is important, especially when you are a newcomer to a company. Also, by working in a group,

when the group achieves something, you share the happiness and glory, and if the group fails, there are others who can share the blame. By contrast, if you work individually, there is just too much burden and risk. Plus it's not fun at all working all by yourself!

大范围四星级

### Task1

1

**Describe a present you have given to others. Explain why you think it is important.**

I remember when my friend Mike had his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, I gave him something very special as a birthday present. It's a 12-month subscription to National Geographic magazine. With this subscription you not only get 12 issues of paper magazines mailed to your home, but also get unlimited access to the national geographic website. My friend Mike later told me that among all the presents that he received that day, he loved this one the most. With a 12-month subscription, he said, it was like getting a present from me every month. More importantly, it reminded him once every month that he should study English just a little harder, so that he could understand the written articles in the magazine, and not just look at the pictures.

2

**What do you think is ONE of the most important characteristics that a teacher should have?**

I think one of the most important characteristics of a qualified teacher is keen observation. This is because the first step towards successful teaching is to find out where the strength and weakness of each student is, and this requires careful observation of each individual student. For example, when working out a math problem, one student may be careful but slow, while another may be fast but careless. A good teacher should be able to notice the difference and teach them accordingly. Moreover, having keen observation means that when a student has met with a difficulty and needs encouragement, the teacher will pay attention and take action immediately.

3

**Describe an area in your city that you like the most. Explain why you like this area the most.**

In the city that I live in, I love the area called the Creative Park the most. It's actually an area housing more than a dozen stores selling creative products. I love this place mainly for two reasons. First, I like the styles of indoor decoration in many of the stores there. From the outside they look not much different from an ordinary store, but when you get inside, you can

feel the difference in all the little details around you, like the color of the carpet, the shape of the door knob, an exquisitely designed price tag, or an old-fashioned gramophone etc. Another reason is the things you can buy in the Park. These include CDs, videos, paintings, handicrafts, toys, etc. Many of them are limited or customized editions. This makes them unique, more interesting and more valuable.

**4**

**What is your favorite outdoor place to do exercise on a nice day?**

There is a park a few blocks away from my house where I go running quite often. It's pretty simple: just a large field with a track going around it. But the atmosphere of the park is just so quiet and comforting. It's tucked behind this big hundred year-old building and almost seems hidden. On the other side of the park, a tall hill covered in pine trees casts its shadow over you. You feel closed-in and cozy. Many times when I've gone running there, I've seen deer and rabbits eating the grass and casually walking across the track. They seem to enjoy the park just as much as I do! It's such a lovely place. I can't believe more people don't know about it.

**5**

**Describe a time when you tried to do something that you have never done. Explain what you did and why you did it.**

Talking about something I tried to do for the first time. I can't help but think of last summer when I did my first bungee jumping in Macao. I travelled there with my friends and we were visiting the Macau Tower when we came across this big bungee jumping sign. It took me a while to collect enough courage and finally make the decision to have a try because I was not an adventurous person at all. But I thought I should do something that could make me proud of myself, so I gave it a shot. I was connected to a large elastic cord. After making sure everything was OK, I jumped off the platform. I think it was 200 or 300 meters high. The free falling lasted about 20 seconds but for me it was close to forever.

**6**

**Describe a historical event that you're interested in most. Explain why you are interested in it and want to know more about it. Include reasons and examples to support your response.**

I have long been fascinated by the sinking of the Titanic ever since I watched the movie they made about it. I still have many questions like how it was built, how they had called it unsinkable beforehand, how the passengers ranged from some of the wealthiest people in the world to poor third class people in cramped rooms on the lower decks, how they insisted on seating the women and children in the lifeboats before the men ... There are just so many tragic and unbelievable elements that all came together on one horrible night! Everything happened so fast and so long ago, there are still so many factors I wonder about. But every time I learn something new about Titanic's sinking, I feel like I'm uncovering part of the mystery.

7

**Describe a tool or object that you rely on often in your daily life. Explain why it is important to you. Include reasons and examples to support your response.**

Version1

I would be lost without my **coffee cup**! When I was a teenager, coffee wasn't really a necessity for me. Then I went to college and was suddenly falling asleep in class! This was happening nearly every day; it was horrible! I guess the combination of increased homework and having fun in the dorms was making me stay up way too late. Anyway, the solution that I came to was to always, always have coffee with me. Every morning I make strong, black coffee and fill my portable coffee cup to the brim. I take it with me everywhere I go, from my dorm to my classroom to the library. Weixin:laoxikou.

Version2:

Well, the object I'd like to talk about is my **electronic dictionary**. My father gave it to me as my birthday present. It is very smart and can be carried about very easily. It includes several major dictionaries such as the Oxford English Dictionary, the Contemporary Longman Dictionary, the Collins English Dictionary, etc. It's quite extensive and can contain up to 500,000 headwords and definitions. It has a lot of useful features. I can look up the pronunciation of new words. It also includes a lot of sentences so I can learn how to use the word in my daily conversation and in my writing. It is very useful in helping me prepare for my Toefl test.

8

**Choose ONE form of technology in the list and tell why it has great impact on people's lives in your country? Airplane, computer or television. Use specific reasons and examples to support your response.**

I would like to talk about the **computer**, which I think has revolutionized people's lives in my country, in at least two very important areas – education and entertainment. In education, because of computer multimedia technology, students don't have to spend a long time learning abstract theories about a subject; they can see them demonstrated vividly and on a computer screen, which is so much easier to understand. In entertainment, computer games have become a major part of almost anyone's childhood in my country, and have often replaced other recreational activities that used to be very popular such as doing sports, which is a pity. But I would also like to argue that playing computer games moderately is beneficial to children's hand-eye coordination and problem-solving skills.

9

**If a foreign visitor comes to your country, what food will you introduce to him/her? Explain why.**

I would offer to take this foreign tourist to the most popular local restaurant in my city and recommend this wonderful **Chinese cuisine**, which is called "**kung pao chicken**", diced chicken fried with chili and peanuts. Actually this is the most popular Chinese dish; you can find it in every Chinese restaurant, big or small. The 2008 Beijing Olympic Games even made it to the top of the official menu to cater to the myriad tastes of international guest. But I have another

reason to recommend "kung pao chicken", which has something to do with a cooking contest I won when I was in college. I spent days researching and experimenting with methods to improve ways to make the perfect "kung pao chicken" and finally I was able to impress the judges. So to recommend "kung pao chicken" also means opportunity to boast this particular experience in front of the foreign guest and hopefully win his/her praise.

**10**

**Talk about an experience of learning something new. What difficulties do you have to overcome in order to learn it?**

I can still remember how I first learned to **ride a bicycle** when I was only six. At first, I found that I wasn't tall enough, so I had to lower the seat so that I can touch the ground with the tip of my toes while seated. I did it all by myself. The most difficult thing is to learn how to keep balance. In the beginning, I pushed myself along with my feet and got the feel of how the bike leaned and steered. I did this for about 30 to 45 minutes or so. Then I pushed myself along fast and glided with my feet up in the air. After practicing for an hour I was finally able to ride my bike confidently.

**11**

**What do you think is the most important advancement over the past 20 years in your country? Use reasons and specific examples to explain why you think that is important.**

Personally I found the increasing availability of **cell phones** the most important advancement in my country. It makes people's life ever more convenient and colorful. For example, we can now keep in touch with family members especially in the event of an emergency like the other day my grandmother was so forgetful that she left the house key at home and couldn't get in so she used the cell phone that I bought her and called me to get her the key. It is hard to imagine what would happen if she had to wait for a whole day till I got home in the evening. Besides that I can also use the mobile phone to get you from A to B using navigation, a very useful feature for people like me who has a hopeless sense of direction.

**12**

**Describe a skill you have already learned and want to improve. Explain what you would do to improve the skill.**

One skill I wish to improve is how to play the **violin**. I first began learning to play it when I was still a kid. I can play fairly well, but of course there is still room for improvement. I've already come up with several ways to refine my skills. Firstly, I want to put an ad on the web site for someone who wishes to exchange skills. I could teach him or her to speak English. It has become a very popular way of learning things. You can enlarge your circle of friends and best of all, it's completely free. Second, if I succeed in being admitted into one of the U.S. universities, I would apply to join a music group. I think I can find someone who shares the same interest.

13

**Describe a piece of news or a story that you are interested in recently. Explain why you think it was interesting. Include reasons and details in your response.**

Recently I read a news on the internet that I took a quite an interest in. The founder of the famous website WikiLeaks **Julian Assange was arrested on rape charges**. Julian has always been my hero; the website he founded has published lots of classified documents from various governments. The general public has for the first time been able to see what's really happening in the Iraq war and the war in Afghanistan. The website has won a number of awards, including the 2008 Economist magazine New Media Award, which is a very prestigious award. I couldn't believe that he could commit crimes. I think it must be because the governments were pissed off and want to take revenge on him for disclosing sensitive materials that have put them to shame.

14

**Our society is now facing very serious environment problems. Choose one approach that you believe to be useful to save our planet.**

In my opinion, every one of us, including myself, of course has the obligation to contribute to the welfare of our planet earth. In fact, there are simple ways that can make a big difference. The one on the top of my priority list would be to dramatically **improve the energy efficiency of electrical goods**. There are many ways to achieve this. For example, we can change the light used in our home. If every household in China replaced one regular light bulb with one of those new compact fluorescent the pollution reduction would be equivalent to removing one million cars from the road.

【此题4月18日已考，不用再看】15

**Among the following three types of books, which do you like the least? Mystery novel, science fiction, biography.**

16

**Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? University students should learn how to manage their time more efficiently.**

**Agree:** As a university student, I think the skill of time management is extremely important. Like many other students, I often get to the end of the day and feel like I worked hard but actually didn't get anything done. This must be due to the lack of time management skill. I mean, university students nowadays have so many things to do each day, like going to classes, doing sports, socializing, the list goes on, so we must learn how to make a schedule and manage our time efficiently to keep to this schedule. Also, the skill of time management will be useful when we graduate and enter the workplace because an employee will have even more tasks to deal with.

17



**Describe a performer, an actor or a musician, etc. that you think is great. Please give specific reasons why you think he/she is a great performer.**

There are countless world-famous actors or musicians but the one person that I admire the most is **Liu Wei, a Chinese disabled pianist** from Beijing. He won the first series of China's Got Talent at the age of 23 by playing the piano with his toes. Liu Wei lost his arms in his childhood, but he started playing the piano at age 18 to pursue his childhood dream of being a musician. He persisted and taught himself how to play, despite cramps and abrasion, often practicing seven hours a day. I watched his performance on TV the final of China's Got Talent and I was moved to tears.

**18**

**Talk about a recent event or celebration you went to. Do you think that everyone who went there had a good time?**

I recently attended **my cousin's wedding ceremony**. My cousin is an engineer who is now living and working in the U.S. It was really a grand occasion. All the relatives including my 90 year old grandpa were present. I guess there must have been over a hundred people. We had a magnificent dinner at a restaurant. During the dinner we talked, proposed toasts to each other. There were traditional opera performances to watch. I guess everybody was having a good time except my aunt and uncle. The reason is that my cousin is their only son and after the wedding he'd have to go back to the States. Therefore my aunt and uncle won't get to see him very often.

**19**

**What suggestions would you give to your friend who wants to improve his/her scores in class?**

To improve your scores, first of all, be sure to **take notes** during class! No matter how well you're paying attention and *think* you're going to remember what your teacher says, you're not going to remember everything. So write it down, clearly and quickly. And use a pen! Pencil smears after a while and becomes really hard to read. Also, try to study in a place that is free of distractions. If you're in your living room and using your laptop, it can be way too tempting to watch some TV or slip on your earphones and listen to music. All these things do is slow you down when you're trying to read something. Try studying in the library or an empty classroom and see if you're able to focus more.

**20**

**What is your favorite place to study? Give details and examples in your response.**

It seems that most students like to study in the library, especially when there are examinations. **I also like to study in the library**, mostly because of the quiet atmosphere there which allows me to better concentrate on my study. When everyone is reading books quietly, I kind of naturally use more diligence and self-discipline. Elsewhere, I might be wandering around and doing meaningless things. So the diligence of other people in the library also inspires me to

work harder. Besides, there are reference books in the library which provide ready guidance in case there is a difficult problem and when a little bit of research is needed.

21

**Many regions in the world face problems with air pollution. What can be done to decrease the amount of air pollution in these regions? Use details and examples in your response.**

Not that I'm an expert on the subject, but I know that **car exhaust** is one of the major causes of air pollution. Of course cars are necessary a lot of the time, but carpooling or taking the bus when you can certainly must help things! With more people in a single vehicle, there are fewer total vehicles on the road and less exhaust being produced. It seems to be easier to take the bus when you incorporate it into your daily routine, memorizing the times and routes and committing yourself to them. I, for instance, take the city bus to and from my college. And I have friends who ride their bikes to work or to school. If everyone did little things like that, it might not get rid of air pollution, but it would at least help make it better.

22

**A friend of yours wants to make a big purchase but does not have enough money. What would you suggest your friend do to get extra money?**

I think my friend can turn to me for help first. Although I'm not a millionaire I do have a small amount of savings in the bank which I can lend to my friend if he really needs it. **I trust each of my friends** and I'm sure he will pay me back in time. If that amount is not enough, he can also turn to his other friends for help because everyone must have their own circle of friends who are supposed to be helping each other. Alternatively, he can also apply for a loan from the bank. Many banks nowadays offer personal loans to people who have a stable income and a good credit. Of course banks charge a pretty high interest rate so he should be careful and try to repay the loan as soon as possible.

23

**Which challenge in the list do you think is the most difficult for university students? Being far away from families, finding time to relax, making new friends.**

As I am prepared to go to study in a foreign country, I can imagine that **home sickness** must be the biggest difficulty for me to overcome. I think that holds true for most young people of my generation. Most of us are the single child in the family and we are very much attached to our family members which we could normally rely on for help. I guess I may have to interrupt a lot of personal relationships or even break them off to come overseas, so I might feel lonely, unhappy, unmotivated and unable to concentrate on studying. However, I am also a very resilient and optimistic person and I am sure I will pass this difficult stage just fine.

24

**Traffic congestion is becoming worse in many cities. What can the government do to decrease the number of cars and other vehicles? Use details and examples in your response.**

I think the government can do at least two things to reduce the number of vehicles running on the street. First, it can **increase the level of tax** imposed on each newly-purchased vehicle. This will somehow discourage people from purchasing new cars and the number of vehicles on the street will naturally decline. Second, the government can take measures to **improve public transportation**, such as buses and the metro system, so more people will be willing to take public transportation instead of driving. This will also effectively reduce traffic.

**25**

**Your university is planning to allow students to watch TV in their dormitories. What is your opinion? What are the advantages and disadvantages of watching TV in dormitories? Include reasons and examples to support your response.**

I think the university is **right** in allowing students to have TV's in their dorm rooms. The advantages of this is that students can have another easy way to inform and to entertain themselves. I mean with a TV in the dorm, students can watch news programs when they want to get an update on world events, or they can watch a TV drama if they want to relax for a while. But of course watching television can be a negative thing if students spend too much time in front of the screen, not to mention that the noise can be disrupting for those who prefer to have a quiet living or studying environment. But overall, I think with moderation and consideration, students can benefit a lot from having a TV in their dorm.

**26**

**What is one style of clothing that the students in your school tend to wear? Why do you like this style of clothing?**

In my opinion, style of clothing reflects both popularity, and personality. Students in my school tend to wear a '**Preppy Style**'. This style is often associated with young students who are engaged and excited about learning, but who like to show some individuality and status. For example, students sport brand named labels of shirts, sweaters, jackets, and slacks. They also wear a certain type of flat shoe, tennis or sneaker. Western brands such as Aeropostale, Old Navy, and Hollister have popular 'preppy styles'. 'Preppy students', as they are often referred to, like to be seen and known as studious. They always carry their backpacks, and may even wear 'eye glasses' to complete their 'preppy' look. I like this style of clothing because whether students are genuinely 'preppy' or just like to mimic the look, the competitiveness seems healthy. 'The Preppy style' student may aspire to better grades.

**27**

**Describe one way to improve the system of education in your country. Use specific details and examples to support your opinion.**

It is hard to define a perfect solution to the improvement of education system since it's such a

complicated and multifaceted subject. But if I have to, I would like to say that **diversifying the evaluation methods of the admission into the university** will definitely help a lot. That means we should put more attention to students' other performances rather than depend solely on their academic scores. For example, students' performance as well as attendance of those so-called less important subjects such as art, PE and so forth should be taken into account when assessing their qualification. Only if we carry out this principle in school can students take those subjects seriously and could have a chance to get really stretched. How to improve the education system is a long-term problem confronting both parents and the government. It could turn out to be a bigger one if we give an inappropriate response to it.

28

**Which of the following do you think is the most important for maintaining good health? Doing exercises, eating healthy food, or going to bed early?**

Among the three, I think **healthy food** is more important than the others for a person to remain healthy. This is because first, we eat three times a day, and every day. So if we have an unhealthy eating habit, and we do not correct it in time, the bad effects will accumulate until one day we start to develop symptoms that are difficult to reverse. Another reason is that eating healthy food is a goal that is not so difficult to achieve, compared with the other options. Some people may find it difficult to go to bed early because of their work assignment or they may not have the luxury to go to a gym for exercise, but they can easily cut down on the calorie intake of their food simply by switching to a diet with more vegetable and less meat.

29

**What kind of food do you recommend to add to the food menu of the campus cafeteria? Use Examples and details to support your response.**

I recommend the cafeteria expand its menu with more **nutritional foods**. First, students want more choices. For instance, a fresh, healthy salad bar should be available to students. The variety of vegetables on a salad bar gives students choices of their favorite foods. Also, a salad can be eaten as a side dish or a full meal. Salads are a great value, and the cafeteria should include locally grown produce, which is likely to be cleaner, healthier, and cheaper to purchase. Next, the menu should include more choices of fresh fruit. Fresh fruit has natural flavors and sugars, and are an important part of a healthy diet. Many students need special diets, while others dislike the high-calorie fat, and sugar in some cafeteria food. Without a doubt, the addition of salads and fruits would encourage, and help students to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

30

**If you were to choose a place to live, what kind of location would you prefer and why?**  
**1. A place close to school 2. A place close to your family 3. A place close to a transportation hub (airport or bus terminal, etc.)**

If I had to choose a place to live, I would prefer **living close to a university**, because I could walk to school every day without having to take a bus or drive my own car, and I would be able to attend some great entertainment on the campus. First of all, walking is good exercise, and

not driving helps me to avoid traffic, parking, and wasting time. For example, if you keep on walking every day, even for a little while, it will help to keep you in shape, and even lose weight if you need to. Second, I love to look in the newspapers for exciting concerts, lectures, and plays that come to campus and are often free of charge. For example, Taylor Swift is probably coming to a campus near you, since the students love pop stars. That's why you can't beat living near a campus.

**31**

**Talk about one of your family members who has similar traits as you. Describe those traits.**

When I consider a family member with similar traits as I, it's **my beautiful daughter**, because people say that she looks, talks, writes, and acts like me! I agree that as she gets older, her facial features resemble mine. She has lovely "dimples" in her cheeks; I don't. However, we both share glowing smiles. Another trait that she has inherited from me is the sound of our voice. Most people can't even tell our voices apart when we speak on the phone. As a writer, my daughter seems to have the same style and tone as I. She says that she hears from voice when she writes. Finally, no one has to tell me that my daughter and I act in similar ways. She and I are both good speakers, and always say what is on our mind. I am proud that my daughter, my twin, shares so many traits.

**32**

**Talk about the benefits of talking to older family members (grandparents, uncles, aunts, etc.)**

One of my favorite things to do is to be around older members of my family. I like to sit quietly and just listen as they talk to each other. My favorite thing is when they start **telling stories** about the things they used to do when they were young. My Aunt Grace always brings up the time that Uncle John was chased by the rooster when he was a little boy. Then Uncle John tells the story about Aunt Helen's first date. Life was very different when the aunts and uncles were young, and it is interesting to hear how they lived. Apart from being interesting, talking with older family members allows me to learn from their knowledge and wisdom, as they are never reluctant to teach you important lessons about life.

**33**

**Among the following professions, which do you think is the most important to a city? Police officer, building designer or transport worker.**

I think **police officers** are absolutely vital to a city running properly. When you hear of cities that are falling apart, one of the main problems that they have is a lack of a police force. Robberies increase, violent crimes increase. People become afraid to even go downtown or walk down the street after dark because they feel unsafe. Then families start to move away for the sake of their children, and so on. It's a mess. A city, first and foremost, needs to be a place where citizens can feel secure enough to live their normal lives. That means having police officers available when needed, both on patrol and responding to emergency phone calls.

Well-designed buildings and public transportation are just secondary compared to that.

34

**Describe a person in your family whose personality or behavior is very different from yours.**

**My Aunt Vivian is crazy about jazz music.** She's always going to jazz shows and concerts around the city. Whenever I visit her house, there are trumpets blaring from the speakers of her stereo. It's funny because nobody else in our family cares much for jazz. Not me, not my parents, not even Aunt Vivian's husband. It just sounds like noise to us, honestly. But we try to learn when she talks about it! She's such an animated person, too. She'll talk so fast, explaining what the different instruments are doing, that I can barely understand her sometimes. I'm much more relaxed and calm than she is! But I admire her knowledge and her dedication to jazz. She could probably teach a class on it if she wanted.

35

**An environmental group is planning to organize an activity to help protect the environment. What activity do you suggest and why?**

I think the best activities are those that are educational and easily accessible. To organize a community **clean-up** day might be a good idea, because the whole community can participate in this activity, without the need to have any specialized knowledge. On a single day a large number of people, not only adults but also children, gather and work together for the common interest of their own community. They can clean up the streets, dump the trash, and most importantly, learn useful knowledge about environmental protection during the process, like the correct ways of handling toxic wastes.

36

**Which of the following do your friends like you about the most? Cheerfulness, kindness, intelligence**

I think my friends probably appreciate my **kindness** the most. I always make an effort to be pleasant with them. When they tell me about their day, I truly listen. If they have a problem, I support them. And at holidays and birthdays, I always give thoughtful gifts that I know my friends will like. I don't understand people who are super competitive with their friends or try to make their friends feel bad about themselves, hinting that they aren't pretty enough or smart enough. Who needs that? Who needs people in their life making them unhappy? The whole idea is that a friend is a person who you *like*. You enjoy their company. Being kind to them is extremely important.

37

**What are the most important qualities that a successful leader should have?**

I think that a successful leader needs to always, first and foremost, **truly care for the people he or she is leading**. Some politicians get wrapped up in issues and scandals that may be

exciting for journalists to cover, but actually affect a very small amount of the population. That sort of disconnect isn't very helpful. The best leaders are the ones who have a keen eye on the real needs of the people. There are leaders who say "You know what? Our school systems are not providing a well-rounded enough education to our children" or "Unemployed and struggling people need easy access to free food." These are issues that many people can connect with. It makes a very personal, positive difference in their life. And the good leaders who attach themselves to such issues rarely gain anything from it. They're not being selfish or power-hungry. They just honestly want to help.

**38**

**Which of the following extracurricular activities would you recommend children to take? Plying sports, playing music, or visiting art galleries? Explain why**

I would recommend that children learn to **play an instrument**. The whole process of learning to read music and play the corresponding notes is wonderful for the minds of young kids. They're memorizing things, they're improving their rhythm...They're just using their brains in a way that is pretty unique and beneficial. And once they learn to play entire songs, their confidence just shines! This is especially true if they play their instrument at a school concert or something similar. When they see their parents and the rest of the audience clapping for them, they are so proud. It's always good to accumulate talents and skills, and knowing how to play an instrument is one that kids will always appreciate they have.

**39**

**Which of the following makes you the happiest? 1. Spending time with friends and family 2. Studying by yourself 3. Exercising**

**I'm most happy when I'm with my family and friends.** There is just nothing like laughing and sharing and enjoying your time with people that you love! That close human interaction is priceless. Now, don't get me wrong, I appreciate my alone time. I can be a little hermit, shut away in my bedroom. Nice breaks all to myself, where I read or write, are great. But soon enough I start to yearn to hang out with a friend or spend the afternoon with a family member. My relationships ground me. When I'm content with them, I feel like I can face anything in the world. And if I'm feeling sad, giggling over silly movies with a friend or relative is the best cure I know of.

**40**

**Your friend studies in a business school now, but he likes playing musical instrument. Would suggestion would you give to your friend? To keep studying business, or to learn to play music?**

**I would tell my friend to keep studying business,** but still take music lessons in his spare time. He already did all the work to get into business school, so he shouldn't just abandon it partway through. That would be such a waste of time and money! Also, he's never going to regret having a business degree. But later on, he might regret it very much if he *doesn't* follow through on getting the degree. Even if he doesn't go into business, any higher education is

helpful as you look for jobs and start your career. In his spare time, too, he can absolutely continue to practice his musical instrument! Maybe he could join a band after graduation and try to be a professional musician. Maybe it will work, maybe it won't. But he'll still have his business degree to fall back on, so he really can't lose either way.

41

**If you were to study a new form of art, which would you choose? Wood sculpture, portrait painting, or photography?**

I would like to study **wood sculpture**, I think. For one thing, you hear about it way less than you do portraits or photography. There's probably a whole wood sculpting culture that I know nothing about! What types of woods are nice to carve from, and for what reasons? Which ones are softer or harder? What wood is from local trees and what wood is foreign? I have no clue about any of these things and honestly, it sounds quite interesting. Also, if my studies included me trying to create some art myself, I think wood sculpture would be the choice with the most creativity involved. With both portrait painting and photography, you are capturing something pre-existing. You paint someone sitting for you or you take a photo of something in front of you. But with wood sculpture, what you end up carving comes solely from your imagination. That's more appealing to me.

42

**Which is the most challenging place to work? Museum, hospital, business office.**

I think a **hospital** must be the most challenging place to work. Even though doctors and nurses are completely trained and competent, it doesn't change the fact that there are lives at stake every single day! What unbelievable pressure! Things can go wrong so quickly and everyone not only needs to know the correct procedure to carry out or medicine to give, but they need to do it *fast*. Then there is the whole personal aspect of calming down relatives of patients, breaking bad news, giving diagnoses, and so on. Even the receptionists must encounter some intense situations at least once a week. I imagine emotions are running high pretty much constantly. It takes a definite inner strength to work in a hospital!

43

**Which of the following volunteer work would you choose and why? 1. Working as a home tutor 2. Helping adults 3. Helping old people**

I would choose **helping adults as a volunteer position**. Sometimes people are so close to being stable in their life, and all they need is just a little help and kindness. I would love to assist with something like that. Some adults, for instance, are unable to read at a good enough level to get a job. Teaching adult reading lessons would make a world of difference to people like them. Other adults have maybe been laid off or gone through some other difficult time and are now homeless. Volunteering at a soup kitchen would help assure that these homeless people get a nice, hot meal and are served with a smile. Children are often focused on with charity work and, although that's an honorable thing, I don't think people should immediately become excluded from help when they become adults. That good spirit toward each other



needs to continue on.

44

**Which of the following activities do you prefer to do with friends? Taking a walk, going to a movie, traveling to another city.**

I would choose to **travel to another city** with my friends if I could. The first reason is that it is more fun. When you travel to a different place, often you have to spend a long time on the way. For example, you may have to take a long train ride. Having someone as a travel companion whom you can talk to during this long ride makes the travel experience less boring and much more fun. Another reason is that when you travel with a few companions instead of by yourself, you can cut your travel expenses significantly, because you can share the cost of hotel rooms, meals, taxi fares and so on.

45

**Your friend wants to have a more healthy eating habit. What suggestions would you give to this friend?**

I would suggest the following to my friend. First, switch to a more **sugar-free diet** because a high-sugar diet boosts your odds of tooth decay, heart diseases, not to mention weight gain. So I would ask my friend to be careful whenever he is doing food shopping. He should read the labels to see the sugar content, and he should avoid buying sweet things like chocolate or candy bars. Second, I would strongly advise that my friend **never skip breakfast**. I know many young people don't have time for breakfast because they get up too late. This is a very dangerous habit because over time it does damage to your stomach and may even cause diabetes.

46

**What quality do you think is the most important for a university student? Self-motivation, hard-working, or intelligence?**

I think that the most important quality for a university student is **self-motivation**. This is because students who are self-motivated can always find the strength and confidence to complete a task, even when this task is challenging, and they do so without giving up or needing others to encourage them. In the university there are so many challenging tasks, like coping with exams and meeting deadlines for papers. Those who are self-motivated do not need other people to tell them what to do or when to do it. They just do what needs to be done, in due time and with good quality. With self-motivation you are naturally hard-working, out of your own will rather than being forced by others. Intelligence is good too, but it doesn't always help.

## Task2

## **Do you always make friends with people who have different interests from you? Why?**

**Yes**, I like to make friends with people who have different interests from mine. When you have a large circle of friends with different interests, your own life becomes more varied and interesting. For example, one day you can hang out with a group of sports fans playing basketball. Another day you can attend a poetry reading activity with a bunch of literature enthusiasts. It seems every day you are doing something new, and this is fun. Another reason is that sometimes you have to try different things before you can discover your true interest or real talent in something. And then you can further develop this interest into a skill, which may benefit your whole life.

**2**

## **What will you do when you need to find an answer to a question: to ask a teacher, to search the Internet, or to read a book?**

When I need to find an answer to a question, **I prefer to search the Internet**. I think this is the fastest and the most reliable way to get an answer. First, because I carry a smartphone with me every day, I can get access to the Internet almost any time I want. To me, getting an answer is as simple as putting in a key word in the search box. Often you'll find that there are already many people asking the same questions, and the answers to these questions are often ranked in an order of relevance or readers' ratings, which make them much more trustworthy. By contrast, a teacher is not always around when you need to ask them a question. And as to the book, well, you have to be very lucky to find the exact piece of information from hundreds of pages. It's just too time-consuming.

**3**

## **Some people like to have a break or get a job during summer vacation. Others think it is better to take a class. Which do you prefer and why? Weixin:laoxikou.**

I try to **take on a part-time job during my summer vacations**, if I can. Sometimes it will only be for one day a week. It's just always helpful to get the work experience and keep myself on some sort of productive schedule. I'm much less likely to take a class during the summer. I'm often so exhausted from all the homework and tests and papers from the school year that I truly need to get away from it for a while. I need to recharge. That way, I can start the new school year with a good attitude, not feeling like I'm going to crash and burn immediately. So my summers are an easy blend of relaxing and working a simple job. I find that it helps make the rest of the year more productive and fulfilling.

**4**

## **Some people prefer to do one job or project at one time. Other people prefer to do several jobs or projects at the same time. Which do you prefer and why?**

**I think it's better to focus on doing one thing at a time**, rather than handling multiple tasks at the same time. The human brain is not a computer after all; it really can't think of that many things in parallel. If you are hungry and thinking about donuts, then you probably will not be able

to focus on solving a math problem. So if you dedicate all your thoughts to only one task, you will get it done more quickly and accurately, whereas if you split your time and effort between different tasks, you run the risk of not completing any one of them with good quality. This is why at the end of each term I would cancel another activities and focus on preparing for the exams only.

5

**Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? What a person wears can show his or her personality.**

**I would agree**, for the most part, but only in a very general sense. For instance, if someone is dressed very sharply, in a nice suit, I would think them to be professional and on-the-ball. I don't know any details about their personality, but at least I know they were thoughtful enough and had enough foresight to dress very nicely that day. Meanwhile, if someone is wearing sweatpants and a raggedy old t-shirt with stains all over it, I might think they were sloppy and careless. Once again, they could be the nicest person in the world or a complete jerk; I have no idea about who they truly are! But their fashion choices can give me an immediate read on them, whether it is entirely accurate or not.

6

**Some people prefer to solve a challenge all by themselves. Others prefer to depend on other people's help. Which do you prefer and why? Include details and examples in your explanation.**

Answer1 (giving reasons): Whenever I face a challenge, I would boldly confront this challenge and try to overcome it as best as I could, **by myself**. I think being able to solve a difficult problem without the help of other proves that you are an independent and competent person, which will win you respect and trust from people around you. Also, you can feel a much greater sense of fulfillment and excitement after successfully dealing with a challenge all by yourself than with others' help. Finally, in many cases there is no one to turn to when you need help because either people are unwilling to help or they are not competent enough to do so.

Answer2 (giving detailed example): **I usually prefer to solve challenges by myself**. I ask friends for advice some times, but ultimately nobody knows my situation as well as I do. Last year, for instance, I thought my biology professor was grading our tests way too harshly. My roommate was absolutely sure that I needed to confront him and that he was an unqualified teacher. But I held back, because I interacted with the man every day and could tell he was really nice. So instead I asked his teaching assistant what we could expect for the rest of the semester. She assured me that everything would get much easier. That made me feel better and I was glad that everything would get much easier. That made me feel better and I was glad that listened to my intuition, because I knew the situation better than my roommate did.

7

**Some people believe that it is better for small children to grow up in a small town. Others, however, believe that it's better for them to grow up in a big city. Which do you**

**think is better?**

In my opinion, **it's better for a child to grow up in a big city.** I think first of all, in the city a child can receive better education because in most countries, the best educational resources and facilities such as teachers, libraries, and laboratories are always found in big cities rather than in small towns. Another important advantage is that by living in a big city, children are more connected to the outside world. In a city like Shanghai, children can go to museums, theaters or visit exhibitions every day to see the latest shows on foreign arts and culture, whereas in a small town, you can hardly get the opportunity to see these things.

**8**

**Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Advertisements have too much influence on what people buy.**

**I think advertisements do have a huge impact on the purchasing behaviour of consumers.**

First of all, through advertising, advertisers obtain the attention of consumers whereas without ads, people might never be aware of the existence of a particular product. What's more, one would never go for a product which he hasn't heard about or which is less popular and advertising leads to popularity. Secondly, advertisements persuade people to buy products, even if they might have no use for it. For example, the other day, I went to a supermarket and my eyes were immediately drawn to an ad for a nice pillow at discounted price, I already had five pillows; however, without second thought, I bought it and when I got home I began regretting having bought it.

**9**

**Some students prefer to take an essay question where they must write an essay to a question. Other students prefer to take a test with objective questions. Which type of exam question do you prefer? Give reasons and examples in your explanation.**

**I prefer to take a test with objective questions** such as multiple-choice questions (MCQs).

First of all, if I take an essay question, the teacher may penalize me for my poor writing and presentation, if there are only MCQs, all I need to do is to write the letters ABCD. Secondly, when I am incapable of answering or have no time to answer a particular MCQ, I can simply select a random answer and still have a chance of receiving a mark for it. But with essay question, this technique will not work.

**10**

**Are you willing to carefully choose the gift which your friends like or choose whatever you like?**

**I'd rather find out what the person is interested in and present the gift accordingly.** For one thing, I think that when it comes to gift-giving, it really is the thought that counts. A gift that is to his or her liking demonstrates that I have given some thought to the person and his or her interests. Second, I might actually offend a friend by giving him or her the gift he or she does not like. This is especially true when it comes to foreign friends. For example, I won't give a

book that contains ox-slaying content book to a friend from India because an ox is considered a sacred animal in Indian culture.

11

**Do you like to travel alone or travel with your family members? Explain why.**

**I like to travel alone.** I'm a pretty independent person. Although I don't mind doing things with friends or family, I don't like to be tied to someone else's schedule all the time. If I travelled with my parents, for example, I would be dragged out of bed at 6 o'clock in the morning and spend most of the day walking, sleepy and exhausted. What's more, the more people you travel with, the more tastes and interests you have to bear with. Like if I travelled with my sister, I would be wandering in jewelry stores or souvenir shops wherever I travel, which gets me bored. So I would rather travel alone, even if it means a lonely or a more costly trip.

12 【4月12日已中，不用再看】

**Some college students like to spend their free time studying another course or doing schoolwork. Others like to join a club and enjoy club activities. Which do you think is better and why?**

13

**Do you like to prepare for something in the beginning or wait just before the due date?**

**I like to prepare for something way beforehand** instead of putting thing off till the last minute because you can have more time carrying out careful and extensive research. For example, I usually have to devote weeks to gathering research for a term paper, reviewing many contradictory opinions before I can perform my own analysis and offer my own perspective on the subject. Another reason is that early preparation in the beginning can help me see ahead of time the weaknesses make provisions to remedy those weaknesses. For example, after finish my paper I can have time to proofread it and make some changes so that it can turn in a paper that is satisfactory.

14

**Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Sixteen-year-old people are not mature enough to drive.**

**In my opinion sixteen-year-olds are way too young to drive without supervision.** After all, they are still high school students. They tend to be reckless, always looking for fun and excitement. That might lead to accidents. Also, I recently read a news report that suggested that the teen brain — the part that weighs risks, makes judgments and controls impulsive behavior is not developed enough. Therefore, they are generally not ready to face the lifethreatening risks that drivers can encounter behind the wheel.

15

**Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Students nowadays work harder in their study than students in the past.**

**I definitely agree** with the idea that students nowadays work harder; it is especially the case in China where there is an ever increasing population. Here in China, Parents are eager to make their only child a versatile genius capable of multiple skills such as playing pianos, calligraphy dancing and so on; so students have to work like crazy to meet their parents high expectations for them. It is also due to the gloomy economic prospect for the whole world. It is not uncommon to find a vacancy with a hundred graduates competing for. Therefore, each student has to work harder to distinguish themselves from the rest.

16

**Some people prefer to have a very tight schedule, while others prefer to have more free time in their schedule. Which one do you prefer and why?**

Personally, I like to **have a tight schedule** when I was at work because in today's competitive world, efficiency is what all private enterprises aim for. If I don't keep myself busy I am not likely to get a promotion and a pay rise. I could even get fired. But on weekends or during holidays, I tend to have a more relaxed life, because besides work, there are a lot of other things that are worthwhile for me, like my family. I need to spend some quality time with them and get my mind relaxed so that I would get back to my busy work relaxed and refreshed.

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17

**Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? In order to be successful, a person should study in the university.**

I think in this increasingly competitive world, **a college education is a must for a person to succeed.** One important answer to this question is more opportunity. As opposed to generations of the past, high school graduates today are unable to obtain the number of high-paying jobs that were once available. The Chinese economy has been transformed from a manufacturing-based economy to an economy based on knowledge, and the importance of a college education today can be compared to that of a high school education forty years ago. It serves as the gateway to better options and more opportunity. There are additional reasons as to why it is important to go to college. When students experience a post-secondary education, they have the opportunity to read books and listen to the lectures of top experts in their fields. This stimulation encourages students to think, ask questions, and explore new ideas, which allows for additional growth and development and provides college graduates with an edge in the job market over those who have not experienced a higher education.

18

**Some people think students should study in the classroom while others believe they should visit the museum or the zoo. Which do you prefer and why?**

Well, personally, I think both the classroom and outside facilities such as museums or zoos are OK. **I mean it all depends on which subject you study.** For example, if you are studying theoretical subjects such as mathematics or languages, I think the best location would be in the classroom. A qualified teacher, a whiteboard and a pointer would be sufficient. However, if you are studying subjects such as botany or zoology, it's better to visit museums or zoos, because you can view or even touch the animals and plants there, so you have a more direct understanding of them.

19

**Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The success of a school largely depends on the resources it has such as textbooks and journals.**

Nowadays, schools are trying every means to achieve success in fierce competition. Resources a school possesses play an important role in accelerating this process. For instance, textbooks with updated information refresh students in academic study. Those journals dealing with current trends and demands really broaden students' horizons. However, there are other decisive factors besides textbooks and journals. **In my opinion, teacher is actually the key to success.** When most people now choose, they will weigh and consider the faculties of a school as a crucial aspect. Star teachers are increasingly appealing to students than mere facilities. This can be explained by an old saying that the best way to learn is to learn from the best. Only when a school is staffed with well-known teachers can it make full use of all resources. For example, teachers with appropriate teaching methods can support students to implement self-exploration. In this way, students with high quality represent the success of a school.

20

**What kind of job will you choose? A job through which you can get a lot of money or a job through which you can get great personal satisfaction**

I will definitely choose the second one-a **job through which I can obtain great personal satisfaction.** I have two reasons for this choice. To begin with, a job takes up at least eight hours per day, which is one third of our lives in total. If I am assigned to boring tasks or things I don't like to do, I feel unhappy all day and that is the last thing I want. Moreover, money plays only a minor role in my life, compared with personal satisfaction and leisure. So basically I will try my best to find my "labor of love", because once I do so, my job will become my leisure and I feel happy and contented all day long. Weixin:laoxikou

21

**Some people prefer to wash dishes by a dish washer. Others prefer to wash dishes by hands. Which do you prefer and why?**

Long before automatic dishwashers were invented, families washed dishes the old-fashioned way, using water, soap, towels, and their hands. My family traditionally hand washed dishes after eating their meals. Dishwashing was a family responsibility, and everyone, including

children who reached a certain age, was expected to learn the proper way to wash dishes. For example, I can remember having to re-do dishwashing because I did not get them clean enough the first time. After that, I learned to wash more carefully. **I prefer hand washing dishes to the dishwasher**, because sometimes there are not enough dishes to cycle through the dishwasher. Also, sometimes, it's necessary to pre-wash or soak some dishes, pots, and pans, because the dishwasher does not clean them as well as hand washing. Finally, washing dishes by hand can be therapeutic, and can be a pleasure to do after one's family has enjoyed a great meal.

22

**Some people like to reading paper books while other like to listen to audio books. Which do you prefer and why?**

It's reasonable for people to choose audio books over printed ones. The attractions consist of three points: convenience, taking up less space and saving time. But in my opinion, **traditional reading is better at least for three reasons**. First, paper reading allows you to read at your own pace. You can even have a second go if you didn't get the meaning. Second, it's possible and convenient for readers to make references, take notes or underline beautiful sentences in a book. Last but not least, books are what an author's thoughts are all about. You should treasure them up and digest the essence whenever you want to. In my house, there are three shelves fully stored with all my cherished books such as the four great classics of Chinese literature, The Analects of Confucius and so forth. I have read them time and time again in my spare time. It is the very advantage that audio books can never match.

23

**Some people like to buy new and expensive books while others prefer to buy old and cheap ones. Which would you prefer?**

**I prefer old, cheap books over new, expensive ones** for two reasons. First, I save money, because buyers of a book's first publication usually pay more, because they can be the first to claim they have a copy of the book. Additional advertising, marketing, and publishing costs are included in the price of the first books printed. However, I can save money by waiting a few weeks until the book is available to check out from my public library, or I can borrow it from someone else that has already purchased and read it. Also, I save money if I find the book at a used book store, garage sale, flea market, or EBay. Second, if I wait to purchase a book at a lower cost, I can buy extra ones. In the end, I prefer worn, readable books even if previous hands have handled it.

24

**Should people be encouraged to visit science and art museums?**

In my opinion, people **should definitely be encouraged to visit both science and art museums**, primarily for the two following reasons. Firstly, many people these days waste their free time playing computer games and watching TV, which isn't productive for them or anyone else. Going to museums instead would make their minds more active and help them learn more



about the world than they can see from their living rooms. It might even give them enthusiasm to be involved in other activities. Secondly, visiting museums sparks young people's interest in everything from sculpture to physics. Visiting interactive museums and seeing remarkable exhibitions are the first steps to recruiting the artists and scientists of the future, so that my country will be able to reach great heights in years to come. That's why everyone, but particularly young people, should be encouraged to visit science and art museums as much as possible.

25

**Some people think the best way to study is to attend a lecture. Others say that it's better to read by yourself. Which way do you prefer and why?**

From my experience, I believe that the best way to study is **silent reading**, because when I read alone, I am able to focus, question, and interact with the text. Lectures can be engaging or distracting, depending on the teacher and the classroom. So, I prefer reading by myself, because I learn and remember more. For example, sometimes I need to read something more than once in order to focus. Unless you tape a lecture, or can take really good notes quickly, you may not be able to keep up with a lecturer. Studying alone, I am not distracted by people talking and getting up and moving around. I control the distractions. I also like to silently question why the author said or didn't say something. It's kind of like having my own private conversation with the author. In the end, I remember more of what I read by myself.

26

**Between the following two places, where would you choose to live? 1. Big and new place but far from your workplace and/or university 2. small and old place but near your workplace and/or university**

I would choose to **live near a small, old place near a university for these reasons**. As a student attending a local university, I rely on the convenience of its location to housing, shopping and entertainment. Since I don't own a car, I depend on public transportation to get to school, work, shopping centers, and to entertainment. A small, old place can be affordable, clean, and safe. I prefer the closeness of living near my neighbors, and for everything that I depend on to survive from day to day. I also save money which I can use to pay for my tuition and books. Living in a small, old place has more to offer than its size, and each day brings a new experience.

27

**When things at home such as furniture or electrical appliances are broken, some people prefer to have them repaired in a shop, while others prefer to fix them at home. Which do you prefer and why?**

When items at my home break, I prefer to **fix them** myself if I am able. I prefer repairing the item myself for two reasons. The first reason is simply money. It is very expensive to have a repairman come to my home or send an item to the repair shop. The repairman charges a fee to come, and then he charges an hourly fee to do the repair. The cost will add up fast! The positive reason for doing the repairs myself is the good feelings that come when I am able to

learn something new and be self-sufficient. It makes me feel proud that I have been able to take care of a problem for myself by myself. From time to time there will be repairs that I cannot fix, but when I can, I like to take care of problems myself.

28

**Nowadays many people find their social network on the Internet. Do you think it is a positive trend?**

Yes, I think **this is a positive trend** for the most part. Online dating, for instance, can be very useful. Often, it's difficult to know whether people you randomly meet in person are single, in a relationship, or even interested in a relationship. Trying to figure it out can be awkward at times. But dating websites lead you to a large amount of people who are very clear about what they are looking for as far as relationships. It simplifies the process. Also online, you can make friends who share your interests and passions by going to websites about those specific topics. Someone who is shy and withdrawn might find it easier to initially talk to new people if it is done over the computer. Eventually such interactions can happen in person, but meeting online can make it start easily and pleasantly.

29

**Some schools require students to bring their own computers to the classroom. Do you agree or disagree with the policy?**

**I disagree with this policy.** What about the students who don't have very much money and can't afford their own laptops? Or have very old computers that overheat or have other technical issues? This could be a very uncomfortable situation for them. Also, when students have computers right in front of them, it is too easy for them to get distracted from the classroom activities. They could start messaging with friends or playing games...It just leads to trouble! Good, old-fashioned notebooks work just as well for taking notes. If the students need to complete an activity on the computer, the class can just meet in a computer lab on campus. Most schools have at least one computer lab, if not several.

30

**When you give gifts to others, do you prefer gifts that are fun or gifts that can be used?**

If I am to give my friend a gift, I would choose **something that my friend can use** over something that is simply fun but is not practical. This is because I want my friend to keep this gift, so if this gift can be used daily, like a coffee mug or a wallet or even a pillow, my friend will probably keep this gift with him, which will remind him of our friendship. On the other hand, if the gift is fun but without any practical use like a fancy toy, probably my friend will enjoy playing with it for a while but soon he will stash it in the bottom of the drawer and never take it out again.

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31

**If you were to choose a class to study for fun, which one would you choose? An art class or a science class?**

I would **choose an art class!** I love art in all forms, from paintings to music to sculptures. But I don't know how to create any of it! So I would love to learn a few basics. Even just knowing what types of paint to use or how to properly draw shadows would be really useful. It's all new to me. I also think it would be kind of relaxing to just sit in an art class and paint for a couple hours. I don't have an activity like that currently, where I can zone out and be creative in a nice, quiet space. It sounds great. Trying to make my own art would probably make me appreciate famous works of art more, as well. I won't just think a painting is pretty. I'll recognize how much work the artist put into it and how difficult the techniques are. It would be a rich learning experience!

32

**Do you agree or disagree? People should always tell the truth.**

**I suppose I disagree.** Honesty, of course, is very important in life. However, I don't think it is wise or realistic for people to tell the truth 100% of the time. Little white lies, for instance, are sometimes necessary. A husband telling his wife who is sick in bed with the flu that she looks pretty (even though she doesn't) is an example of this. Or telling your sister that you like her new house that she bought, even if you think it is freezing and in a bad neighborhood. To spare your sister's feelings, you lie a little. Maybe eventually you'll bring up questions of safety in the neighborhood, but not immediately. There is a time and a place for everything. And sometimes, when you're waiting for the right time to tell the truth, a slight lie is okay.

33

**Which do you prefer? A job with a high salary but a lot of business trips, or a job with a low salary but no business trips.**

I would **prefer a job with a high salary and lots of business trips!** Some people might find business trips to be an annoyance, but they actually sound fun to me. I love plane rides and hotels and traveling to new places. What a great way to see other parts of the world! I think that would be preferable to just staying in the same office every single work day. There would always be a new, exciting trip just around the corner. And to not only get paid to travel, but to receive a high salary for it? That's a dream come true! Also, if somehow the business trips do get old after a while or I feel like I'm not home enough, I could always switch jobs. With all the money I'd made and saved from the high salary, I'd still be pretty satisfied.

34

**Do you prefer to have classes in the morning or in the afternoon? Explain why.**

I prefer **afternoon classes by far!** For one thing, I'm always completely exhausted during morning classes. It is often, literally, a struggle to keep my eyes open. I've even fallen asleep in class a handful of times! Not only do I get embarrassed, but I miss out on important information from the lecture as I snooze away. It's just bad. To me, afternoon classes are much better. I'm able to sleep-in a little and arrive at the classroom refreshed and ready to learn. Also, when I'm up at night working on homework, it's really nice to know that a paper isn't due until noon or my

test isn't until 2:00 pm. It seems like I still have a lot of time, so I don't get nervous or overwhelmed. When the class starts at 8:00 am, it's a completely different story!

35

**Some people choose to go to a school which is close to home so they can keep their old friends. However, other people like to study far away from home so they can make new friends. Which do you prefer and why?**

I think staying **close to home** for college is a good idea. The transition from high school is drastic enough; it's nice to have your old friends close by still. That way you can still see them on the weekends, catch up on what everyone is doing, and maintain that closeness. I do think, however, that even if someone stays close to home for school, they should not continue to live with their parents. Instead, they should either live in the dorms or rent an apartment with other students. Then, they can both have the comforts of being near home and branch out in independence and adulthood. They will still meet new friends, in addition to staying close to the old ones.

36

**Do you prefer to participate in activities alone, or with a team or group?**

Usually I prefer to participate in activities **with a team or group**. If the activity is a class project, for instance, it's nice to have a flurry of different opinions. Everyone in the group will have focused on slightly different things from the class and will add their unique voice to the project. That makes the end result more dynamic than if I had just worked on it myself. Activities outside of the classroom are also often more fun in a group. Going to a park, for example, becomes something of a little adventure when there are several people involved. Someone will unexpectedly begin to climb a tree like a monkey or throw pinecones at everyone else...The randomness certainly increases and makes everything more exciting.

37

**Which do you prefer? Taking a course taught by a teacher, or study by yourself?**

**I much prefer taking a course taught by a teacher!** I need that structure of going to class at a certain time and on certain days. I need someone giving me specific chapters to read for homework. I just don't have the discipline to do that myself. Laziness would set in, I'm sure, and I wouldn't study nearly as much as I should. Also, a teacher can answer any questions I have about a subject. If left to my own devices, I could have a question about something and not be able to find a decent answer anywhere. Along that line of thinking, I could also misunderstand something at some point and have no one there to correct me. I wouldn't even realize my knowledge was wrong! So, I might not even learn that much of substance, really. I prefer to have a teacher's guidance. Weixin:laoxikou.

38

**If you have time, would you choose to learn to play a new musical instrument or learn**

**to play a new sport?**

**I think I would learn to play a new sport.** In fact, I've always wanted to learn how to play volleyball. I know the very basics, I guess, of hitting the ball over the net. But I have memories of being little and trying to play volleyball with my friends and not really understanding how to properly do anything. I couldn't hit the ball hard enough, I didn't know how to position my hands...I don't think I scored a single point! And that was the last time I tried to play. So I think it would be fun if I could learn, finally, all the precise moves and maneuvers to play a decent game of volleyball! Maybe I could even challenge my friends to a match.

**39**

**Do you agree or disagree with the statement? Teachers should make their lessons fun.**

**I definitely think that teachers should make their lessons fun.** The main reason is that if lessons are fun, students will want to learn. When students enjoy their lessons, they are more likely to come to class, talk to their classmates, and do their homework. On the other hand, if lessons are boring, students will probably be absent more often, not participate in class activities, and not do their homework. From my experience as a student, I know this is true. I never used to like studying world history because I always had boring teachers. But a few years ago I had a professor who always delivered creative and fun lessons. I loved studying with him, and so did my classmates, and by the end of the semester we had learned so much.

**40**

**Do you prefer to do a job which requires you to travel a lot, or a job that allows you to work at a fixed location?**

I would defiantly **choose a job that is in a fixed location.** I hate travelling for work, mainly because it disrupts your daily routine. When you take a business trip, for example, you may have to get up very early in order to catch a flight, or get home very late because of a train delay. You would miss your favorite TV show, a weekend family dinner, or a training session at the gym. Another reason is simply time. When you travel to a distant city, you spend a lot of time on the way, and it can be extremely boring and exhausting. A trip from Shanghai to New York takes about 14 hours, and there's nothing you can do except reading, sleeping and eating.

**41**

**Do you prefer a job which requires you to communication with others, or do you prefer a job where you work alone**

**I would prefer a job where I am allowed to communicate with others.** I can't imagine doing a job with no one to talk to. It would make me feel like a robot. Communication is very important in a job setting for two reasons. First, when you meet some difficulty at work, you can communicate with your coworkers and you can find a solution together. It's much more efficient than working on the problem again and again all by yourself. Second, having someone to talk to also eases the stress you may encounter at work. Suppose you feel stressed at work. Instead

of suppressing this feeling, you can talk with your friend for a while, maybe have a cup of coffee, and you'll feel much better afterwards.

42

**When going on a vacation, some people prefer to stay in a hotel, while others prefer to camp outside in a tent. Which do you prefer?**

I am not an adventurous type of person, so **I would choose to stay in a hotel**, like most people do when they travel. I think staying in a hotel is first of all safe. You are protected in the room without having to worry about your belongings being stolen or yourself being attacked by wild animals. Secondly, it's more comfortable and convenient in a hotel room, because you have all kinds of facilities that you may need, for example, TV, the internet, a mini bar, hot bath, etc., whereas if you stay outside in a tent, you have to face the challenges of bad weather or mosquitoes.

43

**Do you agree or disagree with the statement: artists and musicians are important to our society.**

I definitely **agree** with the argument that artists and musicians play an important part in our society. First of all, they enrich our routine, monotonous and sometimes boring daily life, sort of clean the dust from our existence. Whenever I feel tired, I always listen to some soft piano music which never fails to make me feel better. Another thing is that they inspire all kinds of emotions in us such as courage, patriotism and love. You can simply think of the moment when the national anthem is played out too see my point. Music and art touch a part of our being that nothing else can. Yeah! Art and music are definitely part of my life, a very important part.

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### Task1

1

Describe your favorite room either of your own house or in other places and explain why.

My favorite room in my house is the den! Before moving in a couple years ago with my family, I had never lived in a place with a den before. There's something so fun about having a special little room placed off to the side of everything else. It's cozy and intimate. The simple act of watching movies on a stormy night becomes heightened, like the room's only purpose is to provide enjoyment. The den in my house also has a door that opens right to the backyard. On nice days, I leave that door open and let the cool breeze and sound of chirping birds into the room. I love it. It's such a peaceful part of the house!

2

Among the following three professions, which do you think make the biggest contribution to society? Teachers, farmers, doctors.

I think teachers make the biggest contribution to society. If you're thinking of it from the base level of young children, four and five year-olds who have not yet entered school, how do they eventually become doctors? How do they become business leaders and scientists and writers and chefs and engineers? They have to be taught! They not only have to be taught the specifics of their field when they're old enough, but they have to be taught general information throughout their childhood to even get them to the point of having a career. No matter what a person eventually contributes to society, there's a good chance that at some point in their life they were inspired and taught by a teacher!

3

Describe a day that you enjoyed the most or was the most special to you. Include reasons and details to support your response.

My 6<sup>th</sup> birthday was a really great day. A whole bunch of my classmates and I went to the petting zoo and played with all the animals. We got to pet the goats and rabbits and feed them little handfuls of food. Then, the best part, all of us kids got to take turns riding a pony around the barnyard! I still remember her name was Sheba and she was gray with pretty, almost silver speckles. I'm sure she was walking pretty slowly in her little circle, but to a six year-old it was like a rollercoaster ride! Then my parents brought out the ice cream cake. It was so delicious! I still enjoy birthdays now, but something about birthdays when you're a little kid is just extra exciting. Those are some of my best memories.

4

Describe the changes in your life five years from now on. Include specific examples and details in your explanation

In five years' time, I hope to have moved to the country. Living on a small farm would be ideal. I want to raise chickens and grow vegetables and be able to drink my coffee out on my front porch in the morning in complete peaceful silence. Hopefully by then I will have submitted some of my photographs to magazines and had them published; that's been a dream of mine for a long time. I also think I will be more relaxed in five years. I was kind of an anxious teenager, but have started to calm down more recently. That will continue, I think. I'll keep meditating and practicing tai chi and just feel more at peace with everything. I also hope to have paid off my student loans by then! That will definitely help me to be less stressed!

5

Describe a most unforgettable success in your life. Explain why it was important to you. Include reasons and examples to support your response.

Many years have passed, but till today, I still could not forget the challenging experience when I successfully found my first job as a journalist. You know I have dreamed to be a journalist since I was a child. And I went to study journalism in a university because of that. But when I graduated, I found it was very difficult for a female to be a journalist nowadays, for the job is really a tough one. But I overcame it by proving I could persist in the tough work no less than men, and then I got it. I wrote articles critically and always accepted new ideas around the world. I am proud of my achievements in news press.

6

What's your favorite toy or game in your childhood?

My favorite toy when I was a child was a stuffed teddy bear that named Rudolph. My grandma bought him for me when I was 2 years old. I have a lot of memories of this stuffed animal, and I still have him on my bed to sleep with every night. As a child, I used to bring Rudolph everywhere with me, and I still remember one instance: I had been shopping with my grandpa and I accidentally left Rudolph at the store, not realizing it until we got home. My grandpa drove me back to the store to get him, and I never forgot that. I've always felt like I'd only be able to get to sleep if Rudolph was by my side.

7

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? It is good for students to attend a university or college in a foreign country. Explain why.

Studying overseas has a number of advantages. Firstly, it may give students access to knowledge and facilities such as laboratories and libraries which are not available in their home country. Furthermore, by looking abroad students may find a wider range of courses than those offered in their home country, and therefore one which fits more closely to their particular needs. Finally, students learn to be independent and more adaptable to a new environment. These are important qualities for future success. So I would say it is good for students to study in a foreign country.

8

Describe your favorite teacher. Explain why you like him or her. Include reasons and details to support your response.

My favorite teacher is Miss Yang, a 30.-year-old young woman who is now teaching me English in a training school. I like her because she is NOT like a teacher in a traditional sense. You know what a stereotyped teacher looks like - serious, strict, sometimes intimidating. But Miss Yang is different. She is full of energy in the classroom, always smiling. She uses humorous language and dramatic body gestures to capture the attention of every student, so no one falls asleep during her class, no matter how uninteresting the topic was. I like her also because she is a responsible teacher. She would correct each little mistake that I made in my written essay. I know that must have been time-consuming.



9

Describe a character in a book, film, or poem, and explain why you like it.

I really like the character of Forrest from the movie Forrest Gump. I get the feeling that he sees some things clearer than anyone else, like when he knows that it's not good for Jenny to be in an abusive relationship, or that Lieutenant Dan is still the same person he was before his injury and can still lead an accomplished life. He has such a pure heart and that's very admirable. Forrest Gump is always himself; he doesn't let the world tarnish him. Sometimes he's in silly situations and sometimes he's in upsetting situations, but he just continues to do what he thinks is right.

10

Talk about an activity you enjoyed doing with your family when you were a child. Describe the activity and explain why it was enjoyable to do this activity with your family.

When I was a kid, my family and I used to go hiking in the summertime. We would wake up really early, when it was still dark, and my mom would make us blueberry pancakes in the shapes of different animals. The smell of brewing coffee filled the whole house and I loved that. Then we'd head out to one of the nearby trails. There were tons of them within an hour of our house; it was really nice. I don't remember the individual names of the trails anymore, but they were all dense with pines trees and absolutely gorgeous. My mom and dad would lead the way, with my brother and I lagging behind and telling jokes to each other as we hiked. One place in particular had a waterfall at the top of the trail. That was my favorite. We would picnic up there and I would feel so peaceful and connected to everything, there with my family in the vast wilderness. Those are great memories.

11

Describe a special experience that has changed you in life. Give reasons why it changed you with examples/details.

I've never been a fan of thunderstorms. I have this irrational fear that lightning is going to hit my house or electrocute something I'm touching ... I just get scared and wait anxiously for the storm to pass. But once when I was a teenager I was babysitting my young cousin and, lo and behold, a storm started up outside. It was bad, with trees bending in the wind and the rain pelting the windows nonstop. Thunder was rumbling really loudly and my cousin, Theo, told me that he was scared. For a second I didn't really know what to say. But then I decided I had to be the adult and assuage his fears rather than linger on my own. I built a little makeshift tent in the living room with a blanket and a few chairs and had Theo climb in there with me. We sang songs to distract ourselves from the storm and soon enough he was perfectly fine. I felt really proud that day, like I was on the road to maturity.

12

Where do you like to go shopping? Explain why. Include details and examples to support your response.

I find shopping in a supermarket very convenient and consumer-friendly. Numerous kinds of commodities are available in a supermarket, which grants us abundant options that we cannot find in any grocery or roadside stores. What's more, in supermarkets, customers are free to look at and pick up the things they like and are allowed to return goods to the shelves if they decide not take them after a second thought. This form of consumption avoids some embarrassment which is likely to take place in a department store between shop assistants and consumers. In a word, as a purchaser, I find shopping in a supermarket the easiest, the fastest and the most comfortable. So I prefer to go shopping in supermarkets rather than in other kinds of stores.

13

One of your friends is going to study math as his major. What suggestions would you give to this friend?

I would suggest this friend of mine to be diligent and strategic. It's important to be diligent because studying math is tough and takes a lot of time and effort. Unless you are a genius, which most students aren't, you will have to work hard trying to understand abstract concepts and memorizing complicated formulas. Next, be strategic. By this I mean using time efficiently, because if you do not know how to use your time wisely, you will only find yourself buried in books all day long and exhausted without achieving anything. The best math students usually know how to combine these two qualities well, so these are what I would suggest my friend to do if he is considering studying math as his/her major.

14

Is it a good idea to keep a pet such as a dog or a cat? What can you benefit from such an experience?

I think keeping small animals such as a dog or a cat can bring a lot of benefits. Pets can substitute for the absence of other family members. Sometimes a couple who is unable to have children will adopt pets and treat them like babies. They shower on their pets the love that they might have provided a child and receive affection and companionship in return. Many people who live alone enjoy the companionship of a pet instead of loved ones who are at a distance or have passed away. The pet becomes a family member for these people and deserve the same kind of treatment that a member would receive.

15

Among the following three professions, which do you respect the most: photographers, musicians, painters. Explain why.

As far as I am concerned, I have to say that compared with painters and musicians, the photographer is the person that I admire most. The reasons are as follows. Firstly, being a photographer is never an easy job, since most of the photographers especially those who take photos of animals have to stay outside for several hours, even several days, in order to take the pictures they want. Secondly, different from painters and musicians, the photographer is closer to the life of common people. For example, photographers can take photos in the weddings to keep the important memories for the couples; young girls will like to go to photographic studios

to take beautiful photos for themselves. So in conclusion it seems that photographers are everywhere in people's daily life.

16

What personal quality do you admire most? Creativity, courage or intelligence? Explain why? Please include details and examples in your response.

I would consider creativity as the most admirable personal quality in the modern world because it can be the difference between success and failure. Because of intense competitions in the market, every enterprise and venture needs creativity to succeed, whether they are car manufacturers or software companies, large scale engineering projects or financial service providers. For example, Apple would never have been successful without its founder Steve Jobs, a creative genius who launched a series of innovative products. Another great person known for creativity is Deng Xiaoping, the designer of the innovative "one country, two systems" solution to resolving the Hong Kong issue.

17

Many schools do not allow students to take their laptop computers into the classroom. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of having laptop computers in the classroom? Use specific details and examples to support your opinion.

In my opinion, taking laptops into the classroom has more negative than positive effects on students' study. Computers, of course, do bring convenience and updated information into the class. Sharing information such as presentations from teacher becomes much easier and faster. However, students may get lost and become addicted to computer games either in class or outside. Considerable evidence has proved that students do not yet have the will power to control themselves. What's more, with computers, it would be difficult for teachers to observe students' true performance. For example, a student with a laptop on his desk can pretend that he is listening attentively to the teacher while he is only chatting with his friends online.

18

Talk about an organization or club you want to join and why.

I want to join an organization called Pedal Power. It's an international charity based mainly in the UK. It sends bicycles to some of the poorest regions in the world. I want to join this organization because with a bicycle, people can get wherever they want to go without much trouble; this enables them to improve their position and have more control over their lives. In this way, I can make a difference in other people's lives. What's more, I think as a Chinese national, I have more resources to contribute to this organization because, as you know, China is virtually a "Kingdom of Bicycles", where a lot of unwanted bikes are discarded each year, if they can be collected and repaired, Pedal Power can have a constant supply of bikes to send.

19

What suggestions would you give a foreign friend who is coming to your country to study?

I would give three pieces of advice to my friend who is to become a foreign student in my country. First, try to learn some Chinese. The Chinese language is becoming increasingly important in the world, and if you are fluent in Chinese you have more chance to be hired by a local firm. Second, be aware of the cultural differences between China and the western world. China is a large country. Different places have their own unique cultures and it is better to know them to avoid misunderstanding or even troubles. Finally, learn how to cook before coming to China because it takes a while to get used to Chinese food, so until then you should be prepared to cook for yourself.

20

In your opinion, what are some important characteristics of a good school? Use reasons and specific examples to explain why these characteristics are important.

Well, in my opinion, a good school should consist of at least two important characteristics. The first characteristic is the facilities and equipment that are required for different kinds of subjects. For example, many famous universities in the US have their well-renowned laboratories, which enable students to pursue advanced studies in various fields of study. Secondly, I believe the atmosphere of a particular school is also very important because it is the spirit and soul of it. Without a good atmosphere, the school will become no more than a factory producing talents that only know how to operate a certain machine.

21

Which form of transportation is the most enjoyable? Bicycle, automobile, train?

I personally enjoy travelling by train the most. I think travelling by train is by far the most reliable means of transportation, in terms of both punctuality and safety. Unlike the airplane, trains strictly keep to their schedule, seldom delayed or cancelled. If the train schedule says arrival time is 10:30, the train will arrive at that time. When you can be sure of the departure and arrival time, then planning a trip or a business meeting becomes a lot easier for you. Moreover, I feel that travelling by train is much safer than travelling by bus or by air. The fact that a train stays on the ground and on a fixed route makes me worry less about it dropping off the sky or colliding with another running vehicle.

22

If a high school is planning to organize an after-school activity for its students, what kind of activity would you recommend and why?

Recently I have taken quite an interest in cooking, so I would suggest that the school organize a cooking-learning activity to teach students how to prepare some delicious food. It can be really fun and I bet there will be a lot of communication going on with students and it's a good way to build up team spirit. The school can even hold a contest to see who can cook the most delicious food. It doesn't have to be very complicated; only some common easy stir-fry dishes are enough, like kung pao chicken or stir-fry bean sprouts. More importantly I think cooking is an essential

skill for people nowadays as eating home-cooked food is a much more healthy and less costly way of life than, for example, eating in a restaurant or in a fast-food store.

23

If you were to become a volunteer at the school or in the community, what kind of volunteer work would you do and why?

I think People have to contribute to their communities, societies and humanity in some way, and doing volunteer work is a great way to achieve this. If I got the chance, I would like to become a care-giver volunteer for my neighborhood. I am a medical student and I believe that I have the professional skills and knowledge to help those local people who are sick, disabled or semi-bedridden. Even if they do not need medical attention, or if I am not qualified to do so, I could always help by doing laundry, cleaning, cooking, etc, for them, which is also important. I think it is truly gratifying work and I hope that if I need help someday, that someone might come to help me.

24

Describe a special friend in your childhood. Explain why this friend is special to you. Include reasons and details to support your response.

I can't talk about my childhood without mentioning Tom. We have been neighbors since we were in primary school. We kinda stuck together since we found we have many things in common. For example, we both loved soccer and joined the school soccer team. We loved science fictions and were both devoted fans of the Star Trek series. People said we even looked similar, a little bit chubby with about the same height However, Tom is a special friend not just because of these similarities. To me, he is special teacher who first introduced me to the world of astronomy, which seemed to be his specialty. He would let me spend hours looking up into the sky, teaching me how to remember the names and positions of the stars and constellations.

25

Talk about one activity you will do in the near future. Explain why you want to do this activity.

Tonight I'm going to go to the store and get my nephew, Adam, a birthday present. He's turning four on Friday and that's also the day of his party. He really likes big cats, like lions and panthers, so hopefully I'll be able to find a stuffed animal of one of those. If not, his mom always likes when he gets educational toys as presents. I'm sure the store will have a puzzle or alphabet game that would be perfect for Adam, as well as a cute bag for me to wrap it in. No matter what presents he ends up getting, I have a feeling Adam's favorite part of his birthday party will be the cake! It's going to be lemon cake with vanilla frosting this year. I can't wait!

26

Talk about an activity you enjoyed doing with your family when you were a child. Explain why you enjoyed this activity

When I was a kid, my family and I used to go hiking in the summertime. We would wake up really early, when it was still dark, and my mom would make us blueberry pancakes in the shapes of different animals. The smell of brewing coffee filled the whole house and I loved that. Then we'd head out to one of the nearby trails. There were tons of them within an hour of our house; it was really nice. I don't remember the individual names of the trails anymore, but they were all dense with pines trees and absolutely gorgeous. My mom and dad would lead the way, with my brother and I lagging behind and telling jokes to each other as we hiked. One place in particular had a waterfall at the top of the trail. That was my favorite. We would picnic up there and I would feel so peaceful and connected to everything, there with my family in the vast wilderness. Those are great memories.

27

Describe a special event or occasion that you had with your family or friends. Explain why it was special.

My parents threw a huge Halloween party one year when I was about seven. It was interesting because they never did stuff like that. Our house was always calm and quiet! We didn't even have people over for dinner, really. But, for whatever reason, we had a massive Halloween party that year. I don't even know how many people were there. It was so fun—we had black lights and fake cobwebs all over our front porch. People were bobbing for apples in the backyard. I remember my sister and I chasing each other through the fake gravestones, dressed in our costumes, just having the time of our lives! It was an unforgettable night!

28

Talk about two singers who are popular in your country. Explain why they are popular and how they are different.

I would like to talk about Leehom Wang and Teresa Teng, two immensely popular and influential Chinese pop singers but with clear differences both in terms of their musical style and their audience. Leehom is an Americanborn singer. His musical style is known for fusing Chinese elements with hip-hop and R&B. On the other hand, Teresa Teng was known for her folk songs and romantic ballads. Many became standards in her lifetime, such as "The Moon Represents My Heart" In terms of audience, Leehom has become an idol for the younger generation in China who love pop music while Teresa Teng, although she passed away nearly 20 years ago, still enjoyed great popularity, but mainly among older people born in the 50s or 60s.

## TASK2

1

Do you agree or disagree with the following question. In order to stay happy, you must have a job that you love doing.

I kind of agree with this. I don't think you have to do a job that you love in order to stay happy. I mean, it is possible for a person to be happy even if he or she is doing something that's not

completely enjoyable. If you're a struggling sculptor, for instance, who is working at a grocery store to be able to pay your rent, I don't think that's a reason to be unhappy! Sometimes you need to take any job you can; there's no shame in that. Just continue to work on your sculptures on the weekends and never give up on your passion. Keep it alive. And maybe someday you will find steady work as a sculptor. It's completely possible!

2

Some people prefer to have classes during the day and do part-time jobs in the evening while others prefer to have classes in the evening and do part-time jobs during the day. Which do you prefer?

I prefer to have classes during the day and a part-time job in the evening. That's mainly because if I'm in a lecture class in a warm dark room and it's getting later into the evening, there's a very good chance I'm going to be falling asleep at my desk! That's not helpful to my studies and it definitely doesn't make my professors happy if they notice. So, I much prefer to go to class in the daytime when the sun is shining and I'm wide awake. I might still be sleepy at my evening job, but at least there I'm continually engaged by my co-workers and customers. They kind of keep me alert. I'm talking to people and not just sitting in silence. I feel like everything just works out better that way.

3

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Power and money is the symbol of success.

I disagree with this. Of course, it can be very nice to have power and money. Some people out there have the whole package: power, money, family, good health, and so on. They could definitely be called successful in their life. But to aim for only power and money seems kind of shortsighted. I've known too many cold, shallow people who have a good job and are quite wealthy, but shut out others and don't even seem to enjoy themselves. They become selfish and strange and still oddly unsatisfied. Meanwhile, there are many people who may not be rich, but they make the best out of everything. They find joy in their loved ones and hobbies. When they do have money to spare, they appreciate it. They're happy, and I think that's what true success is.

4

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? It is never too late for an old person to receive higher education and to get a university degree. Use specific reasons to support your answer.

From my perspective, I totally agree with the statement that people are never too late to receive university education to get a degree. I have two reasons for holding my opinion. First of all, from university we can learn a lot. Besides the knowledge from the textbooks, we also learn skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving and communication skills. With these knowledge and skills we can survive in today's fierce job market and get a satisfying job after graduation. What's more, we can meet new people who are important human resources for us to have a better

career. We can cooperate with each other so to succeed in the future. Those classmates we met in college can become our future human resources for many years. So, all in all, I agree with this statement.

5

Do you like to be taught by experienced teachers or by new teachers?

I think in most of the cases I would like to be taught by a veteran teacher rather than a rookie teacher. Think about visiting a dentist or seeking advice from an attorney, I'm sure many people would prefer the most experienced because they are more likely to possess well-developed skills and hands-on experience to provide what you need. New teachers may be well trained in terms of teaching methodology, but it is only through the real-world application of these theories that teachers reach their full potential, and that takes time. My own experience also proves this. From high school to university I've always done much better in subjects taught by experienced teachers than in those taught by new teachers.

6

Some people prefer to make decisions quickly. Others prefer to take their time. Which do you prefer and why? Use specific reasons and examples to support your response.

I prefer to take time and think carefully before making the final decision. I don't like risks or surprises, so I need to evaluate the risks associated with each alternative before making a decision, and once I've made one, I know it's final and I won't change it or regret having made it later. Also, for some important decisions, I need to consult other people for their opinion. For example, if I am making decisions about which university to apply for, or even whom to marry, I would certainly discuss this with my parents or my best friends. I need time to make sure the decisions I've made is the right one.

7

Some students prefer to study or work on difficult class assignments early in the morning. Other students prefer to do this type of work in the evening. Which do you prefer and why?

I prefer to study and work on assignments early in the morning. In the evening I like to be able to relax and settle into my routine before going to bed. I'll watch some TV, drink some tea or hot chocolate...I want to be at ease and free of burden, not stressing out over homework and deadlines. I sleep much better that way. Even the darkness of the evening makes me drowsy; I feel like my work would suffer if I tried to do it then. But in the mornings I'm alert and ready to go. I have a new, energized sense of determination and I work much faster and more productively. The key is to do each homework assignment a couple days ahead of schedule, so that I'm not scrambling to complete it just a few hours before it's due!

8

Do you prefer to learn from current people and events or from people and events in the past?



9

Some people would borrow money to buy things they need. Others would save up money until they can afford it. Which would you do and why?

I prefer to learn from people and events in the past. I feel like, when events are current, we sometimes can't properly understand them. We're just living them, day-to-day, perhaps without seeing the big picture. We can't see the forest for the trees, as the saying goes. There needs to be that distance of time in order to have proper comprehension. It is only then that the themes and patterns emerge and we can learn what sorts of things work and what sorts of things are harmful, or what is right and what is wrong. I would feel much more confident proclaiming something from twenty years ago as wise or a brilliant idea over something contemporary, where I'm still not even sure what all of its results and ramifications will be.

10

Should students start to plan their career before entering college, or should they do so until they have entered college and studied for a period of time?

Choosing a career is one of the most important decisions during one's life time and therefore should not be rushed. Before entering college, most young people have no idea of what they want most and where their interest and passion really lies. So it might be a good idea to wait until they have studied a number of college courses before deciding upon which line of work they really like to pursue, it avoids reckless decision based on unfounded assumptions about a career. What's more, college also provides a lot of internship positions during vacation for students to have a real taste of what a particular job involves, after getting a comprehensive picture, students are in a position to make informed choices

11

Which do you prefer, reading paper books or reading electronic books? Explain why.

I prefer to read e-books for two reasons. Firstly, reading e-books is much cheaper. Instead of spending a great amount of money buying paper books in the bookstore, downloading e-books costs me almost nothing. Since I am still a student now, I do not have much extra money to be spent on buying books, so reading e-books can save me a lot of money. Secondly, reading e-books is environmentally friendly. As the production of paper consumes huge amount of water and tree resources, choosing electronic books over paper books will help preserve valuable natural resources and help protect our fragile environment.

12

Some people prefer to listen to music while they are studying or working. Others prefer to stay in a quiet place while they are studying or working. Which way do you prefer and why? Include reasons and details in your response.

I preferred listening to music while I was studying or practicing some easier subjects such as geography or English. I found I could concentrate much better when I was listening to music. It also helped me relax and not go to sleep. But that was only when I was doing these subjects.

If I were doing some difficult subjects like economics and mathematics while listening to music, I easily get distracted and my concentration would definitely be on the song, which would play over and over again long after the music has actually stopped playing, which is really distracting. So it really depends on what I am studying.

13

Some people like to move about and live in different places. Others like to stay at one place all their lives. Which do you prefer and why?

Personally speaking, I would prefer not to stay in one place but to move to different places, to work or to live. Firstly, moving around will enable me to broaden my horizons and enrich my knowledge. Within the diverse living environment, I will have more opportunities to make new friends in different places and observe and experience their different cultures. For example, I was used to having noodles as my main food when I was living in Tianjin, a city in northern China. But now rice has become my staple food when I am in Shanghai. Besides, you will be easily bored if you live in one place for too long. In this case, withdrawing from the old environment would be a great idea to liven up your life. The new neighborhood and working environment could effectively refresh you, getting you back to life again.

14

Some students prefer to study for only one long time during a week. Other students prefer to study for several short periods of time during a week, which do you prefer?

I definitely prefer breaking down a long study session into several short chunks because there is research that shows that after an hour of intense focus, the brain needs a break. It needs to shift gears a while. The brain's ability to absorb information starts to decline after about the first hour, so for example, you are dealing with a lot of new concepts and vocabulary, if you just reviewed your notes, even 20 minutes a day, it would be much better than studying for 5 consecutive hours during the week before the exam.

15

Do you prefer to be friends with people who share the same opinion as you do or with people who hold different opinions?

I will definitely choose the second one—a job through which I can obtain great personal satisfaction. I have two reasons for this choice. To begin with, a job takes up at least eight hours per day, which is one third of our lives in total. If I am assigned to boring tasks or things I don't like to do, I feel unhappy all day and that is the last thing I want. Moreover, money plays only a minor role in my life, compared with personal satisfaction and leisure. So basically I will try my best to find my "labor of love", because once I do so, my job will become my leisure and I feel happy and contented all day long.

16

Do you think that people will read fewer books in the future?

I think the trend is for people to read less and less. I believe the future of human communication will be a return to the more direct social interactions that existed before the evolution of written language. I am not predicting a return to polysyllabic grunting and interpretive dance. Instead, I believe we will rely less and less on reading and writing, and more and more on watching, listening, and speaking. The future of human communication may become merely multimedia experiences. Eventually, even digitally written words may themselves disappear—and we will communicate via interactive digital video and audio—and the very notion of “literacy” may become meaningless. But fear not—I don’t predict this will happen until the end of the century—and I am probably completely wrong anyway.

17

Some people like to spend their spare time with friends, some people like to spend it alone. Which do you prefer?

Answer: I like doing both! I suppose more of my time is spent alone, though. I really value being able to be alone with my thoughts and do whatever I want. I can go for a drive in my car, run some errands, read a book. It’s almost meditative; I need those times to recharge and just relax. At the same time, if I’m by myself for too long, then I start to get antsy and feel like visiting a friend. So, I guess my preference is to spend my spare time alone, but not all of my spare time. I think it’s wise to mix it up and continually change your patterns of activity so you never feel as if you’re in a rut

18

Some people prefer to work in the office, while others prefer to work from home. Which do you prefer and why?

Given the choice, I would prefer to work from home. By working from home I don’t have to spend 2 or 3 hours every day commuting, which means I don’t need to get up very early, rush through my breakfast, and squeeze myself into an overcrowded bus or subway train. It feels like I’ll have 2 or 3 hours extra time every day, all to myself, which I could spend as freely as I wish, such as jogging or exercising, reading books, or walking by dog. Some people may say that working from home means cutting yourself from the rest of your colleagues, but I think that with today’s telecommunication and internet technology, weixin: laoxikou you can still stay connected, and quite effectively, with your colleagues or your boss by writing emails, making calls, and sending or receiving fax.

19

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Personality changes as one grows older.

Many people say that personality is genetically determined, but I believe that it changes with age. For example, as people reach middle age, they tend to become more mature and less dependent on others. They care more about their work, responsibilities, and those in their lives. When people get old, they are less energetic and become less open to new ideas and concepts.

These are all personality changes that naturally occur when people get older. Another possible factor of personality change is education. As knowledge accumulates over the years, people's understanding of the world or of themselves may both change, leading to a different pattern of personalities.

20

Some people prefer to be a leader in a group project, while others prefer to be a supporting member in a group project. Which do you prefer and why? Use examples and details in your explanation.

If I could choose, I would prefer to be a leader in a group project. Although being a leader in a group means more responsibilities, it also means I am given the chance to develop my leadership and management skills, which I think are very important in the current society. For example, when I am applying for a job, my resume would look a lot better if it could include a successful project I have personally led. Well I'm not saying supporting members are not important. It's just that the work of a leader is more challenging, so it is more valued. Being the leader of a project also has the potential of stretching me to my limit, helping me find out what I can really do.

21

While traveling, some people prefer to go to new places, but others prefer to visit familiar places. Which do you think is better? Explain why.

I like to visit new places whenever I have the opportunity. I think the fun of travelling to new places is that it gives you a chance to learn about and meet people from different cultures. When I am in a foreign country, I see it as a unique opportunity to immerse myself in its culture. Of course, I visit the popular tourist attractions, but I do a lot more. I speak the language, eat where the natives eat, and do some of the same things they like to do. I encourage other travelers to do likewise. Having this added layer of experience helps you to grow as a person and makes you a more interesting person to others.

22

When they meet a problem, some people prefer to seek advice or help from people who are older than they are, while others prefer to seek advice or help from people of the same age. Which do you prefer and why?

I think it all depends on what types of problems you are dealing with. I encounter many different kinds of problems every day. Some of them are really small and may be too personal so I only ask my close friends for help. For example if I am extremely sad about my girlfriend breaking up with me, I would never turn to my parents for help. Instead, I would talk with my friends who can offer me comfort. However, on other occasions, there may be complicated problems and to solve them requires skills and experience far beyond my own knowledge or capability, and it is at this moment that I think older people's help or advice is much more valuable.

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Do you prefer to have fast food in a fast-food restaurant, or do you prefer to have food in other kinds of places?

I don't like to eat in a fast-food restaurant. Health is my first concern. Fast food is known to have poor nutritional value because it is high in calories, fats, sugars and other unhealthy ingredients. My next concern is with the dining environment of a fast-food restaurant, which is often overcrowded and noisy, and there appear to be lines everywhere. So I would avoid going to a fast-food restaurant. Instead, I would go to a small but cozy restaurant or café, where I can sit comfortably in a chair, enjoy reading the latest menus, and maybe listen to some nice music while having a lovely afternoon tea.