

2014 COLLECTION

龚学众 著

IELTS

IELTS ALL SPEAKING TOPICS and SAMPLE ANSWERS

SPECIAL FEATURES:

- *Full topics that appeared in the actual speaking section
- *Simple answers, suitable for learners of all levels
- *Searchable contents, easy to find desired topics
- *Including topics likely to re-appear in 2015 speaking section

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IELTS speaking and writing Corner

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PART 1: Most frequent topics and suggested answers

Note: In the first part, a candidate is asked a variety of personal questions .In light of this fact, suggested answers should be modified to meet your own personal circumstances.

(Mr.Saint)

1.Name

➤ Do you like your name?

Yes, I do like my name very much. My name was given by my parents and it carries a very good meaning, which means happy. I believe this name can bring me good luck and I'll be happy all the time.

➤ Are there any special meanings of your name?

Yes, my name in Chinese pronunciation means "happy" because my parents want me to lead a happy life in the future, and I can smile to every circumstance encountered.

➤ Who gives the names in China? What's the tradition of giving names?

In general, parents will give the children the name, but sometimes, grandparents will also take part in the naming process. I think it is universal around the world. In every country, relatives will give the children names.

➤ Are you willing to change your name? Why?

No. First, I like my name very much, and I don't feel it necessary to change my name. Second, name is just a small part of me; people get along with me, not with my name. So it doesn't matter.

➤ What meanings are there in the nicknames of Chinese children?

Most children in China will have a nickname for different reasons. Some people believe a nickname will bring their children blessings, and some others want to call their children more conveniently.

➤ In your country, do people feel that their name is very important?

Well, every Chinese name carries a meaning, and it represents the common value and pursuit of the family. So people usually consider their own names unique and important.

➤ Is it easy to change your name in your country?

It's not so easy. Firstly the family members should come to an agreement on that. Then I have to go to the police station for registration. And all the friends and acquaintances should be informed.

➤ What names are most common in your hometown?

Those with nice meanings. A lot of boys are given names like Da, meaning making achievements. And girls' parents prefer characters such as Fang, implying fragrance.

2. House/Flat (Apartment)

➤ Do you live in a house or a flat?

I live in a rented Flat in Hangzhou. I've been living in the flat for over three years since I found a job here.

➤ Do you prefer to live in a house or a flat?

I'd like to live in a house as the one my family have in the countryside. There is much space in the three-storey house where my parents, my brother and my grandma live. We have a garden backyard where we plant many flowers which are my favourite. However, it's impossible to enjoy that while living in a flat.

➤ Why do you like your home?

I like my home for there are my family. There is no comfortable place as a home. My family at home give me comfort, making me feel safe.

➤ Which room you like best at your home?

I like my study best. I spent a lot of time in the study where there is a full shelf of books. I like reading, especially novels. Each year I received books as gifts from my relatives. I used to invite my friends to study with me in the room, and we often lost ourselves in reading books there.

➤ Do you have a plan to move to a new house/ flat in the future?

I've been living alone in the flat, and I seldom have time to go back home. In the future I hope to buy a flat in the city, in the following two or three years if possible. Though I prefer to have my own house, I cannot afford the high house price.

➤ What do you think can be added to your flat?

Maybe a dancing room that has lots of mirrors, because in that way, my mother and I can practice dancing in our spare time at home, and we don't need to go to the fitness club.

➤ Do you know your neighbors? Is it good to know your neighbors?

Yes, I do. We have a really good relationship with my neighbors, because we will send each other foods or other things. Also, we will help each other if we encounter some problems.

➤ Do you prefer young or old neighbors?

I don't mind. I believe that everyone in the world is very kind, so no matter my neighbor is young or old, if we treat each other friendly, we must get along well with each other.

3. Your Hometown

➤ Where is your hometown? How long have you been living there?

I'm from XX, the capital of XX province. I was born and raised in that city until I went to study in XX two years ago. I enjoy the time studying in the city, too.

I'm from XX, a small city in XX province. Living there for the past twenty years, I've been to almost every corner of the city and know many good restaurants. It's also interesting when I go out because I could always run across some acquaintances.

➤ **Is your hometown famous for anything?**

Yes, my hometown is famous for the local food, XX. Everyone who comes to my hometown would try this food. Also, there're some famous tourist attractions and the most famous place is XX, which would attract people from all over the world.

➤ **What do you like most about living in your hometown (or, about living where you are living now)?**

I love the local food. I have to admit every region has their famous food and it's hard to find authentic food of my hometown in other cities, so I would always miss the delicious local food when I'm away.

➤ **Do you like your hometown?**

Of course! Who doesn't like his hometown? And from among all the aspects, I love the local food most. It's hard to find authentic food of my hometown in other cities, so I would always miss the delicious local food when I'm away.

➤ **Would you say it's an interesting place?**

Yes. Though it's a small place, there are some scenic spots. Modern facilities for entertainments are also built up in downtown areas. So we can always find something interesting to do when getting together with friends. And if you have time, I may be your guide to have a tour around there.

➤ **What would you say are the good points and the bad points of your hometown?**

Well, the local food is definitely a good point, and the native people are hospitable. In the past, the environment was among the best in the neighboring areas. But the protection has not been attached importance to. So now pollution has become one of the most serious problems in my hometown.

➤ **Did your friends also grow up in the same place as you?**

My old friends are mostly former classmates and neighbors in my hometown. Since I attended the university, I have been making new friends coming from different areas.

➤ **Would you like to live there in the future?**

Yes. There is a Chinese saying; Fallen leaves return to the roots. So even if I may have further education and future jobs in bigger cities, I will go back to my hometown and live there when I grow old.

4. Work or Studies

➤ **Do you work or are you a student?**

I'm a student. Now, I'm studying in XX University in XX province and my major is XX, which requires us to do a lot of relative practice. I'm about to graduate next year, but I want to pursue my master's degree in XX.

I'm a high school student in XX high school. I'll graduate next year and I'm planning to study in the UK because I think the education system there is very advanced. I hope I can get into a good university so that I can be competitive in the job market when I graduate.

I'm working. I have been working in a private company in my hometown for two years. I think the job is very suitable for me because I could use what I have learned at school and of course there're also a lot of new things for me to learn in this field.

1) Your Work

➤ **What job (or, what work) do you do? What do you do in that job?**

I'm an accountant in a private company in Hangzhou. My job involves a lot of calculating and tabulating. Sometimes, it's hard to explain what I do because I don't produce or sell products, but I think my job is important for the company.

➤ **Why did you choose to do that kind of work(or, that job)?**

I chose to be an accountant because I majored in accounting when as was in the college. And I had already accumulated some work experience by doing part-time jobs before I graduated. What's more, the job suits my character and my interest.

➤ **Would you recommend the job to other people?**

Yes, I recommend it to people who are majored in Business or Accounting. They may be able to put the knowledge they have learned in the courses into practice. And it is a well-paid job.

2) Your Studies

➤ **Do you like your major?**

Yes, I do. I actually chose my major by myself because I'm interested in science since middle school. When I was a child, I always wanted to be a scientist. Now, I feel I'm closer and closer to my dream.

➤ **Is that a popular major in your country?**

Yes, it is. It's comparatively easier for engineering major students to find suitable jobs because there are a lot of manufacturers in China and they all need professional engineers to work in the R&D department or their factories. I guess the prospect of this major is bright.

➤ **Is it difficult to learn your major?**

Kind of. My major involves a lot of math and physics theories, so if one wants to be excellent in this field, you must know the foundational knowledge well. Sometimes, we also need to do some lab work and I think the most difficult part is put what we have learned into practice.

➤ **Do you think it's important to choose a subject you are interested in? (Why?)**

Definitely. It's probably true for everybody. When you're interested in something, you can put more effort into it and you're more likely to succeed. However, if you have no interest in something, you probably can do it, but it's

hard to be good at it. So, teachers should try their best to arouse students' interest and help them to learn unconsciously and students should choose something their interest lies in.

➤ **What's the most enjoyable part of being a student?**

It's hard to say. As a student, I can learn knowledge and don't need to work to earn my living. However, sometimes, I feel it's hard to be a student because I have too much workload and so many things to learn.

➤ **For you, what's the most interesting part (or subject or class) of your course?**

I like practical knowledge. When I learn something about my future work, I would always feel excited. I feel I'm not only learning some theories, but the real skills for my career. It's the most interesting part for me.

➤ **(For high school) What's the most interesting of your subjects at school?**

I love science. I think science classes can help me know the wonders of the universe and tell me the laws of the nature. Because of my science classes, many questions I have had since I was a child have been solved.

➤ **What are your future work plans? (after you graduate)**

Now, I'm planning to pursue my master's degree in the UK. After my graduation, I would find a job at one of the world's best enterprises because there will be more promotion opportunities in such companies. I don't mind starting from a lower position, but eventually I want to become a department manager.

➤ **Who do you think is more important, the students or the teacher?**

I think both. The classmates can create a group atmosphere, which could be warm, hostile, or indifferent. If you have a bunch of good classmates, you could get help from them in your studies or social life. Teachers are also important. They could teach professional and moral knowledge. If the teachers are dedicated, they could influence the students learning outcomes and world view.

➤ **Are there anything special about your teachers and classmates in this major?**

Yes. Professors and students studying science tend to be a little nerdy. We don't mind spending a lot of time reading or doing experiments. It's probably true that many of my classmates are not very sociable; however, there're always exceptions.

➤ **How should teachers teach?**

Teachers shouldn't only teach, they should help students learn well and arouse their interests. Since we will leave school sooner or later and there's still a lot there for us to learn, teachers should foster students' self-teaching abilities so that they will become lifelong learners.

➤ **Will children tell their parents when they face difficulties in their studies?**

It depends on the children's personalities. A lot of children like sharing what happen at school, things both good and bad. It's always good to get help from

their parents. However, some children feel it's embarrassing to tell their parents their bad grades at school, which might make them want to hide the truth from their parents.

➤ **Do you think it's good for teachers to praise the students when they do something good and point it out when they do something wrong?**

Of course. When children get approval from their teachers, they'll be motivated to do better in the future. When they do something wrong, they also need someone to remind them. However, it's not good to give complements all the time and too much criticism can also create hatred and make students rebellious.

➤ **What subject(s) are you studying?**

I am studying Business. There are many specialized courses related to it, such as Introduction to Business Conference, Marketing Strategy and Business Law & Company Law. I have to study the general courses for all college students as well.

➤ **Why do you choose to study that?**

I chose to study Business because I dreamed to be a businessman since I was a kid. You know, both my parents are businessmen and I have been greatly influenced by them. I am determined to learn the courses well before I can really set about to practice.

➤ **What school/university do you go to now?**

I go to Zhejiang University, one of the best universities in China. Many great scientists and artists, such as Feng Zikai and Zhu Kezhen graduated from this university. The Business College is in the campus located on Xixi Road, in the West of Hangzhou.

➤ **How long have you been going to that school/studying your subjects?**

I've been studying here/this subject for 3 years. Being a junior, I have finished all the required general courses and most of my major courses. That's why I am preparing for the IELTS test and the further education.

➤ **Do you like studying at that school/university?**

Yes, I enjoy studying there very much. With a river flowing nearby, the environment of the campus is quite good. Convenient facilities are available in teaching buildings, the library and mass-media rooms all day along. And teachers help a lot both in the class and in our daily life.

➤ **What's the most important thing/part of your study life?**

It's hard to say. As a student, I think I should firstly learn the courses well. However, a lot of my classmates and I are doing part-time jobs in our spare time in order to accumulate some work experience and to social experience. I think both of them are also essential when we are to find jobs.

5. Advertisements

➤ **Are there many advertisements in your country?**

Yes, there are. We are surrounded by advertisements, which occupy a lot of space in our life. I am fed up with the advertising messages sent to my cell-phones, which

inform me of the sales of houses by estate agency, sales of clothes in a certain mall, and so on.

➤ **Why do you think there are so many advertisements now?**

For one thing, the competition is severe among manufacturers and companies who offer the same type of product or service. By investing in advertisement, they are better known to the public, so as to achieve high sales. For another, the various ways of advertising available makes it possible for them to publicize their product or service.

➤ **What are the various places where we see advertisements?**

We can see advertisements everywhere. They are printed on newspapers and magazines, painted on the wall of various buildings and on the buses running around the city, broadcasted on TVs and radios. Moreover, they are sent to us through our cell-phones and we are exposed to advertisements when we surf on the internet.

➤ **How do you feel about advertisements?**

I dislike advertisements. Advertisements do offer us useful information, but most of them are to promote stuff for people to consume. I hope more space, no matter that on newspapers or walls on the buildings, be used to publicize public service advertising, advocating people to have a healthier life.

➤ **What kinds of advertisements you like the most?**

I like advertisements of publicizing kinds of activities, such as concerts given by singers, promotion of a well-known brand with a celebrity coming to the opening ceremony, or charity program. I appreciate the opportunities to see in person my favourite musicians and actors coming to take part in the activities.

➤ **Do advertisements (ever) influence your choice about what to buy?**

Yes, they do, to some extent. There are times when I waste money on things I don't need on sales, which I know from advertisements. Advertisements, however, offer me information of various brands of what I need. I tend to buy things advertised most, though I know I am charged more as the expense of advertising is added to the cost of goods.

➤ **Do you like advertisements on TV?**

No, I don't like that. I am tired of wasting my time on advertisements broadcasted before or during the program I want to see. That's why I prefer to watch programs on the internet, where the amount of advertisements is less.

➤ **Do you prefer advertisements on TV or those in magazines?**

I prefer advertisements on TV, which are more vivid than those in magazines. TV advertising makes full use of language, sound, words, images, action and performance, etc, to entertain people. Besides, they take up diverse forms of expression, such as telling a story to move audience, inviting a celebrity to participate, or making up a funny cartoon, by computer technology, to amuse audience, all of which leave a deeper impression on the audience.

➤ **What do you think is the purpose of advertisements (or advertising)?**

As the name suggests, advertisement is a public promotion of some product or service. Advertisements are mostly used by manufacturers and companies to make their product or the service they offer known to people, which is an effective means of publicity.

➤ **Do you think advertising play a very important role in today's world?**

Yes, it does. Besides promoting product of service, advertising provides people a wide collection of news. For example, there are various activities held in Hangzhou every year, like the China International Animation Festival, which are on broadcast months ago before their opening date, to inform people of relevant information.

➤ **What sorts of advertisements leave the deepest impression on people?**

The public service advertising impresses me most. As we know, smoking does great harm to people's health, and more people suffer from passive smoking. A public service advertising aims at this is on broadcast. A smoking man appears, followed by a woman and a child who cough badly and then fall down. It is exaggerative but does well in warning people of the danger.

6. Major

➤ **What's your major?**

I major in preschool education. I'm in the third year, and I look forward to the internship when I will work in a kindergarten in the fourth year.

➤ **Do you like your major?/ Are you interested in your major? Why?**

Yes, I do. I believe preschool education is meaningful. Thanks to the teachers teaching me in the kindergarten, I had an enjoyable childhood. I learned to sing, dance and painting. I had a lot of playmates, many of whom are still my friends. So I want to learn to be a teacher like them.

➤ **Why did you choose your major?**

I chose my major for it's my dream to be a kind teacher. I want to be qualified to be a good teacher, so I can take up teaching kids, who are innocent and creative.

➤ **Is there anything interesting of your major?**

Firstly, some of our lessons are interesting. We have art lessons, of course we are not taught to be actors, in which we learn some basic skills, such as drawing and dancing. In this way, we will be able to make our class more attractive to children in the future. Then the internship when we assist teaching work in schools is the most exciting part of our major, and that's also the beginning of our practical study.

➤ **The advantages and disadvantages of your major.**

Nowadays, people pay more attention to preschool education, and parents are eager to send their children to a high-quality kindergarten. Therefore, the obvious advantage is that students of the major will not have much difficulty in finding a job. However, except for teaching in kindergartens, we have limited choices of doing something else, that's why not so many students are willing to take the major.

➤ **Will you take up a job relating to your major?**

Yes, of course. I am striving to be an excellent teacher. I will work hard to get the certificate, with which I will be eligible to teach in a kindergarten. I am enthusiastic and hopeful. Although years later, I might get tired of teaching some day in the future, I will never regret what I choose to do.

➤ **When is the best time in a day for you to study?**

The best time for me to study is in the morning. I prefer to recite books for an hour before having my first class at eight fifty. I have seven-hour sleeping everyday. After a sound sleep the night forward, I am refreshed and my mind is clear. It's the best time when I can study efficiently.

7. Food&Cooking

➤ Who does cooking at your home? Why?

My grandma does cooking at my home. I was left to be under care of my grandma since my parents went to city to make a living while I was live years old. My grandma cooks all yeararound except on holidays when my mother is at home in charge of housework.

➤ What do you think of cooking program in China?

There are kinds of popular cooking programs nowadays, and they are shown mostly in TV. I think the kind of program is meaningful. Chefs, or sometimes housewives, are invited to share their own way of cooking a dish in the program. Their experience is useful for learners who'd like to try cooking themselves.

➤ When was the first time you did cooking? What you cooked?

The first I did cooking was on a summer day at my twenty. That day I made two dished with the help of my grandma. The first dish I made was "the tomato fries the egg", my favourite food. Though I was a bit nervous, I did it right, however it's not as delicious as that cooked by grandma. Then I tried the 'pork braised in soy sauce', which I had much difficulty in getting the pork to be easy to chow. It's not bad as my first try.

➤ What food did you like to eat when you were a child?

I like to eat fast food such as KFC very much when I was a child. Although the media says fast food is not good for our health, as a child, I didn't care much about those things. As far as the food is delicious, I like to eat the food.

➤ Do you think it's good to (often or sometimes) take children to restaurants?

Yes, I think it is good to take children to restaurants sometimes. My parents would take me to restaurants since I was very a child, and I learned the table manners when eating outside.

➤ Do you think it is important to cook at home? Why?

Of course. There're at least three advantages for cooking at home. First, you can eat many delicious foods at a reasonable price. Second, food cooked at home is much safer than that in restaurants. Finally, it is very good to enjoy dishes together with family members.

➤ What is the feature of the home-made food?

The most important feature of home-made food is that food cooked at home is much safer than that in restaurants. And home-made food contains our love for family members, and this is hard to compare with foods made in restaurants by chefs.

➤ What kind of food is popular in your country?

China has a vast territory, so the popular food varies from place to place. Generally, there is some food that is very popular such as dumplings. According to places, the filling for dumplings is a bit different, but most

people like to eat dumplings very much. At the Spring Festival, many families will also make dumplings themselves and share with friends and relatives.

➤ **Do people in different places like different kinds of food?**

It's natural that people in different places like different kinds of food. They grow up in different climate and environment. For example, people in Sichuan and Hunan province all like spicy foods, but there is a bit difference even between the two. People from the southeast tend to prefer sweet food.

➤ **Who usually does the cooking in your family (or, in your home)?**

My mom usually does the cooking at home. My father can't cook, so my mom takes the job to cook for the family. Sometimes I will also do some cooking if I want to try new dishes.

➤ **Did you learn how to cook when you were younger (or, when you were a child)?**

No, actually I didn't learn how to cook when I was a child. After I grew up, I gradually learned how to cook, and I find I like it very much. Cooking is a very interesting thing.

➤ **In the future, do you think you will be cooking more than you do now, or less? (Why?)**

Of course. Now I am a student, so I just cook for myself if I'm away from home. If I get married, I need to cook for my family members. Also, I need to make bento for my children, so I will be cooking more than I do now.

➤ **What kind of food do you think is healthy?**

I think there is a lot of healthy food and how you cook it is the most important. Usually deep fried food or food that contains too much sugar or salt is considered bad for our health. We should eat a balanced diet and try to cook the food in a healthy way.

➤ **Do you think Chinese people's diet is healthy?**

Yes, a lot of Chinese people pay attention to the food we eat, and many of us like eating soup or vegetables. I think that's pretty healthy. But I have to admit that nowadays because of the fast pace of living, many people have to choose fast food for lunch, which is usually not healthy.

➤ **Will you change your diet habit?**

Yes, I'd like to make some changes. I actually eat too much junk food, which really makes me fat and unhealthy. In the future, I think I should learn how to cook by myself so that I could make healthy and delicious food at home. Also, I don't eat enough vegetables, so, in the future, I should try to have vegetables for every meal.

➤ **Do you like tasting new food?**

Yes, whenever I'm in a new place, I would always try my best to find the famous local food and have a taste. I think food cannot only satisfy my stomach but also can help us understand the local culture. However, sometimes, it's not easy to get used to the new food for the first we try it.

➤ **Do you like lunch or dinner?**

Probably dinner, because I usually have some fast food for lunch, which is not nutritious and doesn't always have a good taste. But our family usually can

prepare the dinner together and we'll have several dishes and a soup for the meal. I love it not only because of the variety we could have, but also because of the family time we spend.

8. Time management

➤ How do you organize your time?

I have a timetable in both my notebook and the cellphone to manage my time. At the beginning of every term I fill in the timetable firstly with the curriculum schedule. Then I can make proper plans of other activities according to the spare time I have.

➤ Do you think young people organize their time in the same way?

Most of my fellow students do it like me. Study is our prime task anyway, so we have to devote enough time to it. If there is much spare time left, we may consider joining in clubs or doing part-time jobs.

➤ Are you ever late for anything?

Yes, sometimes I sleep over in the morning and was late for the classes. Once I didn't manage to come back from part-time work to the class-meeting on time. But generally speaking I am a punctual person.

➤ What excuses do you use when you are late?

Excuses will not help anything, according to me. So I told the truth rather than used excuses, and made apologies to the teachers and my classmates. They all forgave me in those cases.

➤ (similar to above) What excuses do people have when they are late?

Well, some people don't like to use excuses when they are late. They just tell the truth and make apologies then. While some may make up lies or excuses, hoping not to be blamed by others. But the effect doesn't always turn out to be good.

➤ Do you like it when others are late?

Some people may mind it, but I don't really hate it when others are late. I think they must have their own reasons, or no one wants to be blamed for that.

➤ In your country, do people forgive others when they are late?

It depends on the exact circumstance. In a serious occasion such as a conference or an appointment, being late is annoying and may not be forgiven. But if it's a party among friends, I think people won't care if someone comes a little late.

➤ If you had more time, what would you do with the extra time?

I have been hoping to learn playing violin since I was 15 years old. But I have never had enough time to do it because I have to spend most of my time studying. So if I had more time I would use it to learn violin.

9. Emails & Letters

➤ Do you write many letters or emails?

Yes, I use email nearly everyday to contact my friends all over the world. But I write letters not so often, maybe once a month.

➤ **What are the differences between emails and letters?**

There are a few differences. Emails are very free, convenient, and most importantly, very fast, but emails cannot contain your emotion, and we hardly review emails later. Letters are different. They are inconvenient, and need a long time to be received, but letters may convey your emotions better.

➤ **What kind(s) of letter/email do you think is (are) the hardest to write?**

I think emails to professors are the hardest to write, because I will be afraid if I don't use the proper word or make him or her feel uncomfortable. But as for friends, we can write to each other quite freely.

➤ **How do you feel when you receive a letter or email?**

I will be very glad to receive a letter or email, because it means that there is someone who remembers me, and sends me something for greetings, or if they have something to discuss with me, I am also pleased to reply to them.

➤ **What kinds of emails (or letters) do you receive that make you feel happy?**

Whatever I receive, I will be glad. Of course, if my friends tell me some happy news about them such as weddings, or being admitted to a good university, such as Stanford, I will be really glad to share the happiness with them.

➤ **Do you think people will still write letters in the future?**

Yes, I think so. Because I think emails cannot take place of your emotions filled in the writing letter, and that's why you can see people still sending postcards, or writing letters to each other even they are really far away.

➤ **Do you keep letters?**

Yes. I kept a lot of letters from elementary school until now in my drawer. When I have freetime, I will take the letters out and review them. It seems that I return to that time, so I value the letters I keep.

➤ **How do you get on the internet?**

I use the broadband of China Telecom to get on the internet. There're actually two computers in my home. Now we use a router so that two computers can get online at the same time. Recently, I bought a smart phone, which can enable me to get online even when I'm outside.

➤ **Is the internet very popular in China?**

The internet is very popular in China. Now, we use the internet in every aspect of our life. We use it to entertain and search for information. It's also a very important way for us to communicate with each other. To be honest, because of the internet, I haven't written a real letter for more than ten years.

➤ **How can people learn things on the internet?**

A lot of people post their own experience on the internet and sometimes, you could also find some video clips that teach you how to do things. For me, I love reading Wikipedia to gain knowledge and solve my questions. Also, a lot of people use online courses to get their degrees without going to the campus, which is really convenient for our life.

➤ **Do you write letters to your parents often?**

Not really. Now, I use the cell phone all the time because I could receive the respond immediately so that I could communicate with my parents easier. If I write letters, I have to wait for a while to receive the reply, which will make me feel anxious. However, I sometimes write emails to friends that I haven't heard from for a long time.

10. Gifts

➤ What is your favourite gift?

I received lots of gifts from my relatives and friends, among which I liked the bicycle best. It's a birthday present from my parents when I was ten, and it's rare to have a mountain bike at that time. I used to ride it to study and it makes my life more convenient.

➤ Have you ever received a gift that you didn't like?

Well, I haven't received any gift I dislike, but I do have gifts I pile up for years, such as soft toys. I don't like soft toys so much as other girls, and I have about twenty toys in various types in stock.

➤ When was the last time you received a gift?

Actually it is today. My best friend came home from Taiwan, and she bought me some delicious snacks from Taiwan, so today was the last time I received a gift, and I love the taste very much.

➤ Do you prefer receiving a gift or giving a gift?

I prefer receiving a gift. For giving a gift, I need to consider the interest of that person, and sometimes it may not be accurate, so it is very hard to send gifts. But for receiving a gift, you can decide if you like it or not.

➤ Do you think it's difficult to choose what gift to give to people?

Of course it is very different to choose gifts for people. Everyone is different. I need to consider the interest of that person, and sometimes it may not be accurate, so it is very hard to send gifts.

➤ What were the gifts you sent to others recently?

I sent to my friends some cosmetics such as the eye shadow makeup or the daycare cream. Besides, I also sent one of my friends a blue bag that is very cute, and she liked it very much.

➤ Do you like giving gifts to your friends?

Yes, of course. I always bring some gifts to my friends if I travel. If they like my gifts very much, I will also feel very happy. So I like to choose gifts for them. Also, gifts can express my love to my friends or family members.

11. Painting & Drawing

➤ Do you like painting/ drawing? Why?

Yes, I do. I used to be fancy of drawing when I was in primary school. I just enjoyed copying the figure in my drawing book and making use of any color as I like. I felt proud of being praised by my relatives when they saw my drawing pasted on the wall of my house.

➤ **Do you think children should learn drawing?**

It depends. If a child has interest in drawing, it's OK for him to do. Parents should encourage their children to do what they like. However, it's useless to push every child to learn drawing.

➤ **Why do primary schools have painting class?**

It's said it's a great time for children at primary schools to do painting for plenty of advantages. Children can express what they think of the world through drawing, and many enjoy the various colors. Besides children will think for the figure they'd like to draw, the tool they need to complete their painting. Children will be more creative in the process of doing painting.

➤ **Why do people display art work (painting) at their homes?**

Most people do that because of their love of art work. For example, people in love of photographing, though they are amateur, and they prefer to hang the pictures they took at home. Also, there are people enjoying art work as a kind of decoration, and they like to appreciate works of others. For instance, many wealthy people like to collect and display famous art work.

➤ **Have you ever bought any painting?**

Yes, I have. The only painting I bought was the one sold at the charity activity held in my secondary school. Each year, a fete will be organised when students donate something to sell to others, and the money will be collected to help students from poor families. The painting was a copy of the famous painting "Playing Shrimps" by a new student, whom I made friends with later.

➤ **Do you think painting (or drawing) is important for adults?**

Yes, I do. Adults can draw or paint what they like in their spare time. It is a hobby that won't disturb others, and you can enjoy it very much if you can explore it deeply.

➤ **Do you still draw those pictures that you did in your childhood?**

Not really. I don't draw the sun, flowers, and trees as I did in my childhood. Now I draw those elements in a different way, in a more abstract way.

12. Patience

➤ **Is it important to be patient? Why?**

Yes, it is, because people won't do things successfully without being patient. For example, people, more or less, had the experience of making mistakes on a math test because they were not patient enough. Patience, however, enables people to discover where the trap lies and find the key information to a correct answer.

➤ **Is it easy to be patient? Why?**

Well, it depends, some people are patient while others are not. Patience is an expression of one's mood and character. To be patient is not easy, but patience can be developed through habit. It's said going fishing and practicing handwriting helps people to slow down and be patient.

➤ **How can people be patient?**

People lose patience when they meet what seemingly insoluble or when, what they are doing costs longer time than they expected. So I think people should be optimistic, and have an overall judgment of what they engage in.

Besides, they can set up goals step by step to reach a final success and they should encourage themselves by whatever improvement they make. In this way, people won't get upset and easily lose their patience.

➤ **When do people need to be patient?**

People need to be patient all the time whatever they are doing. For example, researchers have to spend months or years to collect data for their experiments, and they may repeat a single experiment again and again.

Without patience, they may make mistakes or could not hold on to the end.

➤ **What do you do when waiting for the bus or something else?**

While waiting for a bus, I prefer to play games on my cell-phone, or call my friend to kill time. As it is said, the time spent on waiting always seems to be longer than it is. I will lose patience if I do nothing but just wait.

➤ **Are people now less patient than people in the past? Why?**

Yes, we do. We are now living in a rapid developing world. Flights and high-speed railways enable people to travel around in short time. Fast food or take-away food makes it convenient for people to eat while walking. Exposed to the world, people are made to get used to and catch up with the fast pace. They have less time left to be patient.

13. TV program

➤ **Do you like watching TV?**

Yes, I like watching TV. TV is an indispensable part of my life. Though computer has been a popular way to watch kinds of programs, I prefer to watch TV together with my family.

➤ **How often do you watch TV?**

I watch TV almost every day. I have a regular working day. I usually take a walk aftersupper with my mother, and we will spend two hours watching TV series together. While on weekends when I'm free at home, watching TV is a good way for me to relax.

➤ **What kind of programs you'd like to watch?**

I enjoy a range of programs. I prefer to watch TV series filmed in China and foreign countries like Korea and America in the evening. At weekends I'd like to see various entertainment programs, like Happy Camp. Also, I'd like to watch documentary programs in CCTV-News broadcasted in English.

➤ **Do you watch foreign programs?**

Yes, I do. One entertainment program from Korea, called Running Man, is a bit funny, and I often laugh to tears watching it. Also I prefer to see foreign movies played in channel CCTV-6, and there are popular films from several countries. I'm also interested in watching the oversea documentaries, through which I can appreciate the landscape and culture of foreign countries.

➤ **Do you like watching TV with your family or friends or by yourself?**

I don't like watching TV alone. I prefer to do it with my friends or family members. When I watch TV, I also like talking and sharing my feelings with others. It's like an important part of TV watching. When I watch TV alone, I'll feel bored and hard to concentrate.

➤ **Do you think you watch too much TV when you were a child?**

I don't think so. You know, when I was a child, my parents were very strict with me, and they even forced me to learn many other skills after I finished my school work. Actually, I missed a lot of interesting cartoon programs in my childhood.

14. Trees(forest)

➤ **Did you climb a tree when you were a child?**

Yes, I did. I grew up in a village where I enjoyed a wonderful childhood. Together with my friends, I was fond of playing in the woods after school on summer days. I remember clearly that one day I climbed to a tree about 5 meters tall to get baby birds from their nest, for which I was harshly blamed by my father.

➤ **Do you like to go to the forest (for vacation)? Why?**

Yes, I do. For times I see people equipped with compass and flashlight exploring in the forest. I know, however, what they are doing is not so cool and exciting as it appears, I long for camping in forestsomedays. Forest, an ideal habitat for diverse creatures, is always an attraction to people, where we can relax in a world of green and enjoy the company of wildlife.

➤ **Do people need to protect trees? Why?**

Yes, people should protect trees. As we know, trees absorb carbon dioxide, sunlight and water to produce nutrients, releasing oxygen for creatures in the world, that's why the forest is called the lung of the earth. The excessive logging humans made has caused serious environmental problems, so it's high time for every person to take action to protect trees.

➤ **Is it comfortable/ nice to live in a place with lots of trees?**

Yes, it's a pleasure to live in a place full of trees. One of my aunts lives in mountain area where lots of bamboos are planted. Every spring, my parents take me to visit her and dig bamboo shoots together, which is full of fun. My aunt is expert in cooking and she always surprises us by the delicious meal she cooked with bamboo shoots in various ways.

➤ **Have you ever planted a tree?**

Yes, I have. I planted a gardenia by myself in my garden. My neighbor has a large gardenia in his garden which gives out alluring scent when it's blooming in July, so I beg him for a seedling. On a warm spring morning, I planted the seedling joyfully. Though I am away from home, I always miss the gardenia each July.

➤ **Do we need to plant trees? What are the effects of trees (forests)?**

Yes, we need. Trees we plant can clear the air, reduce the noise of traffic and protect buildings from heavy wind. That's why citizens are encouraged to plant trees. Trees provide people with oxygen, food as well as woods for lighting, building and furniture, etc; trees play an important role in preventing water and soil loss. I have to say it will be impossible for humans to live without trees.

15. Being busy

➤ **Are you busy recently?**

Yes, I am. I've been preparing for the test, and I am on training for a driving license. I have training lesson once in three days, and have to get up at 6 o'clock so that I can have more time to practice in the morning when it's not so hot. I feel exhausted after staying in the car for three hours.

➤ **Are you busy recently? (If not) When was the last time you were busy?**

No, I am free recently. I had a busy autumn holiday when I signed for a diving license. I had training lesson every other day, and had to get up at 6 o'clock so that I could have more time to practice in the morning when it's not so hot. I felt exhausted after staying in the car for three hours.

➤ **Do you like being busy?/ Do you prefer to be busy or to be free?**

Yes, I like being busy. Sometimes I feel lost when I am free at home. Many of my friends prefer to relax at home, and they enjoy sleeping or watching TV for a whole day, which is impossible for me. I'd rather do some laundry or go to gym to do some exercise.

➤ **Was there a time when you felt stressed out (or under pressure) because of a busy schedule?**

There was once I felt stressed out, and it was about years ago, which was still impressive. That day I had to take a certificate test which I signed up months ago, however, unexpectedly I received a phone call telling me to go for a job interview in the afternoon. It took about two hours for me to get the interview after I finished my test. I was nervous of taking exams or going interview, and I had to confront both on that day, which was really a tough day for me.

➤ **Have you experienced stress at work?**

Yes, I have. There were times when I had to finish difficult projects, and it's stressful when I had not done well as planned while the deadline was coming. Thanks to the advice of my colleagues, I made it. I did feel terrible on times like that, but I appreciated the suffering, for no pain, no gain.

➤ **How do you handle stress?**

I prefer to get rid off stress by singing or doing exercise. I used to call up my friends and sang songs in KTV, though I am not good at singing. We sometimes lost ourselves in singing till we were hoarse. When the weather is fine, I prefer to go hiking or cycling to get myself exhausted. Then I can get a sound sleep to get myself refreshed.

➤ **Do you think you will be busy in the next few years?/ Do you think you will be busier in the future than you are now?**

Yes, I think so. Firstly, I need to learn as much as I could, so that I won't fall behind others. At the same time, I will spare some time to be with friends and some time to accompany my family. Life with family and friends around is more enjoyable.

16. News

➤ **Do you read news?**

Yes, I like reading news, for I think it's a good way for me to catch up with the fast developing world by reading the updated news happening around.

➤ **How do you get news? Reading newspaper or other ways?**

I get news in several ways. I prefer to read newspaper after lunch when I am at home. While at school, I usually surf the internet to see the news. Also, sometimes I will read news by phones while I'm waiting for sb. to kill time.

➤ **What kind of news do you often read?**

I like to read news about stories of people or events in my city. I often read the Qianjiang Evening News issued in Zhejiang Province, where various unusual things people came across are reported. Also, the news of kinds of activities, such as a singer giving a performance to the city, is attractive to me.

➤ **Who do you think prefer to read news, young people or old people?**

Well, it depends. In general, old people appear to be more interested in reading news. Lots of old people can be seen reading newspaper, or listening to news report in the radio. However, many young people prefer to read news about what they interest, such as sports, fashion clothes, and stock, and so on.

➤ **How do you make yourself to keep up to date?**

Well, firstly I will surf online to be informed of what's happening around the world. To be clear of the policy carried out and social events, I won't be alienated from society. Also I can make friends with people of all walks of life whose idea will help me get better view of the developing world. Of course, I will keep learning what's related with my work, so that I won't fall behind others.

17. Shopping /Clothes /Fashion

➤ **What kind of clothes you like best?**

I like casual clothes and prefer to wear T-shirt and jeans. I believe shirts and jeans are the most comfortable clothes. They are easy to wash, and jeans are a great match to types of clothes.

➤ **Who chose clothes for you, when you were young?**

When I was a child, my mother took care of my wearing, besides, my aunt often made and bought clothes for me. My aunt is a tailor, and I really admire her for that she could make use of pieces of cloth left by her customers to make a beautiful dress for me.

➤ **Can you give advice to your friend about choosing clothes?**

Well, in most cases I can't. I am not good at selecting clothes, for I don't know if the style or color of clothes goes well with a person. Besides, different people enjoy different preferences. I actually was the one needing help and I used to invite my friends to give me ideas of choosing clothes.

➤ **Do you like the clothes you wear?**

Yes, I do. Wearing does great influence on one's mood, that's exactly how I feel. I usually wear what I like, so that I feel happy and confident. However, I have to wear uniforms or formal clothes in some occasions which I have to get accustomed to.

➤ **What you mind/care while choosing clothes?**

The quality of clothes is the first thing I will think about while doing shopping. Usually, I will buy clothes in Specialty Stores, which are chain stores of brand clothes. Clothes bought in the stores will last years, saving me much time. Then sometimes I will think of the style and I'd like to try new ones if they go with my clothes I'm wearing.

➤ **Where do you usually do your shopping? Where do you buy your clothes?**

I will buy daily necessities through online stores, but when it comes to clothes, I will certainly go to the shopping mall, because although online shopping is very convenient, in terms of clothes, we don't know the size and color, so we won't know if it is suitable for us by simply seeing the picture online.

➤ **Do you enjoy shopping in big shopping malls (big shopping centers)?**

Yes, I do. I like to go shopping in big shopping malls very much. First, the environment there is better than the small street shops. Second, the service there is also very good. Finally, I think it is much more fun to shop at big shopping center than online shopping.

➤ **How often do you buy clothes? What styles of clothes do you like to buy?**

Once or twice a month. I buy clothes I really like, no matter which kind of style. As long as it is the suitable style for me. I will decide to buy the clothes. Clothes don't wear us: we wear clothes.

➤ **Why some people don't like shopping?**

I don't know. Maybe it is because they feel it is very troublesome to shop. They have enough clothes, or they don't care about their appearance, so they are not shopaholics.

➤ **What do you feel about the trend of the fashion?**

The trend of the fashion is changing all the time, sometimes vintage is the fashion, while sometimes Korean style becomes the fashion. It is really hard to understand the trend of the fashion.

➤ **Have you ever bought clothes that you (now) don't like?**

Of course. I sometimes bought clothes that I don't wear now. Maybe at that time, I liked the clothes very much, but as the time went by, I have turned my interest to another style, so the clothes gradually became the one that I don't like.

➤ **Do you think you will like wear a different style of clothes when you are older?**

Maybe. Who knows? I am changing all the time about the style of clothes, and of course I think I may change to a different style when I become older.

➤ **What types of clothes are in fashion now?**

Probably Japanese style. I was an exchange student in Japan, and my style has been influenced by the fashion there, and when I came back, many friends and relatives say my style makes me look like a Japanese.

➤ **Do you think fashion trends will be the same when you are old(er)?**

Of course not. There is nothing that stays the same all the time; everything will change, and fashion will also change quickly from one style to another style. So I think when I am older, the style may be different from that of now.

➤ **Are you very interested in fashion and clothes?**

Yes, I love fashion because I think fashion can make our life more enjoyable. For young people, we should care about how we look. Of course, it's also not right to follow fashion blindly. I would buy new clothes every year in order to be up-to-date.

➤ **Do you like to wear fashionable clothes? Do you wear designer clothes?**

Yes, I do. I think fashionable clothes can make me feel more confident. Of course, I'll try my best to wear something different from others because I want to be unique. When people are all wearing the similar style clothes, it won't be too good so we should also care about the individuality in clothes selection.

➤ **Do you have a lot of nice clothes?**

I don't have a lot, but some. Most of my clothes were carefully selected. When I buy a piece of clothing, I would usually wear it for a long time so I care about the brand and quality. I think bad quality clothes can make us look cheap and destroy our taste.

➤ **Is there anything that you used to wear in the past that you don't wear now ?**

When I was a child, I liked wearing clothes with cute cartoon characters or animals. But now I'm a grown-up, so I wouldn't wear something that childish. I guess it's the biggest change for me.

➤ **How often do you go shopping for clothes?**

I don't go shopping very often, about once every other month. I only go shopping when I really need to add some pieces to my closet and I'm pretty efficient because I know exactly what I want. I could finish my shopping in one or two hours and buy a lot of stuff.

18. Politeness

➤ **Is it important to be polite?**

Of course. If people are rude to others, they cannot get help from others when they are in trouble. Besides, more conflicts will occur because people easily lose patience while dealing with those who behave impolitely.

➤ **How to be polite?**

Being polite is a daily matter, and people can be polite in ways. I believe not to disturb others or to make trouble for others is also one kind of politeness. For example, not to smoke in the public, as smoking is harmful to people's health.

➤ **Is being polite different now from that in the past?**

There are differences. For example, to be polite, people in China used to bow to the old, to teachers or leaders when they met. People nowadays seldom do that. Instead, people shake hands with guests, or greeting others they know well.

19. Friends and family

➤ **Do you have any (or, many) close friends?**

Yes, I have a few good friends. I can trust them and tell them my troubles and worries. It's always good to have someone to turn to when you have something

you want to share with others. I value my friendship with them very much because friends are an important part of our life.

➤ **What qualities make them good friends?**

I think good friends should be honest to each other and care about each other's feelings. It's also important for good friends to have the same topics and same values so that they can share many things in their lives.

➤ **Do you live with your family?**

I don't live with my family, but I could visit them during vacations. I think it's always good to live close with them. We could have dinner and spend weekend time together. It's nice to have quality time with family members because they're the ones who love us the most.

➤ **Do your family and friends still live in your hometown?**

Yes, my family and most of my friends still live in my hometown, so it's very convenient for me to see them whenever I go back to my hometown. It's always nice to see so many people you know well around you.

➤ **Do you think family members should live together? (Why? /Why not?)**

I think it depends. For me, I prefer to live by myself but be close to my family members. If we live together, under the same roof, there'll be a lot of conflicts between us, but if we live too far away from each other, we'll miss each other. So it's better to be close but not together.

➤ **When do you spend time with your family? What do you do together?**

I usually spend the major holidays with my family members. I really enjoy the time that we do something together, such as playing pokers or going shopping. Occasionally, we would cook a family meal together.

➤ **Do you often go out with your friends?**

Maybe once a week, but of course, usually with different friends. I like going shopping with friends because they could always give me good advice and help me make sensible decisions. When traveling, I also love going with a bunch of friends because we could do many fun things together.

➤ **Is your family very important to you?**

Of course. No one can replace our family members in our life. We should try our best to spend some quality time with our family members and make them feel happy. I think family can help us to feel a sense of belonging and identity as well.

➤ **Do you prefer to spend time with your family or your friends?**

I don't know. Sometimes I want to spend time with my friends because we have a lot of things in common and it's easy for us to find interesting topics to talk about. But when I'm with my family, I can feel the love from them, which make me feel comfortable.

➤ **What do you do in your free time with your friends?**

I enjoy chatting, traveling, and shopping with my friends. When we do things alone, we'll feel lonely, but if we do something with a bunch of friends, we'll feel the merry atmosphere. Maybe that's why people always say "the more, the merrier". I agree with that a lot. When I travel with a group of friends, I will usually laugh more and feel more enjoyable.

➤ **Are there any times when you prefer to be alone?**

Yes. When I'm spending too much time with others, I'll want to have some solitary time to help myself think better and enjoy some time to read or watch movie by myself. I think a balance of solitary and group life is healthy for us.

20. Walking

➤ Do you like walking?

Yes, I do. Walking is a good way for exercise and relaxing. Walking for an hour after supper can keep my body fit, without worrying about eating too much. Besides, I can walk without thinking about anything, and relax my eyes to see the plants and people doing exercise along the path I'm walking on.

➤ How often do you take a walk?

Weather permitting, I will go out for a walk everyday whenever I am free. I'm living with my sister who prefers to take a walk with me. We usually walk along the park for about an hour. It's interesting to see people passing by, old and young, in a group of two or more.

➤ Do you prefer to walk in countryside or in the city?

I like both. Working in the city, I usually walk in the park where there are loads of people, some dancing to music played in the stereo sound box provided by the government, some chatting with their friends, some wondering and watching others. It's interesting. When I return home in a village, I take a walk with my mother in countryside. Walking there is much quieter and the fresh air makes me relaxed and comfortable.

21. Sunshine

➤ Do you like sunshine? Why?

Yes, I like sunshine. Life is more colorful on sunny day when I can go outside to play sports. Staying in sunshine makes me feel warm, and sunshine is helpful. Though humans do not rely on sunshine, like plants, for a living, the ultraviolet stimulates the form of vitamin D, which helps our body to absorb calcium. Besides, ultraviolet is useful in killing harmful bacteria.

➤ What you like to do in sunshine/ on sunny day?

I'd like to play sports on sunny days, and playing badminton or going cycling with my friends are my favourite. I prefer to ride a bike to work, especially in spring and autumn when it's warm. Also, when I am free at home, I'd like sitting under sun, it's wonderful to enjoy the sunshine while doing nothing.

➤ What things do you think is hard to do in sunshine?/ what you dislike to do when it's sunny outside?

I enjoy being in the sunshine, though I dislike doing anything in summer sunny days. It's much too hot in summer, and the temperature can reach above forty degrees centigrade with the sun shining in the sky. I never like to go out if I have a choice.

➤ Do you like going outside on weekends on sunny days?

Yes, I do. Sometimes, I'd like to invite my friends to go for a picnic on warm spring and autumn sunny days. Lying in the sun, we'd like to share the interesting things in our life. Or we can take a walk while talking. More often, I'd like to play badminton with my brother in the playground of our community for an hour when it's sunny.

➤ **Have you ever been a place without sunshine?**

Well, the place without sunshine I've been is a Hat rented by my friend. Facing North, the small flat, about twenty square meters, receives no sunshine all year round. It's really cold there in winter, and it's humid on rainy days. It's uncomfortable to live in a place without sunshine.

22 Leisure Time

➤ **How much free time (or time to relax) do you have (per week)?**

I have two days off every week, and I think it is not enough for me to relax. I don't really have a good time. I hope I could have more shop holidays than now, so I can visit my friends and go traveling more.

➤ **What do you do in your spare time (= free time)?**

I will do many things. If I stay at home, then I will read books or watch TVs. Sometimes I will also go outside to take part in outdoor activities or parties with my friends and family members.

➤ **(In the evenings), do you prefer to relax at home and watch TV or go out with your friends?**

It depends. Sometimes if I am tired, I would prefer to relax at home, either watching TV or reading novels. If I have a lot of energy, I would like to go out with my friends.

➤ **Do you have a lot of fun in the city?**

Yes, of course. There are a lot of entertainment activities in the city. You can go to the cinema to watch films, the KTV to sing songs, the gym to exercise your body, or the restaurant to have a meal. As long as you want to, you could always find interesting places to enjoy yourself.

➤ **Do you think it's important to (have time to) relax?**

Yes, I do. I think it is very important to have time to relax. We cannot work all day, it may affect our efficiency. We need to have time to relax, so that we will have better performance.

➤ **Do men and women relax (= spend their free time) in the same way?**

No, I don't think so. Men will prefer to play basketball or watch games. But women like to go shopping. Of course, they will also choose to travel or watch films.

➤ **When do you spend time with your family or your friends?**

I spend time with my family every evening and every weekend, because we will usually have dinner together. On weekends, our family will go to the tea house to relax. Sometimes, if I have free time, I will also go out with my friends to have a meal.

➤ **Who are more important to you, family or friends?**

I think family is more important to me, because family members cannot be replaced by others; you can always find new friends, but it is not possible for you to choose family members.

23. Bicycles

➤ **Do you ever ride a bicycle?**

Yes, I do. I've been riding a bicycle since I was six years old. I think it's a great fun to ride a bicycle.

➤ **What do you use a bicycle for?**

I used to ride my bicycle to my middle school which is about 30 minutes' riding from my home. Now I usually ride to work when it's not raining. It takes me about 40 minutes riding to work, while I have to spend at least an hour to cover the trip by bus. Besides, I enjoy watching passers-by who, like me, hurry to work.

➤ **How old were you when you first learned to ride a bicycle?**

Well, I had my first three-wheel bike at six, which was more a toy. I had a great fun riding it with my cousin. Then my father bought me a bicycle on my tenth birthday. I, unexpectedly, had no difficulty in riding the bicycle.

➤ **Are bicycles popular in China?**

Yes, bicycles are popular. Bicycles are one of the important transports in China. When I was a child, streets were crowded with bicycles, and cars were rare. Now, there are various bikes for different usages. Mountain bikes are popular with teenagers; mini-bikes are more used by girls; and a range of children's bikes are designed for children at different ages.

➤ **Would you say it's difficult to learn to ride a bicycle?**

I don't think it's difficult to learn riding a bicycle, based on my own experience. I started riding a bike as a toy, and then I rode a bicycle without any instruction. In general, however, many children may fall down and hurt themselves at the beginning of learning.

➤ **What are the reasons why people ride bicycles?**

In the past, bicycles were one of the main transports, and it's convenient for people, being able to ride, to go around by bike. Now, people ride bicycles as one way of doing exercise. Besides, more people in big cities prefer to ride to work, for the heavy traffic on road takes them more time to their destination by buses or cars.

➤ **What are the advantages (or benefits) of riding a bicycle?**

First of all, riding a bicycle is an ideal way for exercise, so it's good to people's health. Secondly, bicycle is an efficient tool for people in big cities where the traffic is heavy, and more people prefer to ride their bikes instead of driving. Thirdly, it's convenient to ride a bicycle. People can stop anywhere, and they can even park their bikes halfway home, and do some shopping for example.

➤ **What kinds of people ride bicycles?**

People, old and young, male and female, all ride bicycles. Most people use bicycles as tools for short-distance trips. Some teenagers are fond of riding mountain bikes for mountain climbing, which is popular, and kinds of racing competitions are held every year.

➤ **Do children also ride bicycles in your country?**

Yes, they do. But in cities, not many children are seen riding bicycles on the road. Children below fourteen are not allowed to ride by themselves on roads. Besides, the running cars and buses are dangerous, so many parents prefer drive their children. However, children in counties are much freer to ride bicycles. They often ride together, in a group, to schools.

➤ **Why do children enjoy riding bicycles?**

Maybe because riding bicycles is a special experience. I remember I fell in love with riding the first time I got on the bicycle at the age of ten. I once wondered how it's possible for bikes to operate when I pedaled, and I enjoyed the feeling while riding in the wind. The soft wind was so comfortable while I was riding.

- **Would you say bicycles are suitable for people of all ages?/ Can you think of any people who are not suited to riding a bicycle?**

Yes, I think so. But children below fourteen should be under the company of adults while riding on roads, as they are not mature enough to deal with the danger that may occur. People, over seventy, are not physically fit enough, and riding is energy costing, so it's better for those old, who have heart disease, to give up riding.

- **Do you think bicycles are suitable for present society?**

Yes, I think so. The increasing cars have caused many problems, like traffic jam, environmental pollution, the lack of parking places, and more car accidents. I think it's high time for people to return to ride bicycles. Besides, people are in face of more healthy problems because of lacking of exercise, and riding bicycles is an ideal way for people to do exercise.

- **What do you think are the advantages (and disadvantages) of bicycles compared to cars?**

Advantages: firstly, the speed of bicycles is much slower than that of cars, so it's much safer. Secondly, riding bicycles is good to people's health, and they will not have the trouble of diseases relating to shoulder and lumbar, which are big problems for those who often drive. Thirdly, it's much cheaper to use a bicycle, while driving cars costs a lot in fuel, maintenance and parking fee.

- **Would you say it's safe (suitable) to ride a bicycle in the city (or in China)?**

It's not safe to ride a bicycle in the city. Nowadays, a growing number of people drive themselves, some of whom are not experienced enough, and many accidents happen because of that. Besides, electric bicycles are popular with people, for they are faster than ordinary bikes and cheaper than car driving. Electric bicycles take up a lot of space reserved for bicycling, and their fast speed makes it dangerous for bicyclers.

24. Mobile Phones

- **Do you have a mobile phone (= "a cell phone")? What do you use it for? Is your cell phone important for you in your daily life?**

Yes, I have a mobile phone, and I cannot imagine a life without my mobile phone. I use it to send messages or call my family and my friends. Sometimes, I also use the mobile phone to get on the Internet.

- **When do you use it? How often do you use it?**

Whenever I have something to discuss with my family or friends, I will use the mobile phone. Or when I want to search some information, I will get on the Internet by mobile phone.

I use it everyday, and I cannot imagine a life without a mobile phone, I may not lead a normal life with it.

- **When did you get your first mobile phone?**

In my middle school, I got my first mobile phone as a birthday present. It's a Nokia, so I have developed great love for the brand Nokia, and that's why I still use Nokia now. I think Nokia can type messages very fast.

- **Is there anything you dislike about using cell phones?**

Not really. I think I dislike about using cell phones only when it occupies a lot of my time, and I don't have enough time to finish important and urgent things. I don't use it so often now.

- **Do you think you will continue using your mobile phone in the future?**

Of course, I will continue using mobile phones in the future, because I cannot leave a mobile phone and lead a normal life. But maybe one day I will change my Nokia for iPhone, since it's so popular nowadays.

- **Do people in your country like using mobile phone?**

In fact, mobile phone has become a necessity in people's daily life. Young people are especially fond of using mobile phone. We don't only use it as a means of communication, but also an entertainment tool and a daily companion.

- **Have you ever had any problems using your mobile phone when traveling?**

Yes. The signals are not always good when travelling, especially when I am on fast-moving vehicles or in the mountainous areas.

- **How do you think mobile phones will develop (or) change in the future?**

If you ask me, I would say that some mobile phones will become as small as an earphone jack so as to be easily portable. And the rest may be of a notebook size to provide convenient uses in processing documents and photos.

25. Concert & Music

- **Do you think it is necessary for children to learn musical instrument?**

It's not necessarily. Playing musical instrument indeed is beneficial to children, making them better at memory, for example. However, if a child has no interest in music, there is no need to push him, because it's hard to learn instrument. And I think it's hard for a child without gift to learn well.

- **What kind of music do you like best?**

Well, I don't have any particular preference of music. Music helps me relax and I listen to various kinds of music. Usually I listen to soft music which makes me calm down when I am nervous or angry. At times I'm in good mood, I think rock music is fine, and I may dance to music.

- **Have you ever been to a live concert? When was the last time you attended a concert?**

Yes. One year ago, I attended a live piano concert, and I like it very much. A group of artists played famous piano sonatas such as that of Mozart and Bach. Really amazing!

- **Would you like to go to a concert in the future? If you have the chance, will you attend the concert?**

Yes, of course. I would like to go to a concert in the future. I think it is good to enjoy a live concert. I am planning to attend a rock band's concert when they have a world tour.

- **Would you prefer to watch a concert on TV or to attend a live concert?**

I would prefer to attend a live concert. To watch a concert on TV is very different from the live one. You cannot enjoy the atmosphere, the ambience, the close distance to the stage.

➤ **What is the most popular concert in China?**

I think the most popular concert in China is the concert held by famous stars or bands such as Faye Wong, or bands like Beyond. Also, Korean and Japanese bands such as SMAP are also popular here.

➤ **What type of music did you like when you were a child? What about now?**

When I was a child, I like classical music of such as Mozart and Bach very much. Now I still keep an interest in this type of music. Now, I have developed a new interest in pop music.

➤ **Do you have a lot of classmates who play musical instruments?**

Yes. A lot of my classmates had to take music classes after school. Some of them wanted to learn by themselves and some were forced by their parents. I also learned how to play the piano but I stopped when I was in middle school because I felt my workload was too heavy. I think playing a musical instrument can make our life more enjoyable so I'm glad that I learned how to play the piano.

26. Birthdays&Parties

➤ **Do you like birthdays?**

Yes, I like birthdays. When I was a child, I looked forward to the day since the beginning of a new year, for on the day every year, my Mum would cook a big meal for me and I could get lots of presents from my relatives. Now I celebrate my birthday with my friends at school when we have a dinner outside and go to KTV to enjoy the day.

➤ **Do people in China celebrate birthdays?**

Yes, we do. Traditionally, people will give a birthday party for a child when he is one, ten and twenty years old; and for an old man on his/ her fifty, sixty and seventy, that's every ten years. On times like these, people will have a big family party when all the relatives are invited. Of course, people celebrate their birthdays every year, and they often have a big meal with his/ her parents or children.

➤ **Are any birthdays (reaching a certain age) especially important in your country?**

Yes, the birthdays when one is twenty and fifty are much more important. When one reaches twenty, the age standing for one's being an adult in China, one needs to be responsible as he's no longer a child. While at the age of fifty, one becomes a member of the old, and his/her children should care more of their ageing parent.

➤ **How do Chinese people celebrate birthdays?**

Chinese people would like to have a birthday party with their relatives and friends. On that day, people used to prepare a big meal at home for the guests, and it's just a day for guests to get together to relax. Nowadays, however, guests are invited to have dinner at restaurant where they may watch performances, like magic or singing organized to entertain the guests.

➤ **Who do you like to celebrate your birthday with? With your friends or family?**

I prefer to celebrate my birthday with my family. On the day, my mum will cook all my favourite dishes for me, and I will receive best wishes from my family. It's joyful

to enjoy the noodles with them. I'm thankful to my Mum who suffered a lot to give birth to me.

➤ **Do all your friends know when your birthday is?**

No. Only some of my friends know my birthday. I used to celebrate my birthdays with my family and relatives, and friends were seldom invited. I had my first birthday with friends when I was studying at college which was thousands of miles away from my home. Though I am happy with friends to celebrate my birthday, I miss the times with my family.

➤ **Do people in China have birthday parties? (Why/ Why not)**

Yes, but the birthday parties in China are different from those abroad. Chinese people prefer to share happiness with others. In general, relatives will be invited to one's home to celebrate, and have big meal for lunch and supper with the host. At night, firework will be played to celebrate the happy day.

➤ **Do you think it's important to give a (special) gift to someone on their birthday?**

Yes, it is. It's traditional in China for the adults to give the old birthday gifts, wishing them having long life; and to give the young gifts expecting their happy growing. Gifts, no matter what, express care and wishes for a person. It's not easy to choose gifts for others, and it always takes me a lot of time to decide on buying special and useful gifts.

➤ **Do children and adults celebrate birthdays in the same way?**

Ofcoursenot. Children's birthdays may be not so special. The playmates and friends of a child will be invited to attend the party, during which they can play games together and enjoy delicious food. While for adults, many of them tend to create their own unique days. On the day, one may challenge something he has never tried before: one may buy something expensive; one may spend the whole day sleeping at home to relax; one may invite his friends out singing at KTV. In a word, it's a day for one to enjoy as he likes, if he has time.

➤ **What do children do when they have a birthday party?**

In general, the child will play with other children. Sometimes the child will perform for the guests. At lunch time, a cake will be set on the table, and the child will get candles into the cake. After making wishes, the child will divide the cake and offer it to all the guests. Then he needs to eat noodles, which stands for a long life in China.

➤ **Do you like parties? Why?**

Yes. I do. I think it's an ideal time for me to get together with my relatives or friends at parties, when we can enjoy the company of each other, and can relax ourselves. People now are busy with work, and we have less time to hang out with friends or stay with relatives.

➤ **Do you like parties with young people or old people?**

I prefer parties with young people, for we share more things in common. I'd like to have parties with friends on weekends when we are off work. We often go to KTV to sing songs and dance till we get exhausted, as we think it's a good way to relax: sometimes, we'd like to spend half a day enjoying coffee at a cafe and chatting about our life.

➤ **Do you prefer family parties or parties with friends?**

I like family parties better. It's comfortable to stay with my relatives who are familiar with me. For they are families to me. That is, I can be myself and enjoy the happiness with the ones I love on family parties. Since I took up work, I have less time to stay with my relatives, so I appreciate family parties.

➤ **When you go to a party, what do you usually do?**

On a family party, I prefer to chat with my relatives, share our happiness and trouble in life; sometimes, I will play games with my little nephews and nieces, who like playing *The eagle catches the chicken* with me. While on parties with friends, we will gossip, make fun of each other, sing and dance together to enjoy ourselves.

27. Photographs

➤ **Do you like taking photos?**

Yes, I love taking photos. Whenever I see anything special or interesting, I would take them down. I have several albums keeping the photos I like best.

➤ **How do you take photographs?**

I used to take photographs by cameras, and I had to develop films to get the photos. But now, I usually take photos by my phones, which is much convenient. But when I on a trip, I prefer to take pictures by digital camera, and the pictures taken by a camera are of higher quality.

➤ **What do you like to photograph?**

I'd like to take photos of many things. I'd like to take photos of people. Days ago on my trip home, I took a picture of a lovely boy who sat next to me with his mother. I also love to shoot animals and flowers, like birds and lotus.

➤ **Do you like cameras?**

Yes, I do. I think the camera is one of the greatest inventions in the world. Cameras take down and keep special moments forever. Though nowadays, people can use their phones to take photos, I believe it's better to do it by cameras. Besides, people can take out a photo seconds later after it's taken, how interesting it is!

➤ **How do you organize (or keep, or save) your photos?**

I have several albums, in which hundreds of photos are saved. But more pictures are kept in my computer. It costs a bit to develop all the pictures. And it's convenient to share those images online with my friends.

➤ **How do you think you will keep (save) your photos in the future?**

I will keep my photos in both albums and computer. After a trip, I prefer to develop some photos I took and watch albums with my relatives who pay a visit to me. It's joyful to share my trip with others by the photos. Also, more of my photos will be saved in my computer, and I'd like to upload some of them online to share with my friends living far away.

➤ **Are there any photos on your wall at home?**

Yes, there are. I put up photos on wall in several rooms. Most of the photos hang on the wall are those about beautiful scenery, a bit like paintings. All those are put on the wall of our dining room, lounge and study. The others on our bedrooms are pictures about my family.

- **Would you say photographs are a good way to preserve memories?**

Yes, I agree with that. The photos often remind me of the past whenever I watch them, and I never get tired of that. Photos are a great help to our brains to preserve memories.

- **Do you think it's important to preserve memories?**

Yes, I think so. The memories, special and valuable, are indispensable part of our life. I obtain happiness from memory. Whenever I feel sad, I prefer to take out my photos and look at the happy smiles I had taken, which often get me out of my feeling low. Without memory, I may lose myself.

28. School

- **Did your parents choose a secondary school for you?**

Not really, I had to take a high school entrance test and the schools would admit us according to our scores. Because my score was good, I went to the best high school in my city. If the students couldn't get a good score, they wouldn't be able to go to good high schools.

- **Which school did you like the most? Will you send your children to that school?**

I liked my middle school most, but I probably won't send my children to that kind of school. I prefer private schools because the teachers are better and they can take care of the students more. Plus, most private schools have small classes, which are good for the students to receive enough attention from the school and teachers.

- **How did you go to school everyday?**

When I was a child, I lived very close to my school, so everyday I could just walk to school. I think it's nice because I didn't need to get up too early to catch a bus or wait for my parents to send me to school. Actually, some of my classmates had to travel for a long time to go to school, so I always felt I was blessed.

- **What was the first school you attended?**

The first school I attended was a kindergarten near my mother's working place. Every day she took me there on her way to work. I loved it very much, for the teachers were motherly. And there were slides and swings on the playground.

- **Where was it?**

It was on Xinhua Road, Downtown District in Hangzhou. And it was in a 5 minutes' walk distance from my mother's working place.

- **Was it far from you home?**

Not that far. It took about 10 minutes to arrive there by bike. But since it was nearer to my mother's working place, she took me there on her way to work and fetched me in the afternoon every day.

29. Relative

- **How often do you pay a visit to your relatives?**

Well, it depends. I usually visit my relatives on holidays. I used to visit my aunts on weekends when I was in primary school, but then I seldom had time because of the heavy homework to complete.

➤ **When was the last time you visited your relatives?**

I visited my aunt this National Holiday a week ago. During the three days there, I had a great time with my cousin who led me to pick up Chinese chestnut in the hills. It's my first time to pick up chestnut from the trees.

➤ **What you usually do at your relatives'?**

I usually play with my cousins at my relatives'. I have several cousins a bit older or younger than I am. I enjoy playing with them. When we were children, we enjoyed playing outside, such as catching cicada in summer, or going fishing on sunny days. Now we've grown up, we spend more time playing computer games at home.

➤ **Do you prefer to visit your friends or relatives?**

I prefer to visit my relatives. Though I enjoy playing with my friends, I do not pay visits to their homes. However, I feel at home at my relatives' where I can do whatever I like, as if I am at my home.

➤ **Will you buy anything when you pay a visit?**

No, in most cases I don't. It's a convention in my hometown that people need not buy any gift before they have jobs and make earning themselves. Since I am still a student, I don't have to buy anything, but there are times when I will bring gifts bought by my parents.

30. Toys

➤ **What toys did you like to play with when you were a child?**

When I was a child, I loved playing with my transformer. I would always do role play with my friends, imagining that we were from different planets and we had to fight for our people. It's really fun.

➤ **Do you think you learned anything from playing with toys?**

I learned how to share with other friends and also the toys helped me to be imaginative and creative. Some educational toys also taught me English vocabulary or math problems. I think toys are helpful for children's growth.

➤ **Did you (prefer to) play with those toys alone or with other children?**

I would usually play with the toys with my friends. When I was with my friends, we could have more good ideas for playing, so it's really important for children to have some friends to play with.

➤ **If you have children in the future, what toys will you give them?**

I would buy toys that they like. For example, for boys, I would probably buy toy cars or guns. But for girls, I think they might like dolls better. Of course, besides these, I also want to buy some education toys for them to learn something new.

31. History

➤ **Are you a student?**

Yes, I am. I am in the third year of my college study in Hangzhou. I major in XX, which I have great interest in.

➤ **Do you like history? /Do you think history is interesting?**

Yes, I do. I can learn a lot from history. By studying history, I know the development of my country, what my ancestors did in the past 3000 years, the interesting events and the suffering of people. I think everyone should be proud of the history of his country.

➤ **Do you think the internet is helpful in your learning history?**

Yes, I think so. There are loads of materials about history online, and it's an addition to books for us to learn history. For example, if I want to know the story of a person in history, I just surf the internet for kinds of information relating to the person.

➤ **Do you think it is a good way to learn history online?**

Yes, I think so. It's convenient to learn history online. The fastest way to know something about certain stuff or a person in history is to surf the internet. Besides, we can never get access to all the relevant information through books in a short time.

➤ **Do you think the resources on the internet reliable?**

I don't think all the resources online are reliable. The internet is open to everyone, and many people are free to present information of history they think is right online, which sometimes can be misleading. Besides, history is history, so it's impossible for people to tell exactly what happened in history. What we can know is based on what recorded in books, however, books are personal works and they just recorded their writers' idea of the facts.

➤ **How often do you watch programs or films relating to history?**

It's hard to tell the frequency. I like history and have read many history books. There are plenty of TV series and films about history, and when I have time, I prefer to watch those with good actors. I however, many playwrights adapted the history as they wished, which I believe will do harm to young people's understanding of the real history.

32. Countryside

➤ **Have you ever lived in countryside for a long time?**

No. Growing up in the city, I have never lived in the countryside for long. Sometimes in the summer holiday our family go to the summer resorts in the countryside, but we stay there for no more than one month.

➤ **What are advantages and disadvantages of living in the countryside?**

Life is simpler in the countryside. There is less working pressure or social pressure. And the fresh air there does good to health. However once people fall ill, the medical treatment in the countryside is neither good nor convenient.

➤ **Compare the availability of services such as education, health services and transportation in cities and countryside?**

Well, schools and hospitals are set up near every community in the cities. A variety of public transportations are for us to choose when we are going out, letting alone our private cars. However, there are much less such services and

facilities in the countryside. Children have to walk a long way to school and patients can only find small clinics in some areas.

➤ **What are some of the differences between city people and country people?**

Generally speaking, city people are better educated, because they are provided more and better choices in education from the very beginning. Country people mostly lead a simple life, for they are not faced with too much information or social pressure. Thus they are more hospitable and unadorned. They differ in family background, education, horizon, living style and attitude towards life.

➤ **Which place is more beautiful than the countryside?**

It depends on personal interest. According to me, scenery by the sea appeals to me more than the countryside.

➤ **Which do you think is the more relaxing place to live, the city or the countryside?**

It's more relaxing to be living in the countryside, because I find nothing to do there except playing cards and climbing mountains. So I think cities are more suitable for me.

33. Daily Route

➤ **What are you doing at this time?**

I'm a student. (In the morning), at this time I usually have class. In general, I have 1-2 classes, each lasting about 110 minutes. After class, I will review the lesson and get my homework done before lunch.

(In the afternoon), generally, I am studying in school library at this time when I seldom have any class. I prefer to read by myself quietly at library where there are plenty of recourses. Occasionally, I will go out with my classmates or friends, for shopping or entertainment.

➤ **Do you do the same thing(s) every day?**

Yes, I have a regular day at school. Most of my time is spent on having classes and studying by myself from day to day. Of course, there are times when I take part in activities which are organised by societies I joined.

➤ **Tell me something about your daily routine.**

I get up at 6.30, and get myself prepared in half an hour. Having breakfast at school canteen, I usually recite my book for about 50 minutes before having my classes which finish at 12. There are seldom any classes in the afternoon which is spent, in most case, at school library where I read materials I'm interested in. I have a much colorful night when I can go out with friends, or surf the internet, enjoying funny movies, for example.

➤ **In a typical day, what do you do in the classroom?**

Except for having classroom, I often study by myself in the classroom, if I don't have a seat in school library I can concentrate on study in classroom and not be interrupted or disturbed by other things. I cannot calm down in dormitory where my classmates busy with their personal matters.

➤ **For you, what's the best time of the day for studying/ working?**

The best time for me to study is on the morning when I get a full rest the former night and refreshed. Besides, not many students get up as early as I do, and I prefer to stand by the woods beside school library where I can recite my lesson aloud, which is helpful.

➤ **Is your life now the same as it was before?**

No. School life in college is different from that in secondary school where the curriculum is heavy, leaving me almost no free time. Now I can study by myself or attend kinds of activities when there are no classes.

➤ **If you could make one change to your daily routine, what would it be?**

I hope to make better use of time at night which is mostly spent on surfing internet. I decide to do some exercise, such as running. I often have flu and am not energetic enough. My friends suggest me to do more exercise to be healthy. I need to give it a try.

➤ **If you had more free time, what would you do?**

If I had more free time, I would like to take up an instrument, like violin. I envy those students who play on school band. I learned to play violin on primary school, which I gave up because of heavy work.

➤ **How do you plan (organize) your study time? Do you ever (do you often) change these plans?**

My study time is flexible, changing according to my time having lessons every day. At most times, I have regular time for studying, but expected things may occur which may stop my plan. However, I often manage to make up for my studying on times like that, as I won't leave work undone to the following day.

➤ **Can you think of any improvements to your daily routine?**

Maybe I need to spare more time out participating in various activities or going out with friends. I have spent too much time studying and I am in lack of social skills, which worries me a lot.

PEOPLE

1. An interesting person

Describe an interesting person you met recently

You should say:

Who the person was

When and where you met the person

What you did together

And explain why you think the person was interesting

Sample:

The interesting person I met recently is my roommate, who moved in to live with me a week ago. She, newly graduated, is nice and talkative. The minute after she was introduced to me by the landlady, she began to tell me everything about herself, as if we've known for a long time. The past week living with her was full of unexpectedness and quite interesting. Everyday she'd like to share her experience which made me laughed to tears. Sometimes, she begged me to do something crazy, crazy to me, which she came up with at midnight. Optimistic as she is, she makes me feel that life is not so hard, and I can enjoy a better, happier day as I like it.

I usually make supper by myself and she prefers to eat take-away at the table while I am eating. Meanwhile, she would tell me funny things she'd come across on the day. For example, on the first day, she got to the wrong bus, as she was not used to the new route. Not until half an hour later did she realise that and she had to take a taxi so as not to be late. What's more, she got off at the wrong station, and she had to walk for twenty minutes to return home. I was sorry for her terrible day, and I would definitely in a bad mood if I had had a day like that. However, she was more amused of her experience and seemed to be telling a funny story of others'. Then last Saturday, we were enjoying a film together at night, which didn't finish until eleven thirty. Five minutes later after she went back to her room, she knocked at my door, asking me if I'd like to go out to eat barbecue, since there are barbecue stalls in the street opposite our community, which I mentioned forward to her that day. I've been living in the community for two years, however, I never went to the street at midnight. I had to accompany her there for she kept begging me.

I cannot imagine what she will share and do with me in the future, but I am sure it's interesting to live with a roommate like her.

PART 3: Discussion topics

1. What do you think are important between friends?

To be friends, the two need to be sincere with each other. As the saying goes, to make a friend, one needs to be friendly. They should care about each other so as to offer in time help when needed. Besides, they should trust each other, otherwise, their friendship won't last long.

2. How do people nowadays make friends?

There are ways for people make friends, through their recent friends, or by taking part in activities, hiking for example. Besides, some make friends with those they cooperate with while playing online games. Currently, more tend to make friends online and chat with each other through QQ or EMS, as they feel free to complain about their sadness online and can make friends in all woks of life.

3. Is it reliable to make friends online? What are the problems of making friends online?

No. As people tend to make up their identity, it's hard for others to judge whether the information online is true. For example, some men pretend to be girls and make friends with those who want girlfriends. People may be threatened in personal and property safety. It was reported that a girl was robbed by her net-friend on their first meeting, with whom she had chatted online for years. Things like that are not rare now.

4. How to avoid making friends who are not sincere online?

People should protect themselves and shouldn't share their personal information like income, name and address online or during their chatting. In case someone evil may deliberately makes friends and win trust of his target, and then he takes advantage of what they get through former chatting, to commence crime, such as kidnapping children of his target for money.

5. Will you tell others you meet for the first time your personal information, like your telephone number or your address?

I won't tell the guys I meet for the first time much personal information. For example, on an hours' bus riding, I may have a conversation with a fellow traveller to kill time, talking about our hometowns and jobs. If asked for further contact, I may leave a telephone number. But I won't tell him my working or living address or further information, as I can't completely judge whether the guy is reliable.

6. Does first impression count on your making friends?

Yes, though I never make friends on first meet, the first impression of meeting with a person will influence our further contact at the beginning. If a person leaves a good impression on me, I will be polite to him/ her. Otherwise, the prejudice I have may stop me to being wam-heated and friendly. But I believe it takes time to know clearly about a person.

7. Do you talk about different things with male and female friends?

Of course, I share different things with them. I am a girl. With my girlfriends, we always talk about things related to our life, such as dresses in fashion, the cosmetics we use or experience of love affairs. While with boyfriends, we often about our work, sharing the happiness of success and offering suggestions to problems we recently met on work.

8. What is the standard of making friends? Will the standard change in thefuture?

People have different standard of making friends. Some believe that a person shares the same interest with them is necessary, as they can always have something to talk about together. Some would like to make friends doing the

same or similar job, for they can learn from each other. Others want to make friends with wealthy people or men of power, whom they can turn to for help. The standard surely will change in the future, as people are in need of different friends in certain stage.

9. Who, friends or family, will have bigger influences on the character of a child? Family has bigger influence on a child. A child relies on family since his birth. At the very beginning, family is the whole world for him, from whom he learns the basic skills and ethics for living. Then a child, gradually, will be influenced by his friends, as peers, they may encounter same problems and share their opinions. What a child learns from the words and behaviors of his parents in his youth, however, will determine his character and future development.

10. Do children have the ability to tell what is right and wrong?

Children, with little experience of social life and common sense, are not able to judge what is right or wrong. For example, they are not clear why they are allowed to pick up flowers in the park as they do at home in their gardens, until their parents tell them they have no right to possess public property which is owned by all people. They gather and try out social experience on their growth.

2. A person who taught you a useful skill

Describe a person who taught you a useful skill. (For example, cooking, riding a bike)

You should say:

Who this person is (or, was)

Who you learned from the person

How the person taught you this

And explain how this skill is useful to you.

Sample:

I'd like to talk about my grandfather. He is a hot-tempered old man, from whom I've learned considerable knowledge. Out of diverse skills he taught me, I would focus on bike-riding.

It was the third year of my primary school when my families thought I was old enough to go to school by myself and the most convenient way to get to school is to ride a bike. My mother became impatient with me after I failed to learn to ride for several days. So my grandfather volunteered to teach me although he was almost impatient to do most of the things. To my surprise, he really taught me with great patience and he didn't lose his temper at all. He explained and demonstrated the skills of riding for me before helping me overcome the fear of riding. And he accompanied me to practice riding for several hours a day. Thanks to his instruction and company, I learned to ride a bike soon and it has benefited me until now.

Learning to ride makes my life much more convenient and it is inevitable that I'll be able to use it for the rest of my life. So I feel grateful to my grandfather and I will pass the skill onto my children and grandchildren.

Sample2:

I'd like to talk about my grandma who taught me how to cook.

I was left under care of my grandma since I was five year old. She was an excellent cook and I, of course, was lucky to enjoy different tasty dishes each day. Time flies, I successfully finished secondary school and went to my ideal university, a boarding school, where I had five roommates who were all able to do cooking. So on summer holiday of my first year, I returned home and asked my grandma to teach me about cooking, to which she agreed immediately, saying that it was necessary for me to take up cooking, for I should look after myself without her being around. Knowing that I had no idea of cooking and foods, she asked me to accompany her to supermarket to get familiarized with various foods. Then I was put in charge of washing all the stuff we bought for cooking, and was made to stand beside her when she cooked, showing me how to do things. After a week's time, she left me to have a try, though I felt I was not ready. Encouraged and instructed by her, I made my first dish, although it was not as delicious as that made by grandma. Anyhow, I made it. Grandma was much happier than I did, saying that I would surely be a good cook like her.

Busy with my work, I still cook when I am on day off. Sometimes, I will try a different way to cook, and I'd like to share my experience with grandma about cooking, which she is eager to listen to and she is happy to try a new way, too.

PART 3: Discussion topics

1. In general, how do children learn things?

Children learn things through observation and imitation. Just as babies learning to speak, there will be a period of time for them to listen to what and how people speak. For example, after parents show them how to pronounce 'Mum' and 'Dad' for times, they will try to imitate the pronunciation and make a sound.

2. How much influence do you think parents have on their children's learning?

Parents have a life-long influence on their children's learning. Parents who encourage their children to do things they are capable can make their children more independent. Children will be optimistic and be more willing to try things out. When they have problems, they can turn to parents for help rather than waiting for things to be done.

3. Do children learn the same (kinds of) things in the homes as they do at school?

No, there are differences. In addition to family education, schools are ideal places offering children various knowledge and leading them to find the interest of learning and to be men with dreams. Children are also shown the necessity of being punctual and disciplined. Moreover, children are made to share and cooperate with each other at school, which prepares them for social life.

4. What do you think parents should teach their children?

First of all, parents should show their children how to dress themselves and make food to eat. Parents should help their children develop a good habit and be disciplined, making it a rule for them to go to bed and getting up on time, for

example. Parents also need to show children to be responsible and to respect others. In a word, parents teach their children basic living skills and ethics.

5. What skills do you think children should be taught?

Children at school should be taught to be active and to communicate with others, so they won't be in solitude. Also, they should also be showed how to cooperate, as we live in society where people need to cooperate and live in harmony. What's more, children should be taught the skills of learning, enabling them to think for themselves and to be creative.

6. Do you think children can (or do) learn anything from other children?

Of course, children can learn something from each other. Once a mother told me her boy had difficulty fastening his shoes even though she had shown him everyday. One day, however, he did it himself, for he saw another girl did that by herself. Children learn through imitation, and they do unconsciously while playing with other children.

7. Which do you think is better for a child, to learn from television or learn from a teacher or a person (face to face)?

I believe it is better for a child to learn from a teacher face to face. A teacher as a human can observe how a child behaves. If he is afraid to do that, the teacher can demonstrate and encourage him to do. When he does it right or just makes improvement, the teacher can praise him so as to make him confident. When a child fails to do it, the teacher can comfort him by giving him a warm hug, telling him it is OK. Children are clever enough to learn things, but with a teacher's help, they will do things better and quicker.

3. An old person you respect

Describe an old person you know who you respect/ admire

You should say:

Who the person is

How you know the person

What kind of person he or she is

And explain why you respect/ admire the person

Sample:

The old person I admire is Guo Mingyi, an ordinary worker, but he is called the living Lei Feng. (Lei Feng, a person in the history kindly doing good deeds to loads of people he never knew, now refers to people who are willing to help others.) I got to know him from the reports about him on newspaper and internet, telling his story of donating money to students in poor regions, donating his blood for over 20 years, setting up a voluntary group to help those in need. The continuous donation took up a large part of his income, while his family still lived in an old small house provided by his factory. I admire him for his selflessness and dedication which impacted millions of people in China.

In 1982, Guo retired from the army where he stayed for five years, during the time his hardworking and kindness to others was highly praised. In 1979, he

made his first donation to people suffering earthquake in Yunnan province, with all his savings as a soldier. In 1990, he joined the Blood Donation activity organised by his factory, and he kept on doing it from then on, once, sometimes twice, a year. What's more, he advocated among his colleagues who joined the voluntary group he founded to donate blood. An increasing number of people around were influenced by his deeds and joined his group. Once a person in need of rare blood type, Rh-negative blood, turned to him for help, for there was no that kind of blood store in the hospital, Guo spread the news to the internet as an emergency. People around the China in the blood volunteered to help, whose blood successfully saved the dying person. From then on, Guo realized the usefulness of internet, and set up an online group welcoming anyone to join. Now, there are plenty of groups named after him around the China, whose members are ready to donate their blood to those in need.

Sample2

The old person I respect is Mr. Ye, an 84 years old man from Jiangsu Province. He is an active and kind man. I respect him for what he does. He is an ordinary person, yet he has been doing unusual thing. After he retired, he volunteered to offer help to children of poor families in my hometown, which he has been doing for the past 22 years. We became friends when he paid a visit to my primary school about 12 years ago.

I remembered the day when I was called into the Teachers' Office, where I was introduced to him. He made friends with me because of my handwriting on the school show window. He told me he was impressed by that. He is a friend who is as old as my grandpa, so I called him grandpa Ye. He paid a visit to my home once, during which he told me who he was and the meaningful thing he was doing. He was sad on reading the news that children in my hometown dropped off school because they lost their parent(s), or their parents were disabled. Then he made up his mind to sponsor the unlucky children. He contributed his pension and the donation he collected, stuff like clothing and stationary, to children he funded, while he himself living very simply. At that time, I actually didn't quite understand how he could do the selfless thing like that. But I liked him for his kindness. We wrote to each other for a year since then. However, I lost contact with him when my family moved to another city. Not until a year ago I read news about people in a village holding a birthday party for him then did I know that he's been a well-known good man in my hometown. He's the first person in my life who showed me sincere help to others. He's a friend who I always admire.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Are there any advantages to being old?

One advantage of being old is that one can enjoy more free time. After retirement, one can take up anything he'd like to do. I heard of an old couple who traveled around the world, only being able to speak a little English. Also, there are more people taking up musical instruments which they had no time

to learn when they were young. The old are left free to do what they are interested in.

2. What are the disadvantages of being old?

One disadvantage of being old must be that one is not energetic any more and will confront various healthy problems. Sooner or later, one will find that he's unable to lift certain stuff and he will be out of breath after a short jogging. He, gradually, will forget about things, even worse, he may forget who he is. Old people are said to be worn machines which will breakdown at any time.

3. In China today, what are the living conditions for old people like?

The living condition of the old in China has improved a lot. The state government has developed a national welfare system for the old, and the old even in the countryside can receive monthly allowance. Also, many policies and measurements have been carried to improve old people's life, such as the free classes, which make their life colorful. Many old people develop new interest and make new friends.

4. Why do old people enjoy live longer than in the past?

Enjoying good living, people now can have nutritious food since their birth, so they are physically healthier. Having received education, people know the importance of keeping a healthy lifestyle, and many people give up drinking or smoking for the sake of being healthy. Besides, the standard of health care has improved a lot in the past years, and people can get scientific and efficient treatment when they are sick. All those contribute to people enjoying longer life.

5. What are some things a person can do to help them live longer?

People can do many things to help the old. First of all, people should spend more time with their parents. To many old people, the happiest thing is to have the company of their children. Being in a good mood can make them live longer. Besides, living with their children or others, they can be better taken care of, and they can get in time help if they fall ill. What's more, people working in the Nursing House should treat those lonely old people as their relatives. It's sad for them to stay in Nursing House, but the work of young people there can make the old feel at home and happy.

6. Do you think we should respect old people? (Why)

Of course, we do. No matter what they do, the old have made contribution to make our society and life better. Now they are old, it's time for the society and other people to pay them back, to respect and take care of them.

7. Do old people in China have opportunities to attend any forms of classes?

Yes, in many cities, old people can attend various free classes. Those who are interested in history can enroll in a history class. Those who are in love of music can take up singing or dancing classes, and there are traditional singing and national dancing available. Those being fond of exercise can

take part in aerobics or Chinese Taiji. Everyone can find something interesting to learn.

8. Who pays for these classes?

Those classes are usually provided by the government. In the past, many people cannot adjust to their life after retirement, for they have nothing to do to kill time, especially for those people who have no personal interest. The government has spared much effort in promoting old people's life, and free classes have been introduced to make the old occupied. Doing what they are interested makes their life happier and more colourful. Besides, more companies now donate money to help improve the classes.

9. Do you think the state (the government) has a responsibility to provide these classes?

Yes, I think so. The old citizens have made their personal contribution to the society, and it's time for them to enjoy their life after their retirement. The government is responsible for taking care of the well-being of all its citizens, the old included. Besides, as the old been under good care, the younger need not worry about their parents, in this way, they can spare more effort in their work, contributing to their country.

10. Do you think we (younger people) can learn anything from old people?

Yes, of course. Old people have much life experience. They have obtained much while losing much during their past life, and they are much clearer of what is special and deserves to fight for. So we can learn from the old how to deal with the gain and lose in life. Another thing we should learn from them is how to care others. There are happy old couples who'd be together for decades, and they are living encyclopedia of how to cope with quarrel and fight in family.

11. Are the attitudes of young people today towards old people the same as they used to be years ago?

Generally speaking, young people nowadays still respect old people as people did in the past. Old people are the symbol of wisdom for their life experience. However, part of young people do ignore the valuable experience of the old, since the society is developing rapidly, much of the working experience of the old is no longer useful. Yet, young people will always realize that there are so many for them to learn from the old.

12. What work (if any) is suitable for old people and what work is unsuitable for them?

I think old people are suitable to take care of kids. Nowadays, young couples are busy with their work, and they don't have much time to look after children. Those old people, if physically capable, are surely the best ones to take care of their grandchildren. However, some manual work is unsuitable for them to do, for example, carrying a box of water to upstairs.

4. A person you like spending time with

Describe someone you had a good time with, or someone you enjoy spending

time with

You should say:

Who the person is (was)

How you know (knew) this person

What you do (did) together

And explain why you like to spend time with this person

Sample:

The person I enjoy staying with is my classmate Li, and we spent a lot of time together while studying in university. We became friends for we both like English, and he was the one who always had confidence in me.

I was grateful to have a friend like him who knew me well and who was always there to support me. Being interested in English, I used to read aloud in the morning to recite articles written in English. I preferred to do that in the corner of the school library, and one day I had to find a new place, as someone else was reading books there. Then I turned to the woods behind the library, and unexpectedly, I saw him reading English. From then on, we often studied together. One day, he called me up and encouraged me to join in the English Speech Contest held by our school, which I heard of, but I hesitated, for I was not confident, thinking that there would be plenty of English majors taking part whose English must be better than mine. Finally, I was persuaded by him, as he agreed that he would help me in preparation. The following weeks, we were seen practicing together, and he was patient to offer suggestions. He would cheer me up whenever I was discouraged. On the day for competition, however, he didn't show up, which made me sad. On my way to the dormitory after I got the third in the contest, he called and showed up with a bunch of flowering. I was so happy that I couldn't help crying, when he told me he was sitting somewhere, watching me to give me speech, and he didn't show up for he knew I would feel nervous with him aside.

Though we work in different cities after graduation, he is always ready to share my happiness and trouble. How lucky I am to have him as my best friend.

Sample2

The person I like spending time with is my best friend, Derek, whom I've known for over 9 years. I like staying with him, for I trust him and we have a lot in common. We spent a lot of time together while we were in the university, studying in school library, making trips to nearby places of interest, for example. We'd like to share our happiness and trouble with each other even though we are not always along now.

Derek transferred to my class when we were in grade nine. Actually at that time I didn't have much impression of him as I was busy with my study and he was not a special guy. I just remembered he was a little slim boy then. A year later, we attended the same senior high school, but we're in the different classes. We just greeted when we came across in the campus. Things

changed on the year when we graduated. I wasn't accepted by the school I dreamed of, so did him. Coincidentally, we were accepted by the same university in Sichuan province. When we knew the news, we both couldn't believe that. The following four years, we went to school and went back home together. Every time he helped me with my heavy luggage. I was very thankful to him. During the time, we became the best friends. Now we both worked in Hangzhou, we often chat online and send messages, and sometimes we go hiking and have meals together.

I'm lucky to have a friend like him.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Do you think people have more free time today than they did before? (Why/ Why not)

I don't think so. Though the invention of machines frees people from large amount of labor work, people are busy with more stuff. Firstly, people have to learn more to catch up with the development of the world. Then without the worry of living, people have more to pursuit, such as a big house, or a trip abroad, and they have to earn enough money to make it come true, which is mentally and physically demanding. That's why people are less free than they did before.

2. What are the sources of pressure in people's lives?

People have different sources of pressure at different period of their lives. On their youth, they are under the pressure of study, and they have to study hard so as to attend good schools and receive better education. After graduation, they have to face up the fierce competition at work, and struggle to make a better living. Then they will have endless living pressure, to find a right person to make up a family and to cater for the family.

3. How do you think people can (or do) deal with this pressure?

Well, firstly, people should set appropriate goals and keep trying. It's useless to pursuit something impossible at certain period. At the same time, people should be optimistic, and believe that they will get what they want, maybe in far future or not so perfect, as long as one keeps trying. Besides, people need to get relaxed at times. When they are tired, they can do what they like, or maybe talk to others about their problems, to get refreshed.

4. In life, for example, at work or as a student, what can people do when they need help?

Well, as a student, he can turn to others for help. His parents and teachers are willing to offer help, as students are not capable to deal with many things. However, when at work, people can ask for their colleagues and friends to give some advice. People are no longer to be ready to help adults, as they themselves have their own things to cope with.

5. At work or in school do you think people need to (or should) help each other?

People need to help each other both at work and in school. No one is perfect, so no one is able to deal with everything in life, that's why people have to help each other. However, the ways offering help may be different. People can do and show others how to do in school; while at work, people will offer advice or share experience for the one in need, as it's his duty to complete his own duty.

6. In the future, do you think people will be studying and working more as individuals or more in group?

I think people in the future will more be with themselves than with others. With access to computer, students can study at home, and workers can have their job done anytime and anywhere. The machines available free people from much work, and loads of machines are used to do the labor, with few people operating computers to fulfill their work. The internet might be the medium for people to meet and work together.

7. What is the value of teamwork?

The value of teamwork lies in that it makes full use of the merit of all group members, to have work done in efficient way.

8. Do you think teamwork is important? (Why/ Why not)

Yes, I think so. Without teamwork, much of people's labor and resources will be in vain. To any project, each person has his own idea and approach to finish it. Also it will take different time for people to fulfill it. However, members of a team, at first, can discuss their suggestions and decide on the best one. Then they are assigned to be responsible for different work depending on their ability. With the effort of all members, the project could be done in a short time and with better outcoming.

9. Do you think the internet has brought people closer together, with its communication capability or has it created a greater gap between people?

Well, it depends. It's known that plenty of workers no longer go to certain places to work, as they do in the past, because of the use of internet. Therefore, having less time together, people will be less familiar with each other. However, the internet does bring people closer. For example, I can talk with my parents who are thousands of miles away through the computer, just like we are talking face to face.

10. In the future, do you think these inventions will lead to people spending time with other people less than they do today?

Maybe. The world, in the future, may be one without countries. All the work on earth will be done by machines. There is little work needing to be done by humans, and people take turns to supervise the computers, just to make sure nothing goes wrong. People then are left to enjoy their life with their family and friends.

5. A famous person who is important to your country

Describe a famous person important to your country

You should say:

Who he/she is?

Why he/she is important to your country?

What do you think of him/her?

Sample:

The famous person I'd like to talk about is called Yuefei, a well-known General in history. As recorded, Yuefei, together with his army, won many

battles, and protected his country from being invaded by some minority groups. Although he lived more than eight hundred years ago, his spirit of devoting to his country has always been praised by Chinese people. His work (poems included) has been included to the textbooks and his story adapted to several TV series, being appreciated by people. In another word, he is influential to people nowadays. Born in Beisong dynasty, a time when the country suffering invasions and people living with misery, Yuefei was fan of reading, especially those in military strategy, and by learning from two teachers how to ride a horse, to shoot, and to use sword to fight, he became an excellent fighter. At the age of twenty, he enrolled in the army, and made much contribution in defending his country. During the time, he made him known in his country and its enemy, too, who wanted to bribe him so as to conquest his country, which, of course, was turned down by him. Gradually, he had his own army and invented many strategies in defeating the so called 'undefeatable' enemy, and became the nationally-acclaimed General. However, he was framed and poisoned to die by the evil officials who were bribed by the enemy. I admired him for his talent in training his army and in coming up effective strategies in beating his enemy. What's more, he made some poems expressing his resolution to defense his country and its people which are impressive. He set an outstanding example for one to love his people, and to be loyal and devoted to his country, virtues which are spoken highly throughout the history of China.

Sample2

The topic reminds me of Premier Zhou Enlai, a great person in Chinese history. Although he has been dead for over thirty-seven years, he's always remembered by all the Chinese, Premier Zhou devoted himself to leading Chinese people to found the PRC and to strive for a new way of Chinese development. I admire him not only for the contribution he made to our country, but also for his personality. He was strict with himself and never made use of his status either to make any profit for him or his family, or to be treated differently. He's kind to everyone and his assistants were more of his family than his followers to serve him. Besides, he's the servant of Chinese people, to which he lived up till he died. He's hard-working, and he slept for less than three hours a day for years. He kept working though he was suffering the cancer in his last few months. He's a person being aware of what's right and wrong. He never made comment on an event or judged a person by his personal feeling. Thanks to him, many innocent revolutionists survived the dark period in Chinese history- the Great Cultural Revolution. However, being busy with his work and suffering the painful cancer, he body declined rapidly.

On a cold winter morning, he passed away in pain. On hearing the news broadcasted on the radio, all the people burst to cry. On the day of his funeral, the streets were crowded with people who waited to say goodbye to him. It's said Premier Zhou is the only prime minister, for whom the United Nations

lowered its flag at half mast.

Premier Zhou is one of the most important persons in our history, who deserves admiration of all Chinese.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. How do people become famous?

People become famous in many ways. Some, like singers or actors, become known to people for their performance. Some people are famous for what they do, such as scientists, and their work make great change to people's life. While some ordinary people, they are known not for that they are special or they have any talent, but that they do great favor to others, and their deeds is greatly praised by the public. Besides, a number of people become famous just because they are offspring or have relations with well-known ones.

2. What types of people become famous in your country?

Various types of people can become famous. Just give some examples. Those talents people, such as artists or scientists, are known to people when their work is worshiped by the public. Some people taking part in competition, like singing, attract people's attention. Then the athletes compete in national games, especially the Olympic Games, and they become the focus of the public. The moment the players get gold metal, they will enjoy high reputation.

3. Are there any differences between the people who were famous a few years ago (e.g. 10-50 years ago) and the people who are famous today?

There are differences between famous people nowadays and those decades ago. In the past, only those had made great contribution to the country would be famous. For example. Premier Zhou Enlai, he devoted to making the independence of China. But now, actors taking part in movies or those singers easily become known to people. Especially those beautiful artists and handsome actors who are not so experienced, but loads of young people become fancy of them and even try to behave like them.

4. What qualities do (all or most or many) famous people have in common?

Different kinds of well-known people enjoy different qualities. For example, those people, becoming famous because of their talent, must have worked hard before their ability being acknowledged. In other words, their insistence brings them the fame. To those who are praised by their good deeds, they are in common of being warm-hearted, and willing to help others while expecting no rewards.

5. Do you think people are famous as a result of some real talent or are they famous for some other reasons?

Yes, plenty of people become famous for they are talent, such as scientists and writers. Of course, there are more ordinary people becoming known to the public. For example, Quo Mingyi, a worker, has donated his blood for the past fifteen years, which moves people. Me even set up a voluntary team for people to donate blood to those in need. People around the China are

familiar with his story and many join his team. People like him are called civilian heroes, for what they do is minor but meaningful.

6. What are the good points about being famous?

Well, there is an obvious advantage of being famous, that is to make money. Most actors earn a lot, by performing in the movies, or being shot for advertisements, for people like them and their performance. While other famous people can influence the public, like Jet Li, he set up a charity to raise money to help poor people in China, and there are several celebrities who call for protecting the environmental problems or the animals in drying out.

7. Are there any disadvantages of being famous?

There are disadvantages, which is unavoidable. To begin with, famous people enjoy less privacy, for lots of reporters would like to find out everything of them, their family, their marriage and their social life, anything may be interesting to the public. That's why rumors of actors can be seen in kinds of newspapers or online. Besides, they will be criticized by the public, if they do something wrong or inappropriate, sometimes just an expression of their personal ideas. Even worse, their reputation or career will be greatly influenced because of that. The public won't forgive them for they are considered to be perfect, however, no one is perfect. So the celebrities have to "act" in front of the public.

8. Do you think it's good for a child film star to become famous?

I don't think it's good. Children are not old enough to understand the reality. People prefer to praise them for they are well-known, leading them think they are special or have priority. Being paid much attention to or being given special treatment, they may fail to develop a good view of the world. Besides, there are cases in China, some well-known children stars change a lot when they grow older, and they are no longer so cute as they were before, and sometimes, they may be hurt when others, somehow, make fun of them by that.

9. Do you think famous people have much influence on young people?

Of course, famous people have much influence on the young. Many teenagers make them their idols and try to act like them. As reported, some crazy girls, fans of Fan Bingbing, a beautiful artist, even had a face-lift to appear like her. Besides, many students drop out of school, because they believe it's not necessary to attend school. They got the idea in the TV series where wealthy students never are serious of their study while enjoying wonderful life.

6. A visitor to your home

Describe a person who visited you/ a time when someone visited you

You should say:

Who the person was

When the person visited you

What you and the person did together

and explain how you felt about the visit.

Sample:

Well, I have entertained a lot of friends and relatives at my home. But I'd like to talk about a small boy who came to visit me months ago. He was so naughty that he impressed all of my families.

Being one of my nephews, he is four years old and is living in another city. So I had just seen him once when he was still a little baby. On an evening in March, we received the visit by his parents and him. He caught our eyes at the first sight, for his eyes are very big. Like most children in his age, he had lots of energy and was curious about everything. After a long journey, he didn't show any signs of tiredness at all and went around all of our rooms immediately after his arrival. Finally he decided to stay in my bedroom because there is a computer and some furry toys. To my surprise, such a young boy could play the computer game "angry birds" so skillfully. A moment later, being tired of my computer and furry toys, he enjoyed himself by playing with my green plants. He tortured the poor plants by ripping off the leaves from them. Fortunately, soon the dinner saved my beloved plants. After dinner, he began to sing and dance for us. We were all deeply attracted by his amusing performance.

Several hours passed by quickly, I really felt exhausted when I had to say goodbye to him. But I felt carefree with his company. Later I began to think it may be also a good way to relieve my pressure to be with such a lovely kid. Now I often miss his innocence and naughtiness a lot, and hope someday he will pay another surprising visit to me.

Sample2:

Two weeks ago, my niece paid a two-day visit to my home, which caused much trouble. My niece, Guaiguai, a six-year-old girl is lovely and talent. That day, my cousin called my mother up, and asked if my mother could help look after Guaiguai, for she went to go back home to look after her father who fell ill expectedly, and had been sent to hospital. My cousin decided to go alone as her parents were in another province. Her husband, however, just went out for business the day before, so she had no choice but turned to my mother for help, for it's impossible to find a baby-sitter in short time. My mother agreed. The day after Guaiguai arrived, she enjoyed herself with the snacks my mother prepared for her, and she busied herself with the various toys of my brother's and mine. She finally fell asleep by 5 pm. Then my mother got me to call my cousin to tell her everything was OK, so she wouldn't be worried. Hearing that, my cousin, however, still was not at ease, as Guaiguai had never been away from her for a single night since her birth.

Things happened as my cousin had worried. Guaiguai woke up at about 9 and kept crying until all my family were awakened. Though we tried our best to comfort her, she just didn't stop crying. At last, we had to leave her crying alone, and finally, she fell asleep again because of tiredness.

Early the next morning, she called her mother and told her how sad she was, being unable to eat well and unable to have a sound sleep, for she missed her mother. Fortunately, my cousin told her that her father would finish his business trip ahead and would return to pick her up the following day. On hearing that, Guaiguai calmed down and enjoyed herself as nothing had happened.

We were relieved to say goodbye to Guaiguai.

An occasion when visitors came to your home

Sample

Last week, my cousin with her husband and son who live in another city, paid a visit to my home before they went to attend a wedding party- of a friend of theirs the next day. The last time I saw them was during the Spring Festival. My brother and I drove to pick them up at the train station. My nephew Kimi, a five-year-old, was very active after the three-hour trip. The moment he saw us, he ran to us and called us sweetly. On the way to my home, the little boy looked through the window excitedly and kept asking his Dad about what he saw.

By the time we got home, it's just time for lunch. Mum made a big meal for them, and Kim was so happy to eat the lobster, his favourite dish. On finishing his lunch, he said loudly that the lobster cooked by Mum was the most delicious food in the world, which made us laugh. Then my cousin and brother-in-law decided to go to shopping mall to buy gifts for the party, but Kimi insisted on going along with them and even cried. To stop him crying, my brother took out a box of toys including a book about dinosaurs, which worked well. Kimi picked out some guns and played his favourite game with my brother as he always did when coming to my home. He made my brother to be a hidden robber and himself a policeman, and then they had a 'gun fight'. He enjoyed himself running around the house to find my hidden brother. Mum stopped them and offered him some snack later. He then lay on the sofa and began reading the book. He's a big fan of dinosaurs and is never tired of reading anything related to dinosaurs. He's able to tell the names of dinosaurs printed on the book: I however cannot read many of the names for they are obscure. About an hour later, he fell asleep for tiredness till his parents returned.

I treated them in a restaurant for dinner and we had a great time out. Early the next morning, they set for the party and Kimi reluctantly said goodbye to us.

PART 3: Discussion topics

1. How do people in China welcome visitors to their homes?

The host will wait at the door to welcome visitors, and lead them to lounge or dining room to have tea and snacks. Then the host will talk with visitors, making them comfortable and feel free.

2. In China, when someone is a guest in another person's house, in what ways should he or she express their respect to the host?

On arrival, as a guest, one will go to say hello to the host and the elder in the family; on leaving, he should say goodbye, which is basic politeness. Then if offered food or drinks, it's polite to take them and say thanks.

3. Should the guest offer help to the host?

No, guests are not expected to offer any help. In general, female of the host family will be in charge of preparing food, and male will entertain or have a talk with guests. If there are many guests coming for a party or visiting, the host will hire others to help with food, and they themselves treat guests.

4. In China, when you have visitors, do you usually eat at home or outside the home(at a restaurant)?

Well, it depends. As usual, my parents will cook a meal to treat visitors and have snacks served at teatime. Sometimes, they may prepare days ahead to make a delicious meal for guests. But for me, as I don't have much experience of cooking, I prefer to book a meal at a restaurant, so do people who are busy with their work, especially for those couples both working, which will save much effort and is convenient as well.

5. How do people entertain guests at home?

For adults, the host may spend some time to have a talk with them. And then the most common entertainment is card-playing as well as mahjong-playing, as almost everyone can do. For children, offering them video games, or computers will be no better choice.

6. In China, what do people generally do when they visit each other?

What people do differs. In general, talking is a common way if they haven't seen each other for a long time. On some occasions like birthday and marriage parties, people will give best wish to the host and enjoy the performances and activities on the party.

7. What do they talk about?

Well, as relatives or close friends, people will talk about something private, such as the changes to them, the problems happened and the result, happy and upsetting things they encountered, their jobs and their future plans. If people know each other through work or if they are not quite familiar with each other, they may talk about current news which is known to everyone, or they can talk about interests they show.

8. Do people in China treat different kinds of visitors in different ways?

People will treat visitors who are close to them more freely than those who are not. There's no doubt, if people know their guests well, they will talk about personal matters and do something they all like together. In contrast, treating those acquaintances, the host may politely start a talking which everyone can take part in, making them not feel lonely.

9. Is there much difference between having relatives visit and having friends visit?

Of course, in some ways, people will treat relatives and friends differently. With relatives, people can do things casually as they are so familiar with each other. While with different kinds of friends, people will do something special to entertain them and make them feel at home.

10. In your country, when people visit others, do they usually bring anything (as a gift) to give to their host?

On different occasions people bring different things and things change with time. Traditionally, when going to a birthday party, people will bring some eggs and noodles which mean a long-life wish to the person, as well as money put in a red paper pocket as a gift. But now, people no longer take eggs or noodles, instead, they will buy toys for children, or nutriments for the elder. Other gifts like flowers or chocolates among friends are common now.

11. How would you welcome a foreigner who was visiting your home (or, who was visiting China)?

If a foreign friend comes to visit my home, I will wait for him/her at the gate of the community, for it may be difficult for him/her to find my home. On arrival, I will introduce him/her to my parents. After some rest and food, I will show him/her around my house and introduce something special here in China to him/her and have a talk. If he/she has some interest in cooking, I can show him/her how to cook, do you like this?

12. And what do you think a foreign guest needs to pay attention to when visiting someone's home in your country?

We Chinese people are friendly and there are not so many rules at home. One thing foreign guests should know in advance and get used to is that food is served on plates and they should use chopsticks or spoons to get what they want to eat. At times, it is common for hosts to get food for their guests and to keep offering them food. However, more Chinese people know about foreign table manners, and they will leave foreign guests free to eat by themselves.

PLACES

1. A tourist attraction

Describe a tourist attraction in your country that you enjoying visiting

You should say:

The name and location of the place

What it looked like

What you did there

Who you went with

And explain why you enjoyed it or why you think people are attracted to that place

Sample:

Early this August, my family paid a visit to NeiMenggu, autonomous region in northern border of China, along with another two families of my father's friends'. We, a group of twelve, had a great time there. It's rather hot in southern China at that time, while it's cool there, one of the reasons we took a trip there. What impressed me are the vast prairie, wonderful scenery and unique life of the local people.

The guide, a native, showed us around places of interest in the area by his coach. What I enjoyed most was the experience of riding a horse. It's the first in my life that I touched a horse and rode on it. Being used to tourists, the horses were tame and they were trained to walk around, so that the inexperienced riders, like me, would not get hurt. The riding, however, was stopped by a heavy shower, lasting only a couple of minutes. The wind, in various shapes, in the sky was much different from that in the city, and it flowed rapidly, bringing rainfall to the land, ended with a beautiful rainbow in the sky. What's amazing was that a rainbow showed up whenever raining stops. Then in the evening, we had dinner in a big Mongolian yurt where we had a roast lamb for meal. It's holy to have a roast lamb, and we appreciated the ritual of the native's making and disturbing lamb to us, which was impressive.

There are so many to see there, including the South Gate, the landmark for boundary between China and Mongolia. The four-day visit was too short to enjoy the place, and I'd like to go again in the future.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. How has the way Chinese people spend their holidays changed in the past few decades?

People used to take trains, ships and buses to visit places of interest in their country, and it's not common to visit places far away, for it takes a long time to go and it costs a lot. In the past decades, the standard of people's life has improved a lot, so does the development of transportation. Now, however, people can go to foreign countries in hours with flights available. The fast development of tourism makes it not costly to travel around.

2. Do Chinese people like to travel? What kinds of places do Chinese people prefer to visit?

Yes, more people now can afford travelling. People would like to visit different places. Some prefer to pay a visit somewhere near water, such as beaches. Some prefer to go to mountainous region and appreciate creature in the woods. Some would like to go abroad and enjoy the life of people in other nations.

3. In China, what are the different kinds (types) of places that tourists can visit?

Well, people have many choices of what kind of place to visit. For instance, they can visit the city of Beijing where there are historical constructions. They can also pay a visit to Hong Kong if they are interested in shopping. They can also enjoy the beautiful scenery in Hainan, too, where the weather is warm and there is plenty of delicious food.

4. What kind of place do Chinese people (or do you, or would you) prefer to visit as a tourist, an urban environment or a rural (or a natural) environment?

People have different preference on tourist places. I would like to visit a rural environment. I've been tired of life in the city, and I long for a place to relax. I prefer to climb mountains and have a picnic at the top of mountain with my friends. Then maybe we could enjoy the beautiful sunset together.

5. Most people think that natural scenery is more attractive than modern buildings. Why do you think they feel this way?

There are two main reasons. Firstly, there is no lack of modern buildings in big cities, which appear alike and surely have no much attraction to people. Secondly, made of concrete and steel, modern buildings appear to be cold to people, and remind people of their rush daily life.

6. What are the advantages and disadvantages of going on a guided tour (or travelling in a tour group)?

There are many advantages on a guided tour. For example, a guide can introduce the history of a resort, or the characters of a piece of work, which surely will help visitors appreciate and enjoy the visiting. Also, people can also visit places of interest in several days. However, people, on a tour group, are scheduled to visit somewhere at certain time, and they have to go through it whether they like it or not. Besides, due to the limit of time, people will be urged by a guide to another place while having not enough time to appreciate.

7. What are the good and bad effects of tourism for a country? (e.g. China)

Obviously, the main good effect of tourism for a country is the huge income it brings. Except for the fees tourists pay during visiting, a great number of jobs will be created to serve them. Of course, there are bad effects. The flow in of tourists will put more pressure on the public transport and the environment, which will greatly influence the life of local people.

8. What do you think would be the advantages and disadvantages of living in a popular tourist destination?

The government of the tourist destination tends to pay a lot in keeping the place clean, making it more attractive and comfortable to visitors. The citizen of the place will enjoy the cleanness and comfort, too. Besides, citizen can have more job opportunities in serving the visitors. Those are obvious advantages. The loads of visitor, however, will take up a lot of resources of transport, food and accommodation, which may cause problems for the local people.

9. In addition to economic reasons, can you think of any other benefits from the development of the tourist industry?

Thanks to the large sum of tourism incoming, the destination place can improve its infrastructure, so as to better serve the tourists, and in return,

more tourists will be attracted to the place. Besides, the culture and special product of the place will be made known to more people in the world, so it's good to advertise the place by tourism.

10. Are there any possible bad points associated with international tourism?

Well, language barrier has caused many problems in international tourism. People visiting abroad have to rely on their guide to interpret and introduce all those things on their tour. They themselves have difficulty in finding help when they are in trouble. Besides, they are just guided to see things different from their own, while having no much clear understanding, which is meaningless.

11. What are the differences between the choices of old people and young people for traveling?

Young people are energetic, and they prefer to visit somewhere special and to try something new and exciting. Old people, however, would like to visit historical places and do something relaxing. For example, paying a visit to the beach, young people will enjoy themselves swimming, surfing and driving yacht. While old people, they would prefer to go fishing and sit quietly to enjoy the broad sea.

2. A foreign place

Describe a place (notin your country) that you would like to visit

You should say:

How and when you would go there

How you know about this place

What the scenery is like in this place

Who you would go with

and explain why you want to visit it

Sample:

In the coming month, I'd like to pay a visit to London with my family, and tour along the River Thames where there are lots to see, the famous Buckingham Palace and the Big Ben, for example.

Ever since I fell in love with English, I was hopeful to see the country where the language originates and the city where live the royalty. The historical buildings and the unique view there will definitely impress us.

During the one-week journey, though we could not go into the Buckingham Palace for a visit, for it's said it's open to the public from July to September, we will surely make it to watch the wonderful Ceremony of Changing Guard. Then we will visit Westminster Hall to appreciate St. Stephen's Porch and grand hall, and we expect to have a chance to go up to the Campanile Bell, to have a look of the whole city. At night, we prefer to take the well-known London Eye, and enjoy the special view over the River Thames. Of course, we will tour around the landmark of England, the Big Ben, which I got to know, at first, from the article in New Concept English, which said it's renowned the world over for its accuracy, which is always to be within one second, and it's

connected to the microphones of BBC. We will wait for its striking, which is said can be heard for miles around. It's a pity that foreign tourists can no longer be allowed to enter the clock building, but I have searched the internet and enjoy the online tour of it. I am looking forward to going to appreciate the clock in person in the future. I could not wait for the trip to London.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. When people go travelling (as tourists), what do they spend money on?

Tourists will spend a lot on things like fare, accommodation. Of course, they have to pay the fee of visiting or taking part in the place or facilities that are not free. They also have to pay the food while travelling, and more often, people prefer to buy souvenir, special stuff and product, which may take up a big part of their whole expense.

2. When people move to another country (migrate to another country), what changes do you think take place in their lives, compared to their lives before they left home?

There will be many changes. First of all, people have to overcome the barrier of language, the obvious challenge to people when they move to another country. Starting life in a new country, people will definitely change their former lifestyle. Then in a new neighbourhood, people will feel uncomfortable living in a new culture which may be totally different from their former one. Not to say that, some people may not get used to the food and weather in the new place.

3. What do you think about children growing up abroad? Do you think children (with Chinese parents) are affected by growing up abroad? How?

I think it's beneficial for children growing up abroad. One will definitely be influenced by their living surrounding, and take up the value and culture of the local. At the same time, he will compare the culture with that of his own country, which he learns from his family. During the process, he will keep the best part of both cultures. What's more, they will acquire at least two languages without much difficulty, for they are in use of the languages in daily life, which may be a great help in their work in the future.

4. What are the benefits of travelling to new places?

Travelling to new places, people can appreciate the unique lifestyle and buildings, enjoying the local landscape and food. Being tired of their daily life, people long for going some places totally different from their own one, which enables people to forget their worries. Besides, visiting new places broadens people's horizon, helping people develop optimistic view on life.

5. What are some of the best (or most popular) travel destinations in China?

There are so many popular destinations in China that worth visiting. Just give some examples. Firstly, it's the City of Beijing. Being the capital of several dynasties, plenty of traditional constructions are available in Beijing, such as the Great Wall and Summer Palace. Then the city of Suzhou and Hangzhou, called the heaven in the world, are well known for their wonderful scenery. Of course, Hong Kong, the heaven for shopping, is the best choice for people to appreciate the western life and purchase goods from over the world.

6. Which places (countries) are Chinese people most interested in visiting?

Well, different people have different preference. In general, Chinese people like to visit places with amazing and unique landscape. For example, loads of people prefer to visit the Mount Fuji in Japan and the Maldives as well. Also, people would like to pay a visit to western countries, those developing countries, like England and France, whose culture and life are totally different from those in China, which is a great attraction.

7. Why do many people (i.e. city people) prefer to travel to places of natural beauty rather than travel to another city?

Because people are tired of city life and prefer to get relaxed in nature. Travelling to places of natural beauty enables people to get close to nature and get themselves refreshed, for human will never be dependent from Mother Nature, from whom human can always get comfort. Besides, cities are getting less interesting. The traditional constructions are disappearing and being replaced by the standard high-rise concrete buildings, making cities appear to be alike.

8. What is the landscape like in China?

China is a large country, enjoying about 9 million 600 thousand square kilometers. Therefore, the vast area enables China to enjoy various landscapes. In general, in southern China, there is more rainfall, with views relating to water, such as rivers, lakes and seas. In northern China, however, the area tends to be much colder. When covered with snow, it's one of the most beautiful scenery. Also, there are places like Inner Mongolia, it's covered by endless grass in the prairie.

9. Why do people (humans) like to explore new places?

Well, it's human's nature to be curious about new things, so there's no doubt people like to explore new places. However, not all people have the ability and time to do that. Only a small number of people are capable and persist on doing that. Most people, however, would like to visit places having been discovered by others.

10. If somebody got lost while exploring or travelling in a remote part of the world, or if they needed some other type of help, who should pay for this help?

In current China, a growing number of people prefer to go hiking or excursion to remote mountains by themselves. Some believe it's the best way to totally enjoy the beauty of nature. At the same time, they can practice their living ability in nature. However, many inexperienced ones lost their lives in the challenge. In searching for them, government of the local pay for the rescue expense, which I think should be borne by people themselves. Besides, a policy should be made to inform people of that. In this way, people will think twice before they take action, for they are responsible for their reasonless action.

3. A place near water

Describe a place near water (such as a river, a lake or the ocean) that you enjoyed visiting

You should say:

Where the place was

What you did at this place

Who you went there with

and explain why you liked this place

Sample:

The sight-seeing spot I'd like to talk about is called, translated in English, Viewing Fish at Flower Pond, a famous scene by the West Lake in Hangzhou. There are some wooden pavilions, connected by corridors over the water. Loads of red carp and goldfish are raised in the water there, and people can enjoy feed the swarm of fish swimming around. Above the water, there are masses of lotus and children are always happy to find some fish hidden under the leaves of lotus.

I had several visits there, and the best time to go must be summer. On early summer, when it's warm, waterfowls, like swans, return and reproduce near the water. Many photographers are attracted to take photos of the wildlife, and more people are interested in discovering the blooming of the first lotus. I prefer to sit in the bench of pavilion, relaxing or watching the birds, lotus and fish in the water. On times when it's windy, it's comfortable and enjoyable to see the waving wicker of the loads of willows growing around the lake. In July and August, workers can be seen being busy with harvesting lotus and leaves, with which people prefer to make teas, healthy drink. And the ripe lotus seeds which are sweet can be made into food and medicine.

Sometimes, I'd like to have a walk with my friends, around the area where it's lighted in colorful and soft light in summer nights. Walking or sitting by the Pond calms me down, that's why I am fond of going there.

Sample2:

I'd like to talk about a park on the bank of a tributary of Qianjiang River, a main river flowing through Zhejiang province. The park is actually part of my community, which is open to the public. Small as it is, it enjoys a rockwork, a summerhouse with a table and chairs, several benches along the river bank, a fifty-square-kilometer square, as well as a grove of ginkgo trees, which attracts loads of local people and tourists in summer. It's an ideal place for people to relax. Many fishing lovers enjoy fishing on the river, where fishes coming from the Qianjiang River can be caught. The old living in surrounding communities spend a lot of time there. Some prefer to do morning exercises with their friends, since kinds of sports facilities having been set up. Some just enjoy the company of their peers, who either play chess and cards, or chat sitting in the summerhouse. On weekends, many young couples would like to spend some time there, some of whom just sit on the benches quietly and enjoy warm sunshine.

The best time to visit the park is summer when the leaves of ginkgo turn yellow since middle November, for which the park was made known to the

public. There are over three hundred ginkgo trees which are said planted thirty years ago. It's fantastic and romantic to walk through the woods by the flagstone, especially when layers of fallen leaves cover the earth. Years ago, the amazing scene of yellow leaves of ginkgo in the sunshine attracted a photographer passing by, who took plenty of photos and shared them online. Since then, a growing number of visitors to Hangzhou would like to spare some time in the park, taking photos of the sea of yellow leaves. How wonderful it is!

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Why do so many people like going to places with water such as lakes, rivers or the ocean?

Because people can enjoy many things at places with water. For example by a lake, people can hire a boat and row around by themselves; many people prefer to find a sheltered and quiet place to do fishing; some may walk around to appreciate the plants and fish near the bank.

2. What kinds of leisure activities do people like to do in places such as on the ocean, at a beach, at a river, at a lake, etc.?

Take beach for example. There are lots of leisure activities for people to do. Lying on the beach is a relaxing way for people to enjoy themselves. Most people will spend some time, playing or swimming, in the water. Water sports like water-skiing and surfing are also popular. Besides, people prefer to play games with ball on the sand.

3. As a place to spend some leisure time, do you think the beach or the seaside is more suitable for children or for old people?

Comparatively, I think seaside place may be more suitable for old people to spend some leisure time. The entertainment and leisure facilities are complete on seaside and the old can relax themselves during their stay there. For example, old people can sit on a terrace to appreciate the scene around while talking with friends.

4. Do you think children and old people do the same types of things when they go to a beach?

No, they do different things. Children will enjoy themselves doing kinds of things, such as swimming in the water, collecting shells and catching crabs. And they will never get tired of making animals or houses in the sand. Old people, however, prefer to relax by the sea. They like to appreciate the beautiful sunrise and sunset; they enjoy walking with family in the warm wind, or spend hours fishing.

5. What activities would you do if you are spending some leisure time at a beach or near the ocean?

Well, I will spend some time lying on the beach to have a sun bath if possible. Then I prefer to take photos of wonderful sunrise and sunset, and shoot the beautiful scene of flying birds, blue sky and water. Although I cannot swim, I would take a life buoy and enjoy floating on the water by the beach. Of course, it would be great to make a barbecue and cook the fresh sea food there.

6. Why do some people like water sports?

People like water sports because they are very exciting. People have taken up various water sports, like rowing, water-skiing and sailing. Surfing, too, has been a favor for many people. It's not easy to surf against waves, but it's great fun to "fight" with the power of nature. And people can get completely relaxed after the challenge.

7. Do you think the government should invest money in developing facilities for water sports?

Well, not necessarily. For the places near the ocean or rivers, the government can spare some money in developing related facilities, for the recreation facilities will bring much income for the local. However, to those inland places where the supply of water is in short, it's just a waste of money to invest a lot to create large swimming pool, or something like that, which will waste plenty of water, too.

8. Do you think that human activity is posing a threat to the oceans of the world?

Yes, human activities have done much damage to the oceans. First of all, the unreasonable fishery has led to kinds of fishes being endangered. Secondly, loads of facilities have been constructed to exploit gas and minerals in the sea, which does harm to the habitat of sea animals. What's worse, many accidents of oil spills have caused great pollution to the oceans.

9. How important is water in people's everyday lives?

Water is said to be the source of life, and people cannot live without water. It's said, one can live at most four days without drinking water. Without water, people's daily life would not be possible, for people cannot get themselves washed, get the food cooked and get water to drink to help digest food and recover one's energy.

10. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of traveling on the ocean?

Travelling on the ocean is a wonderful experience. One can enjoy himself sitting on the dock and reading. Surrounded by endless water, one will feel fresh and gleeful. Besides, it's much cheaper, comparatively, travelling on the ocean. However, it costs a long time to complete an ocean travelling, and some people are sick of that. Also, it's a bit dangerous, especially when the weather is bad. The storms on the sea are destructive and terrified.

4. A shopping street

Describe a street where you like to go shopping

You should say:

Where it is

What you buy there

How often you go there

And explain why you like go to the street for shopping.

Sample:

I'd like to talk about the street nearby my home—West Hill Street. It's a small street situated between two blocks. Like many people living in the

neighbourhood, I like to go shopping at this street very much because I can almost get whatever I need there.

There is a wide variety of shops and stores at the street. For example, there are some clothes shops, toy shops, a large supermarket, a jewelry shop, several restaurants, and so on. It is a nice place to kill some time in the evenings or on weekends there. One can spend hours shopping around, or sit in a restaurant, having something to drink, and watching the crowds. It has a good security system with several security officers on duty every day, so I always feel safe there. And it's a pedestrian street where no vehicles are allowed to pull in, so it becomes a good place to take a walk after dinner. The high buildings and the trees provide people with many shades in summer so that we can stroll leisurely even on hot summer days.

I like to go shopping there both alone and with my families because the street makes me relaxed and slow my tempo of life.

Sample2:

I'd like to describe a shopping street in my hometown, constructed about 10 years ago when the Walmart entered my hometown. The government then decided to construct a new shopping center around Walmart, added to the present one in downtown. It took about 3 years before the opening of the street. At the very beginning, however, it's not popular, partly because the surrounding public transportation and facilities were not completed. Gradually, more and more people prefer to go shopping there.

Brand stores of clothing gradually come to being in the street, the majority of which are retail brands of China, and in recent years, more national brand come in for competition. People, old and young, can purchase various clothing and shoes they want. On weekends and holidays, stores offer discount, sales or special offer to attract consumers. So it is rather crowded. Every year before the Spring Festival, people flock to the city to buy new clothes for their family, as it's a tradition in China.

Nowadays, people go to the street not only for shopping, but for relaxing. Since the facilities around are complete, an increasing number of young people prefer to enjoy themselves there. For example, they can enjoy the meal with their friends in a western restaurant like a buffet or a traditional one offering a hotpot; or they can go to the movies to have a relaxing night; or if they are energetic enough, they can attend the fitness center to do exercise; or they can sing at KTV and dance to the music.

The street has been a favourite place for people to do shopping as well as entertainment.

Sample3:

Whenever my friends coming from other cities paid a visit to me, I would like to take them to He fang Street, if time permitting. Hefang Street is a

traditional shopping street in Hangzhou, and I think it's the ideal place for a visitor to appreciate the old Hangzhou, enjoy the traditional food and buy some souvenirs. The area used to be the culture and trading center of Southern Song dynasty when it's rather prosperous. It's the only place where a full range of traditional stuff and foods of Zhejiang province are on offer year round. For example, the traditional clothes and popular marinated duck attract every visitor going there. The buildings constructed decades ago are well kept, being distinct from the modern buildings around. They are mainly built from wood and brick. It's the center of Hangzhou in the very beginning, where situated the well-known local stores. Sometimes, groups of people dressed in Hanfu will perform acrobatics , something like that , as our ancestors did in the past , to entertain the visitors.

Last month , my classmate stopped by and we spent a whole afternoon (here. We stopped on the Tea Shop where the workers dressed in Hanfu to serve the customers. Some of them introduced the different types of tea available; some displayed how to make tea; some were busy 'cooking , tea with their hands in a special pan. Then we spent about an hour in a fan shop where fans in various types are on display. The smallest ones are equal to a man's hand in length , while the largest can be half of a man in height. Some fans are made of paper where traditional painting or poems are painted on the fan leaf. While on the silk fans, the vivid images embroidered on the fan leaf are elegant and fantastic. There are so many interesting things to see in the street that my classmate insisted on visiting it again next time.

PART 3: Discussion topics

1. Do you like going shopping? (Why/ Why not?)

Well, if I am free, I prefer to go shopping for clothes with my friends. Going to stores enables us to choose suitable clothes, at the same time we can chat about triviality, so shopping is a pleasure. Or there are times when I am bored, I will go shopping for food to kill time.

2. Why do some people like shopping and others not like it?

Well, some people, especially women who prefer window shopping are never tired of trying on dresses, are fond of visiting crowded shopping area. While others think it is a waste of time to wonder about, and whenever they need something, they will pay directly for what meet their demand even without trying on.

3. Have you ever bought anything online?

Yes, I've bought many things online, ranging from food, daily necessity and electronic product, to clothes for my family. Whenever I have time, I'd login on taobao to search for products on sale, even if I have no plan to buy anything. After all, it's a good way to kill time.

4. What are the advantages and possible disadvantages of shopping online?

Shopping online has many advantages, as people can buy what they need wherever and whenever they are online. Besides, there are many sales and

special offers online. As to the negative points, people who often do shopping online would, more or less, have the experience of buying unsatisfied stuff, or things do not match the description by the sellers, for people can only judge by the pictures and description words offered by sellers.

5. What do you think about online shopping?

Every coin has two sides, so does online shopping. I believe it offers people much convenience and more choices, as buyers can choose a product from those of same style or model, provided by sellers from all over China. Besides, there have been many improvements to ensure rights of consumers, as people can return the discontented goods they bought, avoiding wasting money. Therefore, online shopping will gradually be an alternative way for all people.

6. Do people in China like to buy things on the Internet?

Yes, a growing number of people in China have the experience of shopping online, of whom the majority are people ranging from 40 to 15 years old, for they are skilled in using the Internet. In addition, many people even get crazy of online shopping, to whom it has been a part of daily life and doing no shopping a single day will make them uncomfortable.

7. Do you think online shopping will become more popular in the future?

Yes, with more people getting used to using the Internet, an increasing number of them will take up online shopping because of its convenience, multiple choices and cheaper selling it offers. In spite of that, more manufactures and producers have realized the advantages of online shopping and they start to offer direct selling, which will greatly cut down the cost of product people pay. Therefore, online shopping will definitely become more popular in the future.

8. Do you think online shopping will replace the current ways we buy things?

Yes, I think online shopping will gradually replace the current ways we buy things, under the condition that the safety of online shopping will be better guaranteed. As mentioned above, being direct offers, more manufactures and producers avoid the cost of employing staff and renting selling stores, thanks to which consumers will save a lot. Moreover, if what they buy is all of good quality or at least can satisfy them, there's no doubt people prefer online shopping.

9. What are the differences between shopping center and shopping street?

Shopping center caters for more kinds of goods with complete infrastructure services, such as food & beverage. It offers people a choice to purchase everything, goods or service, they need. While in a shopping street, a particular kind of product is sold, like women's clothing, household appliances and decoration materials.

10. Compare big shops such as supermarkets and department stores with small shops.

Well, going to supermarkets, people can have a wide selection of the product to choose from, and they can compare the prices of the products of different brands at will before they make decision. The price, however, tends to be higher, as product suppliers have to pay supermarket, the cost of which will

be partly added to the money consumers pay. Comparatively, going to small shops, the options are limited, but the prices of products are lower.

11. How do you think about 24-hour shop?

24-hour shop provides people with much convenience. The existing of restaurants like KFC makes it possible for people having a night shift to get food to eat at midnight or early in the morning. While at some convenience-store, people can buy many kinds of necessity besides processed food or snacks. Drug stores in communities supply emergency medicine for people who may have a diarrhea or fever, which will lessen people's discomfort.

12. Should government make environmental protection of shopping mall?

Shopping mall supplies all the stuff people need, so it is crowded with people all the time. As a result, loads of waste will be discarded and need cleaned out in time. Moreover, people will drive to a mall, causing pressing parking problem as well as pollution. Therefore, governments should take action to deal with waste disposal and traffic.

5. A place where you have studied

Describe a place where you have worked or studied.

You should say:

Where this place was

What this place looked like

What you did there

And explain why you chose to study or work at this place/how you felt about this place.

Sample:

Well, when it comes to a place where I have studied, I will think of places such as my bedroom, my classroom and my dormitory. But I prefer to study in the reading room of our school library the most.

Our school library is my favorite place to study because of its comfortable environment and convenient equipment. Firstly, there is a central air-conditioner, making us feel warm in winter and cool in summer. And the water dispensers provide us with water anytime. Besides, there are several teachers in the library who can guarantee a quiet study place for us. It makes me focus on my book and study efficiently. Last but not the least, when I am tired after long-time study, there is no shortage of recreational books at hand to make me relaxed.

But there are also some disadvantages studying in the library. For example, it is really difficult sometimes to get a vacant seat and it's not unusual for me to wait for long time to occupy one. And sometimes I will indulge myself in some interesting recreational books for too long time.

Despite its inconvenience, I like studying in the library very much and I think there's no better place for me to study in the world.

Sample2:

I'd like to talk about the school library of my university where I spent a lot of time during my studying there.

I used to spend a whole day in the library when there were no classes, and loads of students were in favor of its various materials and comfortable atmosphere. I was interested in the wide range of sources in English there, newspaper, novels, journals, and so on. Finishing my assignment, I prefer to indulge myself in reading novels, and I was among those who would stay to the last minute of its closing. Besides, the availability of air-conditioning and 24-hour water supply made it easy for students to study there. What's more, the school gave priority to senior students who could make use of the free Wi-Fi exclusive in the library, which helped them get access to national website, through which they could download a collection of materials for their preparing and writing of dissertation. Thanks to all that, it's competitive to find a seat in the reading room, in particular during the time before final exams. My roommates took turns to occupy seats in the library, and sometimes we felt guilty for doing that, however, in most cases, we felt lucky to keep a seat, since we could concentrate better while studying in such a quiet environment, together with a full room of students.

I will never forget the time studying in the library, and the happy memory of occupying seats with my roommates.

PART 3: Discussion topics

1. Are there many public libraries in China?

Yes, there are libraries run by governments and universities. In capital cities like Beijing and Hangzhou, the libraries are of large scale. Besides that, there are online libraries of universities open to the public. Thus more people can make use of the databases.

2. Do people in China prefer to read in a library or at home?

Well, it depends on person. Some people prefer the quiet environment of the library, and they can get access to various sources conveniently. Besides, they can focus on reading avoiding being disrupted. Others, however, would rather read at home by themselves, and they are free to pick up reading at any time.

3. Even though it might cost a lot to maintain a library, do you think every university should have its own library?

Yes, it's necessary, but there is an option that several universities can share a library in view of funding shortage. A library is an ideal place for students to obtain knowledge of what they are interested to learn, and the ranges of sources kept in the library is supplement to what they learn in class, that's why many students can be seen studying in the library whenever they are free.

4. Do you think primary school and secondary school should have a library?

Yes, primary and secondary schools should have libraries if possible.

Resources provided in the library help students gain knowledge and broaden their mind. Students should be encouraged to read as many books as possible and to make full use of the materials. In this way, students can find what their interests are and be motivated to do researches regardless of their ages.

5. Do you think every town and city should have a public library?

Well, running a library is not easy and costly, so I don't think it's necessary for every town to have a public library, but each city should be equipped with one. Besides, the library should have a collection of its local works added to the vast common resources, so as to encourage the work of native writers and artists. Meanwhile, a library can be a wonderful place of displaying local characteristics.

6. With the rapid development of technology today, do you think we still need (paper) books in future?

No matter how advanced the technology is, books, I believe, will never be out of need. Though e-books are in fashion now, for it enables people to read with a computer or a cell-phone, e-books will be impossible to take place of paper ones. It's a pleasure to write down some notes on books while reading, and to review a book read a long ago will be a happy memory. Moreover, reading e-books for a long time will do harm to eyes. So in the future, we are still in need of books.

6. A place you know where people go to listen to music

Describe a place you know where people go to listen to music (such as a theatre or a music hall)

You should say:

Where it is

What kind of music is performed there

What type of people go there

Why you know this place

And explain your impressions of this place.

Sample:

I would like to talk about a distinctive theater—The National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA). I visited it and enjoyed a concert in it last year during my staying in Beijing.

NCPA is an opera house located in suburban Beijing. It was designed by French architect Paul Andreu. Its construction started in December 2001 and the inaugural concert was held in December 2007.

The exterior of the theater is a glass dome, completely surrounded by a man-made lake. So it looks like an egg floating on water. That's why it is often mentioned in the papers as the Giant Egg. But according to the designer, the large open space, water, and trees, were especially designed to complement the red walls of ancient buildings and the Great Hall of the People. In the theater, there are three halls: the Opera Hall with over 2,000 seats is used for operas, ballet, and dances; the Music Hall is for music and the Theatre Hall with about 1,000 seats is used for plays and the Beijing op

In the theater, all sorts of performances take turns to be carried out. And many influential orchestras and troupes from home and abroad have performed there. The theater is also open to the visitors for sightseeing. I strongly recommend you to visit there. Even if you are not to attend a play or

a concert, it's still worth going to the theater to appreciate its unique design or see the art exhibitions displayed there.

Sample2

I'd like to talk about the Huanglong sports center in Hangzhou, with modern infrastructure, catering for various sports games, art performances, leisure and entertainment, food and accommodation as well as shopping. Part of the construction, the Main Stadium is a popular place for concerts. There are over 8000 seats available in the stadium which enjoys a good transport. People can go there either by public transport or on their cars which can be parked underground. It's an ideal place for people to appreciate a full range of music, from traditional Chinese songs, pop rock music to classical foreign music. All year round, musicians, singers, music bands at home and abroad prefer to give their concerts there.

On average, two concerts are held monthly in the stadium. In this November, Jay Chou, a well-known singer around the world, will give concert in the Main Stadium during his world tour this year, to review his music achievement in the past 12 years. It's the second time for Jay to have a concert in the stadium. There are so many fans of him that the tickets sold out in a few days. The coming concert is even said to be the most wonderful concert worthy being waiting for. Later, by the end of this month, a concert called "The Singer Returned" will end their tour here in the stadium, when about ten popular singers will perform for the audience. The singers being experts in different music styles will surely bring the audience a fantastic night. Besides that, foreign singers or musicians sometimes give their personal shows there. For example, Richard Clayderman, a famous French pianist, gave his Piano performance the last day of last year. Then this June, the world-acclaimed singer Sarah Brightman offered her concert "Dream Chaser". People are enthusiastic about enjoying their performances.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. In China, where does the average person in society go to listen to music?
Mostly, people go to concerts to listen to music, like a tour performance of a band or a singer, or solos. But to appreciate Opera performances, people would go the Opera House. However, people usually listen to CD or unload music from the Internet at home.
2. What do you think are the various functions(or usages) of music?
Firstly, as is always said, music is beyond boundaries and is a common language of the world, so music is one of the means to spread the culture of one country to the world. Secondly, music can convey feeling and best wishes. The song, You and Me, sung on the opening ceremony of the 29th Olympic Games left a deep impression on people all over the world, showing that friendly Chinese welcome them to China.
3. What are some of the different ways that children are exposed to music?
Many families get their children exposed to music since they were born. Nursery songs are played while children are awake and playing, making them

unconsciously enjoy the rhythm. Later, some children will play an instrument as a toy. At the age of four, children who are interested in playing certain instrument can be guided to learn to play and enjoy the performance of musicians.

4. How do you feel about children learning to play a musical instrument?

Well, if a child has an interest in learning an instrument, he/ she should be encouraged to play it. Besides, children can acquire more things during the process, for learning to play a musical instrument is not easy, and they can learn to persist in what they like and obtain success through making efforts.

5. Do you think it's important for schools to have music classes for (young) children?

Yes, I approve of that idea. Music can bring much happiness to children who can learn to performance to music and learn group cooperation in performance. What's more, studies that observed children learning playing music instrument show that they have better capacity for listening, logical thinking and memory.

6. How has modern science and technology (i.e. hi-tech) influenced the music we listen to today?

Well, in the past, people had to sit on the auditorium to appreciate live opera or concert, or to listen to songs through radio or CD player. Now, the development of science and technology makes it possible for all the music to be recorded. In this way, people can enjoy music from all over the world which is updated on the Internet, or through a walkman or cell-phone when they are out.

7. What's your opinion on the question of the piracy of music?

On one hand, composers make a living on the music they create, so it is their right to gain profit from the selling of music. However, the piracy of music greatly violates their rights. On the other hand, people can benefit from downloading free music or buying piratical CDs. In my opinion, some time after a piece of music being published, it can be downloaded free of charge. That is a practice in movies.

8. Do you think computers will ever replace music composers?

No, I don't think that will happen. Music is not simply the combination of words and melody, but a composition of the feeling and stories that the composers want to tell and share with audience. So a computer can create music, but not that could move audience.

9. Is the music that people listen to today the same type of music that people listened to 20 or 30 years ago?

No, the music people listened to decades ago was mostly about praising the achievement of great people, or the development of our country. As people then were concerned about making a better life, and music was created to encourage people to enjoy the success they made. While nowadays, music in various types is to meet people's pursuit of spiritual happiness. Whenever they feel tired or stressed, they listen to music to calm down and get relaxed.

10. Does traditional (Chinese) music still play an important role in China today?

Yes, traditional music like Chinese opera and ballad still plays an important role, as people are aware of that it is part of valuable Chinese culture. Supported by our government, opera performances go on tour to spread Chinese culture to the world. In recent years, learning opera has been a fashion, which attracts many foreigners like exchange students in China to take part in performance.

7. A seaside place you like to visit.

You should say:

Where it is

What you like about it

What you do there

Who you go there with

and explain why you like to visit it.

Sample:

The seaside place I like most to visit is Sanya. I've dreamed of visiting it since last summer. Several friends of mine invited me to travel to it but I failed to go there because of some emergency.

Before last summer holiday, several friends planned to visit Sanya, a famous tourist city in Hainan province, and they invited me to go, too. For Sanya boasts the best white-sand beach and blue sea water in Asia. We collected the travelling tips on net, and went shopping together for the swimming clothes and sun cream with pleasant expectation for the trip.

I was almost prepared to set off when my sister broke her leg by accident and I was the only person who was free to take care of her for long time, so I had to give up the previous plan. After they returned, my friends showed me the photos they had taken there and gave me a vivid account of their travel, making me more eager to visit Sanya than before. I planned to go there this summer holiday, and my sister decided to accompany me. The first day I arrive there, I think I would go to Yalong Beach, which is one of the most popular tourist attractions owing to the easy access to its wide and long beach. Then I would spend the following days enjoying the beach, the sunshine and the sea slowly. I would do some shopping, taste some special local foods, and go to some pubs to have a drink as well.

I'm looking forward to visiting Sanya, my favorite seaside place. It is irreplaceable in my mind.

Sample2:

Gulangyu, a famous touristy island, is a place I long for to visit for a couple of years. Separated from Xiamen City by 500-meter wide waters, Gulangyu is an ideal place for vacation and there are a lot to see and do any time in a year.

In history, the island had been invaded for several times and various architecture buildings from foreign countries were built and well-reserved there, bringing it the nickname 'World Architecture Expo'. Besides, it's also

called 'an island in the sea' for its year-round warm climate, fantastic scenery and beautiful surrounding.

Last summer, my brother with the family of my cousin's made a self-driving visit there. During their 4-day staying there, they took many wonderful photos, which made me rather regretful for not being able to go with them. On one picture of my brother driving a bamboo draft, the clean water and green plant can be seen, which is rather attractive. On another, my cousin wearing a long dress and a hat against the sea with the wind blowing, it makes me feel the soft wind there. There are lots more photos with them playing in the water, which they say is very cool and comfortable. Besides, they spent two days on the shopping street there, and they were offered, for free, brochures with all the shops there, briefing the characteristic of each shop. Children are encouraged to get a stamp when they visit a shop, if they get all the stamps, it's said, they will be given special souvenirs. However, there are so many shops, and people seldom have enough time to visit all the shops, and my brother suggests having another trip there to get it finished.

I will surely make a visit there in near future.

PART 3 Discussion Questions

1. Do you think traveling by sea is as important today as it used to be in the past?

Well, in the past, traveling by sea is an important means of transportation, as the road, rail and air transportation system were not so well-developed then. But now, people have more options, and few of them would like to travel by sea as it is time-consuming.

2. Do people enjoy travelling by ship? Will people prefer other transportation in the future?

Many people enjoy the pleasure of travelling by ship, as they can appreciate the scenery on the way and enjoy sitting quietly on the dock reading or having tea. Nowadays, people have more options for travelling, such as flight which is time-saving. It takes hours to fly from one country to another, while people taking ship may spend days to do that. There are advantages and disadvantages for each type of transportation. People will choose one considering of their destination, available time and climate condition, etc.

3. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of shipping goods cross the ocean?

There are obvious advantages of shipping goods. For one thing, a large amount of international trade are completed owing to the existing of shipping across the ocean, for there may be no direct connection by land between the trading countries, and that the capacity of air transport is limited; for another, shipping goods is much cheaper compared with road and air transport. However, the biggest shortage of shipping is that it is time-consuming. Besides, there's risk of ship wrecking as the weather, sometimes, is severe and difficult to predict in the ocean.

4. Why do people go to seaside and what are they doing there?

Most people spend their vacations or relax themselves at the seaside. There are a variety of things they can do to enjoy themselves. Besides the broad sea and delicious seafood, people can appreciate the beautiful scene of the sunrise with seabird flying; they can go for a walk by the sound of the waves splashing on the beach. Everyone can have fun at the seaside.

5. Do children and adults enjoy the same thing at the seaside?

No, children and adults enjoy different things except swimming and playing in the water. Children can never get tired of creating a castle or a statue out of sand on the beach. Collecting shell and catching crabs, on certain times, will be a pleasure to them. Adults, however, will prefer lying on the beach or going on cruises for diving or fishing.

6. Do children prefer to go to seaside than adults? Why?

Yes, children like better than adults to be at the seaside, as they are carefree to enjoy the wonderful things, which are trivial to adults. The love of water is the nature of human, especially children, as it's said water is the source of life. Besides swimming and playing in the sea, children have a lot to do at the seaside, such as searching for shells and crabs and playing in the sand. That's why they are fond of going to seaside.

7. Will seaside become more popular (Will more people go to seaside) in the future?

Yes, more people will go to seaside to relax themselves. With the development of cities, more land will be used for construction of buildings, leading to less space reserved for people to enjoy the pleasure of water. People are not satisfied with swimming in a pool and when they have time, they will set for seaside with family or friends.

8. An interesting country(not your own)

You should say:

Which the country is

How you know the country

What you know about the country

And explain why you think the country is interesting

Sample:

I'd like to talk about Kiribati, an island county in the Pacific. I read about Kiribati, accidentally, in a geography book. It is interesting because of its unique geographic features and special culture.

Kiribati, consisting of three widely separated main groups of southwest Pacific islands, is the only country in the world in all four hemispheres. Besides, based on a 1995 realignment of the International Date Line, Kiribati is now the easternmost country in the world, and the Line Islands of it are the first area to enter into a new year. What an interesting experience it will be to welcome a new year there, to which I am looking forward.

Kiribati is an ideal place for fishing-lovers, for the waters there are open for international anglers to try their hand. Moreover, the culture and lifestyle people keep are also attractions to visitors. It is said the way of living there is

very simple and people plan their living for only one day with no worry about their future. "Tomorrow is another day" is the living motto for them. I expect to spend some time there to experience the particular life there.

Sample2:

I'd like to talk about Thailand, a famous tourist destination country, where there are various interesting festivals. There are many things to see and do there.

Thailand is home to elephant, and nicknamed a country of elephant. The Elephant Festival is held there annually on the third weekend of November in Surin. A parade of over 250 elephants is organized, followed by performances of people interacting with elephants. Elephants are arranged to start on the beginning line, like professional runners, and they will rush forward to pick up match-box, bananas, dolls, etc. The most exciting will be playing tag, in which an elephant weighing over 8000 pounds will complete against a team of 60 vigorous young men. There is no exception that the elephant is the winner, even another 40 men are added to the team. The elephant is clumsy, so it's hard to imagine that they can play and interact so well with people. Besides that, the scenery there is attracting because of its year-round warm climate. The man-made temples and palaces are treasure of its culture. Thailand's primary religion is Buddhism, which is practiced by around 95% of the population. That's why loads of temple are available, and the Buddhist monks there is said to be the most respected and wealthy around the world. Therefore, I look forward to making a trip to Thailand.

Sample3:

I long for going to Italy for a visit. Italy is a special and interesting country. I got to know the country while studying the world geography in middle school. Italy is impressive, for my teacher said it looks like a boot. Later, I learned more about its history and an article about Venice, City of Water, made me fall in love with the country.

I think Italy is interesting for some special phenomena. For example, it's said it's impossible to take a taxi in Italy without making reservation. My friend paid a visit to Italy years ago and he told me about that, which sounds incredible to me. In China, taxi drivers drive around the city to pick up passers-by who waited on the roadside. I therefore searched online to find out the fact. In Italy, taxi drivers registered in taxi companies which manage all the taxis. When a passenger calls up a company and leaves his information, a worker will contact a driver whose car is vacant and near to the passenger on radio. The driver then will rush to the passenger, but the passenger will pay a bit more fare, as it'll arrive with a few euros already on the meter. It's because, in Italy, drivers start the meter from the moment they get the call, no matter where they are. Taxi drivers actually cooperate with those companies, and pay monthly fee to their service- providing information. Drivers use their own taxis and are in charge of the insurance, maintenance

as well as gas cost. However, the government offers some allowance, which accounts for twenty percent of their monthly cost. Of course, there are unregistered taxis, which are notorious for not playing by the rules. In most cases, a passenger will be over charged. However, whether he's registered or not, to run a taxi, a driver needs to get a Driver Accreditation from the Taxi Services Commission. Drivers are permitted to take passengers during the time arranged in the certificate.

The taxi service system in Italy is so different from that in China. I think it's beneficial, for the operation can save drivers much time looking for passengers on roadside.

PART 3: Discussion topics

1. How do you think about studying abroad?

Studying abroad has been a trend during the past ten years, as an increasing number of people can afford the cost of studying in foreign country. Besides, with globalization, people know more about the world and are curious of different cultures. On the other hand, more countries being open to receive foreign student makes studying abroad much easier and more popular.

2. Why do many students study abroad now?

Studying abroad is an option for many students, who want to receive a different education from their own, or who try to further their major study in countries where the study is advanced. It's a chance for them to broaden their mind and to experience the culture and lifestyle where they go to study in.

3. How do you think about living in foreign countries?

Living in a foreign country has been a new pursuit for many people, who want to receive a better education or enjoy a well-developed welfare of some advanced countries. At the very beginning, however, the life for new arriving people may be hard because of language barrier and cultural differences. Besides, how well they can adapt to the new living environment differs among people.

4. Why do many people live in foreign countries?

Well, there are various reasons for people to live in foreign countries. Most of them go abroad for working and trading. Some are appointed a job in a foreign country and many of them settle down later, so do some businessmen and owners of family firm. Also, some students who have used to the life where they study decide to reside and make a living.

5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of tourism to a foreign country?

Traveling to a foreign country enables tourists to experience the unique culture, scenery and food of that country, which surely will be a special experience to them. Because of language barrier and cultural differences, however, many visitors may not fully enjoy the journey. Besides, if they come across some problems, they may not be able to get timely help and suffer unexpected difficulties.

6. Talk about some differences between China and a country else?

I'd like to compare China and Japan, the neighbour countries. The ancient China had much impact on Japan, such as the written language, religion and culture. Japan, whose total area is about one twenty-sixth of that of China, is much more advanced in economy, as its industrial revolution began much earlier. I think they should be cooperative and enjoy a harmonious development.

THING

1. A special meal you'd like to have

Describe a special meal you were invited to

You should say:

What to eat

Who you are going to eat with

Where to have the meal

And explain how you felt about the meal

Sample:

I'm planning to have a special meal with my family two weeks later, when will be my brother's twentieth birthday. The twentieth birthday is important to a person, since it's generally considered as the time for one turning to be an adult in China. I decide to cook a meal for him on that day, making it a special day for him and my family as well.

First of all, I need to prepare a birthday cake. I decided on making one myself. When I was worrying about where to make a cake since I don't have related instruments, my friend suggested me to surf online to find DIY activities offered by some cake shops. I, luckily, got in touch with an owner who was willing to help. I've spent some time with her, watching her how to make one. I'm sure I can make a tasty one for the day. Then, I will prepare the menu in advance, cooking dishes that my family like. In total, there will be ten dishes to cook, as in tradition, including the hot pot my brother would like to eat. With the help of my mother, I will list the materials needed, shop and store them, as I may not get all what I need on that day. At last, I have to prepare noodles to eat, which stand for long life for the one having birthday.

I cannot wait for the day to come when I will have a busy day to make a special meal for my family.

Sample2:

Last month, the staff in my department made a trip to Xixi National Wetland Park and had a meal in the open. We took part in the fish-catching activity held there and had a big meal with fish and vegetables we collected from the land by ourselves. We had a great time enjoying the special meal over a lake.

Several ponds of the park are open to the public. Once the water of a pond is pumped out, visitors are free to catch fish in the pond. Equipped with special rubber clothes, the boys spent two hours searching for the fish hidden in the silt. We girls, meanwhile, went to the vegetable garden to pick up some vegetables. The vegetables grow naturally and no fertilizer or pesticide is used. Therefore they're safe and fresh. Carrying full baskets of vegetable, we returned to the bank of the pond and met the boys who were exhausted, for it's hard to walk in the mud while wearing the rubber clothes. Then we went to a restaurant where we had our fish and vegetables cooked by the famous cook in the park.

The restaurant is set on the lakeside and tables are scattered on the wooden terrace above the water. While kitchen hands were busy preparing food for us, we relaxed on the chairs, talking, watching fish swimming by and enjoying the warm sunshine. During the meal, we were divided into two teams and had a competition of singing. Our leader, Mrs. Lin song parts of a song, we then had to tell the name of the song and finish the song. The team that lost the competition was punished to do cleaning of the office for a whole week. What an enjoyable meal we had!

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Do you like cooking?

Yes, I do. Cooking is interesting. Whenever I'm free, I prefer to cook a meal for my family. Sometimes, I'd like to try new recipe and cook various dishes.

2. Would you say that eating a healthy diet is important?

Of course. Having a healthy diet enables people to enjoy a healthy body. Diets provide people energy to cope with daily activity and to be free from illness. Many people enjoying long life span are those eating healthily.

3. Describe what you think is a healthy diet.

Well, healthy diets for people are different, for people are physically different. In general, people need to eat a balanced diet, taking in proper amount of meat, vegetable, milk and fruit. In this way, people can take in enough nutrients necessary for their body.

4. Are there many vegetarians in China?

There may be vegetarians, but not so many. So far, I haven't met anyone who is a vegetarian in reality. We Chinese prefer to cook vegetable with meat as ingredient. People of Hui minority do not eat pork, but they have beef and mutton instead.

5. The frequency of your having special meals.

It depends. Usually I have meals at home. Occasionally I will have special meals when my friends or relatives pay a visit to my family. Sometimes, my mother cook a big meal to treat them, sometimes we eat at restaurant, having a hot pot, for example. I like spicy food, and it's comfortable to have delicious hot-pot in cold days with a group of people.

6. What do Chinese prefer to eat?

China enjoys a rich culture of cooking, and we Chinese pay much attention to what we eat. We enjoy various foods, made by frying, stewing or boiling. Rice and noodle are the main foods. We cook a range of dishes, with a variety of materials.

7. Is meal in north China and south China the same?

No, food eaten in northern and southern part is different due to climate difference. It's much colder in North China where people prefer to eat noodle, food made of flour as well, with stewed food. They like hot and salty food, too. As it's believed hot and salty food can better keep people out of cold. People in southern part eat more delicately. People like to make various dishes making use of different materials, for there is a variety of food available year-round. Comparatively, southern people prefer to eat sweet and less salty food.

8. The food children like and dislike.

Children enjoy tasty and sweet food, while dislike ordinary food adult eat daily. For example, my nephew, a five-year-old boy, likes hamburgers, French fries and cola best, and chocolate is his favourite snack. He suffered a lot because of his decayed teeth, however, he will never give up eating junk food or chocolate. He eats little main food, such as rice or the dishes cooked at home. It's common with children.

9. Why don't adults eat junk food?

I think adults do eat junk food, especially those young. Junk food is tasty,

though not healthy. So adults may not eat junk food as often as children, as they know eating too much junk food is harmful to their healthy.

10. Do you think it's better to have meal at home or at restaurant?

I think it's better to have meal at home. For one thing, eating at home, one can make sure the materials are safer and nutritious. For another, one can cook dishes according to their own favour. However, people now are occupied with their work, and more people prefer to have meals at restaurant.

11. Which is more important, the price or quality of food?

The quality of food is more important. In most cases, however, high quality foods are always in high price, so many people tend to buy expensive food. I think people should be clear of that- expensive foods are not always good. Foods imported from abroad and those planted out of season enjoy higher price, however, they are not more nutritious than ordinary foods.

12. How to control the quality of food?/ What should government do to control the food safety?

First of all, measures should be taken to make sure the safety and harmlessness of food growing on the farm. Then, the ingredient of cooking, such as oil, should meet the standard level. Of course, people working in food industry should be healthy enough to serve others.

2. An important decision

Describe an important decision that took you a long time to make

You should say:

What the decision was

How you made your decision

What the results of the decision were

And explain why it was important or the impact that this decision had on your life

Sample:

Days ago I enrolled in training for driving license, and it took me a couple of months to make the decision. It's important for it's a great change in my life. I used to think I would never take up driving, for it costs a lot in maintaining and fuel-consumption. There was a time, however, when I had something emergency to deal with, and it's time when it's hard to take a taxi. At last, it's my manager who drove me there. Only by then did I think about learning how to drive.

I thought a lot before making the decision. The increasing of private cars has caused many problems, like traffic jam and growing number of car accidents, which scared me a bit. My friends comforted me it's not such a big problem as long as I'm experienced and careful while driving. Besides that, there's another problem of time, for I don't have much time after work. To begin with, I have to attend the theory test, taking about two weeks' time in all. Then I need to spend at least thirty-eight hours on learning driving a car, but as I was told, there are loads of people waiting to learn, so I may have to wait some time before I can actually get the opportunity to learn. My friends

persuaded me to push myself, saying that there would be more people to compete for learning, and it's possible that the city would carry out some policies to limit the number of cars, which means that it might be harder to learn or to own a car.

Thanks to the advice of my friends, I made up my mind to sign up for driving training.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. What do you think are the most important decisions that people make in their lives?

Well, in China the most important decisions people need to make relate to their study, work and marriage, and later, family life of their own. Parents decide for their children to attend good schools. When their children graduate, they will help decide to take part in what kind of ' job. Some parents even interfere in their children making boyfriend or girlfriend. Then the children may probably act like their parents to make decisions for their own children.

2. What are necessary when making decisions?

Well, to well make a decision, people should be mentally prepared. They have to be clear of why they will make a decision, and if they are able to face the change and challenge that follow. Then once they make the decision, they should be determined enough, otherwise, they may be regretful of making the decision.

3. How can people improve their decision-making abilities?

People can improve the ability by daily accumulation to get themselves prepared. By the information online, people could be sure of what they long for, and what they need to do to make it. For example, if one is not satisfied with his current job, he could surf online to find jobs he's interested. During the time, he should work harder to be eligible for the job he wants to take up. Then he can choose a job when an opportunity is available.

4. How do you think computer will change the way people make decisions?

Computer helps people a lot by providing plenty of information. For example, on the time I decided to choose a university to study, I surfed the internet to find out the schools available offering major which I interested in. After comparing those schools, I decided on the one which was in another province, unheard of before. Without the internet, I may only choose among those I know. That is, computer offers us more opportunities and choices on making decisions.

5. Do parents in China allow their children to make important decisions about the future?

It depends. Some parents spare much effort in developing the independence of their children, and they respect the decisions made by their children. Of course, they probably have discussed with their children forward on making the decision. In most cases, however, parents believe their children are not old and experienced enough to do those themselves, so parents would decide without considering the idea of their children's.

6. Do you think that parents should make important decisions for their children?

Well, parents need to make decisions for their children on their childhood. However, they have to discuss with their teenage children when making a

decision, since children at that age have their own ideas which need to be considered. However, some parents still make decisions for their adult children, which I believe is unnecessary and harmful, for their doing this will make their children dependent on them. Adults cannot making their own decisions will not enjoy their own life.

7. Do you think that teachers should help students make decisions?

Teachers should give advice on students making decisions, for they enjoy much more experience, at least in what he specializes. For example, when I chose about a major while attending university, my teacher told me a lot about what effects to consider on making a choice. Then my tutor also offered some suggestions when I wondered to take part in what kind of job.

8. How can older people (parents) help young people (their children) make their own decisions wisely?

Well, older people enjoy much life experience which the young are in lack of. Having less experience, the young cannot make a full consideration of things he might have to face, on making any decision. So older people can help young people by offering advice based on their own experience.

9. What do you think are the qualities of a good teacher (or, a good decision maker)?

To be a good decision maker, one needs to be knowledgeable, at least be knowledgeable at the area relating to his decision. First of all, he has to be clear of himself, of what he can do and what he wants to do. Under this condition, one needs to gain as much relating information as possible, so he will be clear of the change and influence brought by his decision.

10. Do you think it's important for parents to encourage the development of leadership abilities in their children? (Why/ Why not)

I don't think so, because not all children are capable of being leaders in a group. If a child is active and prefers to take the lead, he or she should be encouraged by the parents. Otherwise, if a child is shy, he or she should be encouraged to be active and to cooperate with others.

3. An occasion when you were helped

Describe an occasion when you were helped by stranger

You should say:

Who the person was

Where and when the person helped

How the person helped you

and explain how you felt after the person did this

Sample:

I am thankful to the young man, a passer-by, whose name may never be known to me. He helped me out days ago in repairing my bike on my way to work.

It's a cloudy morning, and I rented a public bike to work as usual. On the halfway, however, it began to rain. I was lucky, for I'd brought my raincoat with me. Finding that I was a bit late, I hurried up. Unexpectedly, the bike broke down, which I found was caused by the detachment of chain from the

bike. There were times I met the same problem, so I was sure to fix it myself. However, that time I failed, and then I became impatient and worried, making it harder. At last, I gave up and thought of parking it somewhere and took a taxi instead. However, realizing that if didn't return it in time I would be charged and that I might be fined by missing it, I, helplessly, began to walk while pushing the bike in the rain. Loads of people rode passing me, hurrying away. Then, suddenly the young man stopped and asked if I needed help. Knowing the problem, he parked his bike aside, and started to mend it. He had to take off his raincoat so as to fix my chain. I was left standing there, looking at him doing so. He made it, at last. Telling me to be careful and that it's better for me to change a bike in the bike station five hundred meters forwards, he returned to his bike. He left before I asked what his name was.

Now, I still ride to work, hoping to meet him again and thank him for doing me a favor. As the saying goes, a tiny kindness one does is a big favor to others, so does what the young man did to me.

Sample2

I'd like to talk about a great favor a dweller of my community did to me this summer. Thanks to him, I found the puppy I lost. The puppy, named Bones, is my nephew's favourite pet. I took care of Bones for a week, when my nephew and his parents travelled to another city.

Bones was familiar with me and I took him downstairs to have a walk after supper. The first two nights, nothing happened; however, on the third night he run away fast no matter how hard I called his name, when a hug dog appeared suddenly and frightened him. Then I run around the community, hoping to find him until I was exhausted. Tired as I was, I could not get to sleep. I could imagine how sad my nephew would cry, since Bones is his best friend and they've been together for two years. So there's no way for me to lose him. Early the next morning, I rushed to a printing shop and made hundreds of notice looking for Bones, with his photo and my number. Then I put them up on each building and the notice board of the community. Unexpectedly, I saw a notice also looking for a puppy, of the same breed as my Bones, which was lost a week ago. I called up the owner, asking if he had his puppy back. He, an old man, told me there was no news, but he would keep finding his pet. I comforted him no news is good news, and he thanked me. Two days past, I didn't receive a call, and I spent the days calling his name and searching each comer of the community, as I thought Bones would be too terrified to hide himself somewhere. Yet, I was desperate as time passing by. The third day, when I was hesitating to call my cousin about that, a call from the old man cheered me up. He said that he found a puppy in the pet shop just half a mile away. Hearing that, I rushed to the shop and found that it's my Bones. Tears went down when I held him. Though I had to pay a thousand Yuan to the shop owner, I was thankful for getting it back. I really appreciated the kind man for his great help.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Do you think it's important for people to help each other?

Yes, I think so. No one is capable to do anything by himself, that's why one cannot live out of society. Besides, as the saying goes-many hands make light work, things can be completed much easier and in shorter time with people helping each other.

2. Are young people more willing to accept help (or support) from their friends or from their parents?

Well, it depends. Some young people prefer the help from their parents. It's the family that will offer sincere help while expecting no payback. Others, however, are willing to accept help from their friends. Young people believe their friends are those who can understand and support their idea.

3. Would you say you are a kind person?

Yes, I am. I am never mean to others; when my friends or relatives turn to me for help, I will try my best; I feel sad for those suffering the attack of disasters, and I will make a donation, though it's not so much; I'm glad to be helpful when some passers-by asking me for giving direction. When I was a child, I dreamt of being wealthy, so that I could help all the poor beggars. I still have the dream, and I do what I can to help others.

4. How can you know whether or not someone is a kind person?

It takes time to know whether a person is kind or not. The deeds of a person will show how the person is. A kind person is the one who cares about others. For example, a kind person will keep his voice down answering the phone while others are having a rest; he will kindly offer advice to help others out of trouble. What he does is not a big deal, but makes difference to others.

5. If you knew a selfish person who needed help, would you help him?

Yes, I will. I will help anyone in need no matter who he is. Besides, I believe no one is born to be selfish. Offer him more help and care, maybe he will open his mind and become helpful to others.

6. How do you think children could be brought up to become unselfish (or kinder) people?

Well, parents have great impact on the characteristics of their children, so to make their children be unselfish, the parents should set examples for them. For example, on their way, they can help carry heavy stuff for old people; they can turn down the volume of their CD players so as not to disturb their neighbours. Children will take up the good deeds without being told to.

7. Do you think schools help teach children to be unselfish?

I think school is a good place for children to learn to be unselfish. Studying together with other students, a child will behave himself so as not to distract attention of others. Also, he has to learn to share his toys or other things with others, otherwise, he will find no one likes to play with him. Gradually, a child will realize the importance of being unselfish.

8. Do you think it's important for nations to help each other?

Yes, it is. In the past, nations formed a union, so that they could help each other in defending the invasion from other countries. Nowadays, economic support is necessary. Developed countries should offer help to those underdeveloped ones. Otherwise, the imbalance development will, sooner or later, lead to the conflicts among nations.

9. Are there many opportunities in your country for people to do volunteer work?

Yes, there are. For instance, college students are encouraged to work in underdeveloped area for a period of time. People in some remote mountainous regions are in lack of education and health care. Every year, a number of newly graduates will volunteer to help those people. Besides, students and citizens are welcomed to take part in service in community. For example, visiting the old in Nursing House, or accompanying children in orphanage.

10. Do you think private companies have a responsibility to society to do some type of "public service"?

Yes, I think so. Companies make use of social resource to make profit, so they are responsible to payback the society. In China, some companies offer jobs to disabled people, and some make donation in solving the problem of pollution. In return, they can pay less tax for their contributing to society.

4. an interesting talk with a stranger

Describe an interesting conversation with a stranger

You should say:

When and where did you meet the stranger?

What did you talk about?

And explain why did you think it is interesting.

Sample:

The topic reminds me of a talk with a passenger I met in the lounge while I was waiting for my plane. It's in the lounge where I met an alumnus who took the same flight. What a coincident, he studied in the same department as I do. We talked happily about the changes of our school in the past years and shared much memory. What a unique experience!

The day I flied to pay a visit to my friend whom I had not seen for years. After I arrived at the lounge , I found a seat and took out a novel to read as there would be about an hour's wait. As I was reading, the man sitting next to me handed me a bookmark , which actually was mine. It's my favorite bookmaker that I used to put in the book. I didn't know when it fell out. Then the man asked me if I was a student of XX University. I had no idea of how he figured out my school. He then smiled , pointing at the bookmaker as I was looking at him rather confused. Well , it turned out the name of my university printed in the bookmaker, which was particularly made for the school's centennial celebration , made him have the guess. The thing got interesting as he told me he graduated from the school three years ago, the year when I was admitted. At his time , when our school moved to the current site , plenty of the facilities in school and infrastructure in surrounding were not completed. Once, he said , a heavy rain last for overnight and water covered the way outside halls of residence , as the drainage system was not efficient enough. As a result , the students had a day off until the water was

cleared out. The time before we had to get on board , I told him the new library under construction, our teachers and things like that. It's fantastic to have an interesting talk with a man like him.

Sample2

I had an unusual talk with a taxi driver about a year ago which was impressive. We talked about our jobs, complained about the traffic jam and enjoyed our talk for about half an hour.

It's a special day, for taxi drivers were on a strike because of the rising fuel price and the heavy traffic on roads. I didn't know that and I was trying to take a taxi back to my company. Standing on the roadside, I waited for over an hour to get on a taxi. I was rather surprised, as I was in downtown area where there were usually plenty of taxis passing by, but that didn't happen on that day. On seeing an empty taxi coming towards, I was happy and waved my hands trying to stop it. Unexpectedly the driver paid no attention to me and drove away in a rush. Thinking that the driver might not see me, I waited again. However, in the following half hour, two more empty taxis passed me, no matter how hard I waved to them. When I was desperate and decided to go to the bus station, a taxi stopped as a passenger walked off. I was glad the driver was willing to take me, from whom I knew why I could not get on a taxi. On talking, I knew that the increasing number of cars on roads made it much crowded on roads, and taxi drivers had to wait longer time for being held up by traffic. What's worse, the price of gas raised several times in the past months. The drivers suffered a great lose in their incoming, and they started a strike- some drivers refused to drive, some didn't take passengers- asking the government to draw up a new charging system for taxi. I was sorry for the drivers, and then I complained about my job with him. We agreed on the difficulty of making a living by working for others. It's joyful to have a talk with him.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Is face to face talking better than that on the Internet?

It depends. People nowadays can make video chat through the Internet, by which people can talk as they are sitting in front of each other. It's convenient for people who are away for thousands of miles. It's popular among people to chat with net friends whom they've never met in real life. However, video chat like this can be dangerous. There are reports about men pretending to be girls to make friends with other males. They make use of technology and appear to be "girls" shown in the video.

2. What's the advantage of face to face talking?

The advantage of face to face talking would be that a listener can better react to what a speaker said. For example, a speaker may tell his terrible experience, and he might not help crying for his suffering. Hearing that, the listener can give him a hug or hold his hands, to comfort him. This can never be achieved by talking online.

3. Do women talk more than men?

Yes, it seems that women talk a lot more than men. Women are interested in sharing with others, and are curious about the affairs of others. That's why women are called the spreaders of rumor. A group of two or more woman can always be seen enjoy chatting anywhere, on buses, at restaurant, or on the road. Sometimes, they lose themselves in talking, and their loudvoice will disturb others around.

4. Do busy people have no time to talk with others?

It depends. Not all busy people are so occupied that they have no time to talk with others. Most men speak less, for they have many affairs to deal with, and they keep considering what to do to deal with those. Men tend to keep their problems and happiness to themselves and seldom show those to others. Women are different, and they will talk with their best friends or someone they trust. They can always find time to do that.

5. Is it easier for people to talk with strangers than with friends?

Yes, it is. The strangers may be net friends, or those people met on the journey, so the strangers have no idea of who the people really are, and in most cases, they will never meet in reality again. Talking with strangers is a good way for people to confide their feelings. For example, some people prefer to take out their anger on others with their net-friends. The net-friends, having no way to know the truth, will take sides in the speaker. Being supported and having releasing their anger, the speaker will feel much better.

6. Why there are so many talk show programs in TV?

Well, talk shows are popular, because people like to watch them to relax. Besides, the cost of talk show is comparatively low, as usually a person or two will be invited to talk with a host in studio. Also, various sources of the interviewed person/ persons would be collected and edited forward, to make the program colorful.

7. Why do people prefer to watch talk shows?

Most people like to watch talk shows for relaxing. Well-known people, like writers, directors, artists, or actors, are often invited to attend the shows. In the program, guests will share their life stories- the interesting events and suffering they went through, and their effort to get succeeded. People tend to be moved by the stories, and they sometimes find they have similar experiences with the guests, and they then are more confident to go forward.

5. An occasion when you moved

Describe an occasion when you moved into a new house or school

You should say:

When did you move into a new house?

Why did you want to move?

and explain whether you'd like to move there

Sample:

Months ago I moved in with my friend, and moving into a new house was not easy work.

Three years ago I rented a flat in a community near the company I worked for, however the rent was a bit high as the community situated city center. Then I found, accidentally, an old friend of mine purchased a house in the city, and I paid her a visit. There was a direct bus carrying me from my working place to her house, taking about fifty minutes. It's been three years since the last time we met and she treated me a big meal in her new house which was big enough to a family. Knowing that I lived by myself, she asked if I was interested in moving in with her, for she's looking for a roommate who could live in the vacant room. In this way, the rental from me could share the load she had to pay monthly, and I could also be a company to her since she's still single. I agreed, for it's convenient for me to go working on one hand and on the other her house was fully-equipped which means I could make use of the kitchen to cook myself which I always longed for. On a sunny morning, I contacted a remover from whom I got some packing boxes. We made it to move at two in the afternoon, before that I cleared all my stuff and had those packed. My clothes made up a big part of my belongings, while two boxes of books were the heaviest. Two workers of the remover carried my stuff down the six-storey flat and then up to the three-storey house of my friend's miles away after a half-hour drive, which took two hours to finish. Then I was left with nine boxes of stuff to arrange to the new room.

Sample 2 An occasion when you moved to a new school

I'd like to talk about my experience of transferring to a new school when I was at grade three. My parents decided to make a living in a city far away, so I was left to be taken care of by my grandparents. Therefore, I had to go to the primary school in the town where lived my grandparents. I was rather sad about leaving my hometown, and my friends with whom I went to school everyday. What I went through in the new school was even harder.

The new primary school was better, with higher qualified teachers and facilities like canteen and indoor playground. However, I did not enjoy it for the first few weeks; actually, the period of time was a bit terrible for me. I didn't get enrolled in until two weeks after the new semester. As a result I didn't have new textbooks and uniforms for a whole week. I was the only one who didn't wear uniform when all the students did morning exercise on the playground, so I felt detached. I was a shy girl. Without any friend, I was all by myself, watching others playing together happily during the break. What's worse, I could not catch up with other students at first. The materials taught in the new school were different and much harder than those of my former school, I could not stand the whole suffering and was so desperate that I cried several times on the phone, begging my mother to pick me up and send me back to my former school. Things got better after my cousin helped me with my study and I gradually made friends with classmates in the neighbourhood. The experience of going to the new school changed my life.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Do you rent a house?

Yes, I do. I have been living in the rented house since I attended working three years ago.

2. Why do people move to a new house?

People move to a new house for different reasons. For example, when people find a new job which takes a long time on commute, people would think about finding somewhere closer to their work place. Sometimes, people prefer to move to a new house when they can afford one.

3. How do people get along with their neighbors?

Well, people now living in big city are becoming less familiar with their neighbors. There are reports about people not knowing their neighbors who have been living next door for years. Modern life and housing construction stop people to get along with their neighbors.

4. What are the advantages and disadvantages of moving to a new place?

The main advantage of moving to a new place would be that people will get to know new or maybe totally different people, and get to use better infrastructure. However, people have to begin a new life where they are strange, without the accompany of their relative and friends, which is painful at the very beginning, and not all the people can well adapt to new surrounding.

5. What are the influences of moving on adults, children and old people?

Comparatively, moving to a new place has less influence on children, than on adults and old people. For children, they have to leave their schools and playmates, while they can soon make new ones in new school and living place. However, it's harder for adults and the old to adapt to new living place, especially the old who may never make up ideal friends again.

6. Do you think it is easier for children to make adjustment to the new environment than for adults?

Yes, it is. For example, it's easy for children to make new friends in the new environment. As long as they have fun playing together, children could be friends without any other consideration. However, it's not the ease with adults. There are kinds of discrimination or prejudice among adults, making them hard to find and make up new friends.

7. What are the advantages and disadvantages of living in one place in the whole life?

Obviously, to live in one place for whole life, one will not confront the difficulty and suffering of moving into a new one. It's happy to live in a place where one is familiar with the people around, whom one can turn to for help at any time. Unfortunately, one may be mentally restricted, and he may be inimical to outside world and new ideas. And he may be afraid of change in any kind.

8. What are the influences of changes of work?

Many people prefer to change work when they are offered a better one, which will bring them higher income or more opportunities for further development. However, it will take people some time, more or less, to adapt to new surrounding; meanwhile, they have to give up something on accepting new work. For instance, they may have to leave for another city and get away from their familiar working and living condition, their family and friends as well.

9. Do students like to move to a new school?

Well, it depends. Some students dislike to move to new schools where they have no friends and they may have problems being unable to catch their new

classmates in study. However others may be happy. For example, in China, many students study in villages, while their parents are working in big cities. And now more students are able to study in cities where their parents work, and they are happy to move to new schools.

10. What are the reasons that students move to a new school? And what are the influences?

In most cases, students move to a new school when they move to live in a new place with their parents. Of course, there are ones who move because of their personal problems. For example, a student might be bullied by his schoolmates, which hurts him mentally so much that he has to move, or a student may not get along with his classmates and has to move.

6. Sth. you did to help learning a foreign language

Describe something you did to help learning another language

You should say:

What you did

Where and when you did it

Who you did it with

and explain why it was helpful

Sample:

While studying at university, we were required to learn another language, besides English, and I found I was left no choice but to take up Japanese. I was a slow learner, and had difficulty in learning at the very beginning. I came up with an idea of finding a partner who could help me to get through, and I made it. My classmate, Li, made it a rule for me to study with him every day, during which we did kinds of practice standing outside the library where it's lighted.

Li helped me find out I was weak in Japanese for I was not interested in it, and I was a bit afraid of speaking out the basic fifty sounds in Japanese, which equals to the twenty-six letters in English. Being not familiar with the basic sounds, I could not spell words, which I remembered by rote. Knowing my problem, he downloaded some pieces of Japanese songs, a bit easy ones, as he knew I liked singing. He carefully noted the strange words, and taught me part of a song each time, and I was left to learn by myself. Then he had me review what I learned at class, to correct my pronunciation and to check my spelling. It took about an hour to do that. Gradually, I found it's not so hard to speak Japanese, and I did well in my exercise. Then one day he took me to a class where I was made to watch an hour of TV series in Japanese, after which I would be given two or three sentences from it, and the next day, I had to practice with him. I kept on studying with him for half of term till I caught up with my classmates. I was grateful for his help.

Sample2

To learn a language well, as told by my teacher, I need to get myself exposed to as much native language as possible. For example, I can read materials,

watch or listen to programs in the language. I'm preparing for the IELTS exam, and I have to study English hard to get the score which enables me to be admitted to the ideal school I've applied for.

I've made it a rule to listen to BBC news everyday in the morning for an hour. Days ago, I bought a radio to listen to the broadcasting. It's convenient to download various listening materials online, and to use a walkman or a phone to play them. I, however, think the best way for me to do that is to use a radio. For one thing, I can listen to the latest news daily. In this way, I can be informed of what's going on around the world. For another, I can focus on listening by using a radio. With a walkman or a phone, I may listen to music stored instead. Every morning, I carry my radio while walking to classroom. On the first week, listening was quite hard, for I was not used to that. There are so many strange words in the program, and the speakers talk or read quite too fast for me to catch up. However, I feel I do better each day, with which I'm satisfied. At the very beginning, I could only get some words, and now I can understand several sentences in a passage. The variety of programs on BBC is really attractive, of which I'll never get tired. Listening on radio helps me improve my listening and offers me a choice to know more about the colorful world.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. How do young people learn another language?

Well, young people will attend language class, listen to record, or watch TV programs. Sometimes, they may make friends with people speaking that language. Now, a growing number of youths prefer to study abroad, as it's believed, it's best to learn a language by living in the area where the language is spoken by local people.

2. How do old people learn another language?

Well, the ways for the old to learn another language are much limited. Some old people I know often learn through language books, and listen to the radio broadcasting English program. Some of them prefer to watch news report in TV. Also, some are active and they learn with their grandchildren. But, few of them make use of a walkman or computer to learn foreign language.

3. Is it easier for young people to learn another language than for old people?

Yes, it is, in most cases. It's well known that the best time for one to learn a language is the time before he's eleven, during which his brain develops and tends to acquire language better. Young people are more energetic, and they enjoy better memory than old people. Besides, they can make use of different means to learn a language. While compared with the young, old people enjoy more free time, especially when they've retired from their work.

4. What changes do learning new languages bring?

People can get to know better about places where the languages they've learned are spoken. For example, English is one of the common languages used around the world. By reading materials written in English or appreciating the movies from abroad, people can broaden their mind. Also, there will be

more job opportunities for people being able to speak foreign languages, like jobs related to international business and trading.

7. A recent event that made you feel happy

Describe a recent event that made you feel happy

You should say

- What the event was
- When and where it happened
- Who participated in this event
- What you saw or did

And explain why this event was so enjoyable.

Sample:

Well, in fact, I feel I've recently become increasingly indifferent to what happens around me and few events can make me feel happy. But at the end of last semester, I was really delighted at the news that I passed my physics final exam. I have been so poor at physics since I was exposed to it. Those formulas and laws which are easy to the others always puzzle me a lot. Before the physics exams, I usually stayed up late; and on the exams I would be very anxious and my hands would even tremble. So you can imagine I almost never achieved a good score no matter how many hours I put in it. I felt so frustrated by this subject that I decided not to prepare for the final examination last semester. Believing that I would fail in the exam, I was unexpectedly calm during that exam and I finished the exam smoothly although there were several questions I being not able to figure out the answers.

After the exam, I was still unconfident of the result and believed that I would undoubtedly fail it. But just several days later, when I was really worried about it, I was informed of the good news by one of my classmates. At that moment, I was indeed excited and I thought it was calmness that helped to make it. From the event, I realized the importance of a good psychological quality and now I am not so afraid of the subject.

Sample2:

A recent event that made me happy was that my older sister came back home for the first time since her marriage. A week ago, we picked her up at the train station. Mum even cried on seeing her, for she'd be away from us for more than a year. It's the happiest thing to me recently.

My sister and her husband got married last summer and moved to live with his parents in another city, in northern part of China. My parents and I had our first Spring Festival without her, and we missed her very much. Six months ago, she called up and told us a good news that she was pregnant. We were so excited on hearing the news, and much happier as she decided to have the baby back home with us. Mum kept telling her what to eat and do to stay healthy.

We looked forward to her coming back. During the past months. Mum, Dad and I were busy preparing stuff to welcome her. Dad took out the wooden cradle that used to hold my sister and me. Though it's old, it's still in good condition. I planed to buy a new one, but my

parents insisted, saying that the cradle would be perfect in keeping a baby warm in winter. Mum unpacked a parcel of old clothing for babies, most of which belonged to my sister and me. I could not believe Mum keeps all those. Looking at the tiny clothes, Mum told me many funny things about us when we were kids. Mum picked out the ones which were given by my cousin, who had a baby last year. It's traditional in our country for a new-born baby to wear some old clothes, which is believed would benefit the baby. I bought some clothes and stuff for baby, like toys online, in addition to what Mum and I had bought in the supermarket. We made full preparation as we could before her arrival.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. What are some things that make you happy?

There are lots of things making me happy, such as getting something I've dreamed of for a long, passing an exam successfully, having an enjoyable meal with my friends, watching a funny film, or hearing good news of my relatives. I am an optimistic person, so any tiny things will make me laugh.

2. Do you think artistic activities can make people happy? (Why/ Why not?)

Sure, artistic activities like singing, painting, film enrich people's life and make people happy.

Some of my friends prefer to sing KTV where they can vent their unhappiness. Besides, people opt to be moved by songs, so positive songs cheer people up. Nowadays, many funny films and comedies unexpectedly receive high box office and ratings, which shows that people enjoy the happiness brought by the show.

3. Do you think people who have more talent are happier than others? (Why/Why not?)

I don't think so, and I believe everyone has his own happiness. The Big Bang Theory, a famous comedy, brings much happiness to people around the world. In it, hero Sheldon, a talent physicist, is fond of comics and enjoys playing games like World of Warcraft, nothing is happier to him than doing those. Well, heroine Penny, a waitress who has the least knowledge of science, enjoys having parties and gossiping. They are both happy fellows enjoying their joy.

4. Do you think money makes people happy?

Yes, to some extent. It's always said the best way to cheer up a sad or angry female is to make her go shopping. I had an experience like that, which actually let me forget my sadness during shopping. Money enables people to buy and do anything as they wish. Money, however, is not everything. There are plenty of wealthy but sad guys.

5. Are the things (or the events) that make people happy today the same as several decades ago?

No, things that can make people happy have changed overtime. My grandma told me the happiest thing in the world is not to be hungry, since she suffered a lot during the three-year famine. My mother told me the happiest thing is to have a secure job which allows her to have a relaxing life after retiring. My friend told me having a house of her own and a health body is the happiest thing. My younger sister said nothing can make her happier than having a free life as her wishes.

6. Why do people feel happy when they are with the members of their family? My mother once told me no one else than family will always worry about and care about me. A saying goes like that there's no arguments last forever between a couple as they care about each other and forgive each other. So love among family members always gives people comfort if they are sad and offers help to get them out of trouble. That's why people will feel happy with their families.

7. What are some (other) examples of family activities that make people feel happy?

Doing things together can always make family members happy. Having a birthday or marriage is a happy event for the whole family who will all do something to help. Having a family awayday or joining a parent-child game is also a favor for people now, as people don't have much free time together. Having a big meal when all family members sit together chatting is also a pleasure.

8. Do you think there is any relationship between a person's age and their happiness? (Why/ Why not?)

Obviously, there is. When I was a child, being given a piece of new dress will bring me much happiness. But now, buying clothes is a necessity of life with no much happiness. With one growing up, one knows there are many choices available. A strange idea comes into being in people's mind: things of others are better than theirs. In a word, people are harder to be pleased, so the happiness people enjoy is closely related to their ages.

9. Some people say the happiest time in people's lives is the period when they are at school? Do you agree?

The majority of people would agree with the statement, so do I. Generally speaking in China, family will pay for the tuition and fee for one's study, so there is no need for people to worry about living cost. Besides, students, especially the college students, have much free time, which they can use to do what they have interest in. With these advantages, life of people at school is sure to be happier than others.

10. Do young people and old(er) people find happiness from the same things?

What makes young and old people happy differs. My grandma, for example, is fond of talking with her friends. At most times, they keep talking about the same things, but there is no tiredness for them. I could not understand that before, but gradually I know she enjoys the companion as we are too busy with our work to talk with her. I, too, loving to have fun with friends, often go to KTV singing or go shopping with them. With friends, my grandma and I enjoy different happiness.

11. When you are old(er), what kinds of things do you think will bring you happiness?

After getting old, I will be happy if I enjoy a pension so I have no worry of living. Besides, I appreciate the company of friends. I can do exercise to keep healthy and talk about family affairs with them, and enjoy ourselves by going out together to watch a film or to travel, all of which bring me a happier life.

What's more, I wish on times, like festival, my family can have a get-together. There's no happiness comparable with that.

12. Do you think people were happier in the past than they are now?

Yes, people nowadays have much to worry about, so we are not as happy as before. For example, the price of housing is rising too quickly for the majority of people to afford. Many people now are working hard for a whole life to pay off a house, as owning a house is necessary in the idea of Chinese people, especially the old.

8. A picnic or meal that you ate outdoors

Describe a picnic or meal that you ate outdoors.

You should say

Where you had this meal

Who was with you

What you ate and drank

What you saw or did

And explain why you ate outdoors/ why you enjoyed this picnic or outdoor meal.

Sample:

Just in late March, I went on a picnic with five of my friends on a sunny day. We chose to have the picnic in Prince Bay Park because in spring many beautiful cherry blossoms, tulips and some other flowers boom in the park. And with lots of trees, vast lawn and several creeks, it is a gorgeous place for picnic. We took a tent and lots of delicious food, drinks, badmintons and pokers with us.

As scheduled, all of us got there early in the morning and we took a walk casually while appreciating beautiful flowers and taking photos in the park. Being a little tired, we set up our tent and took a rest on the lawn. We took turns to play badminton and pokers, while other took out and passed over the food. And sometimes we just lay on the lawn to enjoy ourselves silently. Whatever we did, we felt happy and totally relaxed. And thus imperceptibly the day had crept on to its close and we left the park reluctantly. It was indeed an unforgettable and entertaining experience of picnic. As to me, a picnic is a great gathering for families or friends to communicate with each other and enjoy others' company. And it can always make me relaxed and forgettable out all the pressures I've experienced in everyday life. So I would like to have a picnic outdoors once the weather is fine and some family members or friends have free time.

Sample2:

Early this spring, my friends and I had a barbecue in Jiuxi, a famous spot for barbecue. The weather then was warm and suitable for eating outdoor.

My friends and I made it a rule to have a get-together every two month, trying something different each time. We'd never made barbecue before, and when one of us suggested about having one, all of us agreed. Since we had no relevant experience, we turned to the internet for help. I was responsible for contacting a supplier who would lend us a barbecue, and my friends taking

care of food and drinks. We met at the bus station, and after we saved all our food at the supplier's, we took a walk around as it was still early.

At about 10 o'clock, we returned to the barbecue site where there were plenty of people being busy with cooking food. We soon joined them and took all the stuff we'd prepared. Knowing that we had barbecue for the first time, the supplier kindly showed us how to operate, and told us what kind of food should be cooked first. Thanks to his help, we got to start successfully. Unskilled as we were, some stuff was burnt and some was not ready as appeared, though we had surfed online for instruction. We, however, enjoyed ourselves a lot. Finally we had a good meal, and were too full to eat anything, leaving much food uncooked.

We were in agreement that we would have a barbecue again in late autumn, and since we had the experience, we could make it better and won't waste any food.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. What do you think are the good points and the not-so-good points about eating a picnic lunch?

Eating a picnic means taking prepared food to eat in the open air, a park or a place near water, as one wishes, so the obvious good point is that it's enjoyable to have a picnic lunch with friends or relatives by the nature. While it's possible that food may somehow get polluted and the dining place may be dangerous if people are not careful enough.

2. On what occasions (or in what circumstances) do people choose to eat outdoors and on what occasions do people choose to eat in a restaurant?

People prefer to eat outdoors when the weather is fun, such as a sunny spring day when people can get close to the nature; or people may choose to have a family gather on backyard, so children can play some games together. People will go to dine in a restaurant whenever they don't want to cook themselves or just to eat something special served in restaurants.

3. What are some differences between eating in an open-air environment and eating indoors?

Eating in an open-air environment, like having a picnic or barbecue, is somehow limited, in regard of food. While eating indoors, people can have a full range of food to choose, whether to eat fried, steamed or boiled dishes as they wish. However, there is more fun to eat outdoor, people can play games while enjoying food.

4. When do people prefer to eat out (rather than eating at home)?

Young people would prefer to eat out when they get together with friends. They can have something to eat casually and talk about what happened to them recently. Or when people try to eat something special, such as beef or hot pot, of which it's a bit troublesome to prepare by oneself. If the food served tastes delicious, they will probably invite others to come along next time.

5. Have there been any changes over the past 30 years in where Chinese people eat their meals?

30 years ago, the majority of people had meals with family at home and cooked themselves to treat guests when eating outside was not so common. Others ate with colleagues at canteens run by companies where they worked. Gradually, people go to dine at restaurants, for that some are too busy to cook and that it's more convenient to eat out with loads of places supplying various foods

6. In what ways is eating at home different to eating in a restaurant?

Firstly, food is different. Food cooked at home is not so special but is the favorite taste for a family. So the taste of homely dish is unique. While the food served at a restaurant, however, tends to be inviting in appearance (colorful and in special design) and in smell. Secondly, eating at home people can be more freely, they can talk and laugh as they wish, but eating out they should behave themselves as not to disturb others.

7. What do you think are the pros and cons of inviting a guest(or a friend) to eat at your home as opposed to inviting the guest(or friend) to eat at a restaurant?

To treat a guest at home, one has to make some preparation, not only food. Sometimes, one has to clear his home to make it appear tidier. One has to consider about what to offer to suit the guest's taste. Besides, after guest leaves, there will be a lot of cleaning to do. Compared with the trouble of treating a guest at home, one can save much effort to have him eat at a restaurant. All one needs to do is to choose a good restaurant and order what is special and famous there.

8. Do you think people today are eating a healthier diet than before (i.e. a few decades ago)?

I don't think so. People nowadays eat more carelessly, as people, especially the young, prefer to eat roasted and over-fried food which is tasty but almost with no nutrition. That is also the cause of people suffering diseases because of their eating of food high in content of sweet, fat and salt. In addition, take-away has taken up a large part of food consumption, which is not safe and less-nutrient.

9. What are the effects on people who (habitually) eat an unhealthy diet?

Eating of food high in content of sweet, fat and salt brings much health problems to people. People are more likely to suffer diseases like high pressure, obesity, heart diseases and even stroke. Besides, plenty of young people are used to having no breakfast and many of them don't have regular meals, which will surely disturb the balance of body, leading to lots of problems, such as hyp immunity.

10. What is traditional food in China like?

China is a large country enjoying a vast area, therefore there are kinds of traditional foods in different places. There are plenty of traditional foods to choose from for breakfast, such as porridge, Huajuan, Youtiao, Shaobing, Mantou, salt duck egg, and so on. There are several typical foods for celebration, such as Qingmingguo on Tomb-sweeping Day, Zongzi on Dragon-boat Day, dumplings on Spring Festival and Tangyuan on Lantern Festival.

9. An event made you laugh

Describe an event that made you laugh

You should say:

what event it was

when it occurred

what made you laugh

and explain how you felt about it.

Sample:

I think the family event I had with my extended family during the Chinese New Year was very interesting, which made us laugh a lot.

As usual, our family had a family reunion at my grandparents' home on the New Year's Eve and we enjoyed the time a lot. The event was a little different because my cousin was in charge of the whole thing. In order to make it special and memorable, he planned a lot of activities for us to participate. One thing was really hilarious, in which he asked one person at a time to mimic a family member for others to guess. He would tell the person, who was going to perform, the name of the family member secretly and then the rest of us had to guess cooperatively. The most interesting part was he asked my grandma to mimic my little five-year cousin. My seventy-year-old grandma suddenly became very lovely and active. We couldn't stop laughing and guessed the name immediately because my grandma really did a good job.

I think it's the most interesting family event I have ever attended. I told them how I liked it and we really should have it often.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. What makes people laugh in your country (your culture)?

I think it's probably the same as in other countries. When we see or hear something funny, we'll laugh and when people tell interesting jokes, we'll laugh. I think if we can laugh more, we'll definitely enjoy our life more and have a good mood.

2. Are comedy TV shows very popular in your country?

Yes, there're a lot of entertaining programs having comedic elements in them. When we see such programs, we'll feel relaxed and laugh with the audience. Since they don't require us think too much, and after watching it, we'll feel happy, this kind of program is very popular nowadays.

3. Do you think there are any differences between the comedy shows on TV that young people like and those that old(er) people like?

Yes. Old people usually like watching some shows that are close to their life, but young people love interesting things that are related to fashion the hot topics because they're young and learning all the time. So it's really hard to for young people and old people to appreciate the same comedy shows.

4. What do you think are the differences between seeing comedy on TV and reading funny materials in a book?

Well, when we see comedies on TV, we use more senses, both our visual and auditory senses, so we can feel it more. But when we read something, we'll have to take the initiative because we need to imagine the funny scene so that after the process, we can feel it's really funny.

5. Would you like to appear in a TV comedy program?

Maybe not, because I don't think I'm a very humorous person. If I appear in such a program, I might feel nervous and if they ask me to do some funny things, I'll be too shy to cooperate with them.

6. How would you make people laugh?

I know some jokes and when I want to make others laugh, I would tell them the jokes. Usually they can laugh a lot if they've never heard of them.

However, occasionally, I tell jokes that people already know, then, it'll be hard for them to laugh.

7. Do you think it's easy to translate comedy TV programs into other languages?

I think it's very hard. I remember a friend of mine telling a Chinese joke to an American friend. All the Chinese students got it, but the American friend didn't feel it's funny at all. I guess there's culture involved in a lot of funny things, so the funny thing in one culture may not be that interesting in another language.

8. Is comedy used much in advertisements in your country?

Not much, but now we can see more and more funny elements in advertisements. I have to say it's good to make people laugh when watching advertisements because it can make us feel less bored. Also, it's easier for us to remember things when we laugh a lot, so it's also good for promoting the products.

9. Do you think funny advertisements on TV are effective?

Yes, I think so. When we see something that can make us laugh, we can usually remember it better. Also, it's common for friends to talk about funny things we see on TV, so in this way the advertisement can be spread among friends, which will definitely make the advertisement more effective.

10. Sports competition/a sports event that you watched or took part in

Describe a sports event that you watched or took part in.

You should say:

when this event was held

where it was held

who participated in the event

and explain why you remember this event so well.

Sample:

I'd like to talk about the sports meeting held in our school. Our school holds sports meeting once a year, and it is one of the most important events for us. The sports meeting usually lasts for two days. The students participating in the event will keep training for several months in advance. Those who don't take part in it also look forward to it because during those two days, the lessons will be cancelled.

There are many races and matches on the sports meeting such as relay races and basketball match. I didn't participate in it until last year when a competitor from our class was injured accidentally. Just two weeks ahead of the sports meeting, I was informed to replace him to take part in the 1500-meter-race. It was the first time that I had participated in such kind of sports event and I am not so good at long-distance running, so I was really nervous and anxious about my performance in the race. But I determined to do well, and I told myself that I must at least finish the race. During those two weeks, our monitor accompanied me to run around our playground every morning and evening. On the big day, I had made good preparations for it at least mentally. But it was still a challenge for me and I was the last one to reach the finishing line.

This experience had a great influence on me: it aroused my interest in sports and I spend more time doing exercise now.

Sample2:

The sport competition I'd like to talk about was the long-distance running, one I took part in at university. It's impressive for it's the first and also the last time for me to participate in school sports meeting, what's more, it's the one I didn't complete.

Short as I am, I'm good at running. Running, I believe is a good option for me to keep healthy. Weather permitting, I will run in the morning, or occasionally at night for 1,000 meters a day. I've kept doing it since my studying at secondary school.

Though I love running, I've no idea of taking competition. On the third year, my roommate signed me up for the 800 meters running held by our faculty of Language, the winners of which would take part in school sports meeting representing our faculty. On a Friday morning, I competed with a total of twelve students, and unexpectedly I was the fastest to reach the finishing line where I was warmly received by my roommates, ahead of other runners about five seconds. So I, together with another student was selected to run for our college at school sports meeting held two days later.

To be honest, I was excited and a bit afraid of running for competing. Since 800-meter-running was scheduled to begin at 10 am, I decided to do some washing at laundry to distract myself at about 8 that morning, leaving my phone in the dorm. When I checked my phone half an hour later, I found there were several missed calls. I called back and found that the time had been changed, and it was set to start at 9. On hearing that, I rushed out of dorm to

the playground, only to find it's finished. It's hard to describe my mixed feeling at that time.

Whenever I recalled the time while studying at university, the special running experience would come to my mind, which made me laugh with regret.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. How do you think about Chinese football teams?

Well, to be honest, they are quite disappointing. With such a large population to select out those excellent players, with so high a salary to encourage them, and with such good training facilities, their performances are really disappointing to the public. For so long a time, the Chinese team was only once able to play in the world cup, but unfortunately they were weeded out in the first round. Besides, in the Asian cup, they had never been able to stand on the first place, compared with so many other tiny countries.

2. Why parents want their kids to win the first place in a sport competition?

Parents do so for various reasons. Some parents, failing to make such achievements themselves, hope that their children can, on behalf of them, realize their dreams. Other parents, expecting to earn a face in front of other parents, may also want their children to do so. And still others, out of true love of their kids, hoping that the children can gain confidence through winning the games.

3. Which one is better, participating in or watching a competition?

Well, it depends. When one hopes to have an overall view about the competition, and try to learn something from it, standing by watching the competition may be a good choice. However, when one expects to feel the real excitement, or display his talents, participating in the competition may be better.

4. What indoor and outdoor activities are there in China?

Well, there are great varieties of indoor activities in China, such as chess, table tennis, billiards, cards, mahjong and so on. On the other hand, we also have a lot of outdoor activities, such as football, tennis, basketball, and boating. However, these days, with the help of technology in construction, we now are enabled to play indoor activities outdoors, and we can also play outdoor activities inside.

5. What sports are popular in China? What sports do Chinese people like?

Well, many sports are popular in china now. For example, many people are in favor of playing badminton, and even without booking in advance, one cannot find a place to play. Also, many students like to play pingpong or table tennis with their classmates or friends, especially in school, because of the availability. University students, however, may be better fond of playing basketball and tennis.

6. When do you watch the matches? What will you do when you are watching the match?

Well, at nights or weekends, when I finish my school work and when there are some excellent basketball or football matches on show, I will be there watching, or even sometimes, when I know some matches are held in the sports center, I may go with my friends there to watch the games on spots. When we are watching, we will cheer for the good performance of the players, and of course, when I have a preference of the teams on playing or when I am fond of some specific players, I will only cheer to support them.

7. Who like sports more, men or women?

Generally speaking, men like sports more than women. For one thing, men are usually stronger physically, and it's human nature to choose doing something they are good at, so men play sports more than women. Also, because men are often more energetic, sports help them to release part of their energy, otherwise, they may feel fidgety. In addition, men like to seek excitement more than women, and sports are just a way for them to achieve the aim.

8. What will life be when there are no sports?

Well, it's hard to imagine when there are no sports in the world. Our ancestors had long in history invented varieties of sports, to help them become stronger, to relieve their pressure, to amuse themselves, and to entertain others. Without sports, our world will be monotonous, and to achieve something like from the sports, there may be more wars around.

9. What're the advantages of watching live games and games on TV?

Well, there are some differences. For example, by watching live games, people can enjoy the games with a larger audience and so feel the greater excitement. Also, people can be closer to those players or the stars, and so get more involved with the games. In comparison, watching games on TV is quite convenient and economical to enjoy the same game. Also, we can record the games and so watch the games repeatedly on TV, which is impossible for live games.

10. Why do you think some old people like exciting sports more than young people?

Well, I am not so sure. Maybe some old people are still quite strong physically, and so they like exciting sports. Or in some other occasions, because they are old and they can not take part in those sports, they like to watch those games to show that they are still energetic. In addition, some old people may like those exciting sports since they were young, and so it is their habits to still love those sports.

11. What benefits can a country get from hosting international games?

Well, to host international games, a country can benefit a lot. For example, it may attract millions of people to come there to watch the games, which may bring them huge income. Also, to meet the requirement of holding the games, the country may be forced to improve its construction of those facilities, which, if not given the chance, may be delayed. In addition, the games will be reported in various media throughout the world, which provides a very good

chance for the country to publicize itself, and so make it better understood and have its international status enhanced.

12. Do you think men are better sports players than women?

Generally, I think so. This is because men are usually stronger physically, and so can run faster, jump higher and farther. However, these days, with the improvement of people's life level, women can also enjoy the nutrition to become as strong as men, and with the help of professional training, women can also do well in sports.

11. A science lesson

Describe a science lesson that you had in school or university (such as biology, chemistry or physics).

You should say:

When you attended this lesson

Where you attended this lesson

What you learned (and what branch of science it was)

And explain how you learned it (= how it was taught) / what happened in the lesson.

Sample:

If I am to describe a science lesson I had in my middle school, I must mention my weakest subject — physics, which used to torture me a lot. As to physics, I was never competent to do well in the subject.

In middle school, I was one of the top students in my class for I could cope with most of the subjects with ease. But I was not so good at science lessons, especially physics. I made lots of efforts on it but in vain.

At the very beginning, my parents and teachers awakened me to the practical value of physics and the importance of learning it well. Therefore, I attached much importance to it. But soon I found a painful truth, that is, I was unable to do well in the subject no matter how hard I worked on it and every physics examination was difficult for me. Before physics examinations, I always felt so nervous that I would force myself to recall the formulas and the laws over and over again almost all the night. And my hands would even tremble on the examination. And every time the scores embarrassed me.

Faced with the situation, I tried every means to improve the subject and my parents got a tutor to help me with it. But our efforts didn't pay off at all, which made me determined to be a liberal arts student in senior high school.

Sample 2:

My favorite subject in secondary school was science and I always looked forward to having the class because I had a very good science teacher.

Actually, I didn't like it at first because the theories in science could be really complicated, but soon, my teacher helped me to realize how interesting science class could be. She would give us a lot of opportunities to go to the school lab to do science experiments and a lot of these experiments were real

life related, which would always make us feel fascinated. I think applying theories to real life is a very good way to teach knowledge. Besides that, our teacher also gave us opportunities to do group work so that we could brainstorm, discuss, and work cooperatively.

I think good teachers are really important because they could arouse students' interest in learning and help students develop their intrinsic motivation, which would make learning much more enjoyable. Because of the fun science class I had, I could always have good marks and even now, I'm still fond of this subject and always want to learn more about it.

Sample 3:

I'd like to talk about a biology class I had on my first year in secondary school. I liked biology lesson for the biology teacher, Mr. Li, was creative and his class was interesting. Also, we students could do experiments to prove whether the knowledge stated on the textbook is right or wrong.

On the class, Mr. Li divided us into six groups, with six students in a group. Then he distributed three glasses, two carrots, a bottle of salt, and a knife to each group. After that, one member was asked to get half cup of water in two of the glasses, and to put two spoons of salt into one of the glasses with water. And we then marked the glass of salty water. At the same time, two members should cut three pieces of carrot sticks which should be of similar size. The carrot sticks were put into the separate glasses. With these done by us, Mr. Li asked us to discuss what would happen to the two sticks. A boy guessed that the carrot in salty water would be fresher, as salt is a kind of nutrition to plant. A girl said the carrot in the salty water would wilt, for she had had the experience of putting a bunch of flowers into salty water, which died soon.

Then Mr. Li mentioned what we learned in the last lesson about the cell tap which takes up the main part of a cell. When we took out the sticks and put them on the table, we found that the one in salty water was softer, while the water in fresh water was harder, compared to the one put in the empty glass. Mr. Li then asked us to turn to the book at the lesson about plants absorbing and losing water, and explained the principle why the phenomenon happened. Doing experiments, making observation and presumption made it easier for us students to understand the principle in biology.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. What do you think is (was) the greatest scientific discovery (or advancement) of the twenty-first century?

I think the greatest scientific discovery in this era would be the use of the internet. Because of the internet, people are allowed to get information from all over the world. It has made our life more convenient. Now, we could write emails instead of sending letters through the post office; we can shop online and get our stuff delivered to our door step. I can't imagine what our life will be like if we don't have the internet.

2. How have science and technology contributed to China's (recent) development?

Science and technology have helped China's development a lot. Now because of the wide use of the internet, Chinese businessmen can do business online and even talk to foreign customers on the internet. China has made rapid advances in areas such as education, and infrastructure. The use of the high speed train makes travelling much more convenient and schools are equipped with computers and other high tech equipment to enhance students learning.

3. What effects does rapid technological change have on people in society?

The rapid technological change gives people more convenience in life but it also requires people to learn up-dated knowledge in order to catch up with the development, which means that the competition is fiercer than before. Also, people tend to stay more time indoors because of the wide use of the computer, which is not good for people's physical health.

4. Can you think of any examples of (advanced) technology that are not good for society (or, not good for humanity)?

It's hard to answer. I think most advanced technology has positive effects on people's life. However, some of them also have some drawbacks. For example, plastic bags are a new invention for this century. They make people's life more convenient, but they also leave a serious problem for people because they will take a very long time to decompose.

5. Do you think it's good for (high) schools to have (or, to offer the choice of) science classes?

Definitely, science class can teach students practical skills for them to use in their daily life and the knowledge they learn is also helpful for their future studying, especially when they choose to study science in college. I think it might be good for schools to give students more choices so that they could decide which area they want to learn more.

6. What age do you think is most suitable age for school students to begin studying science? Do you think it's suitable to start teaching science to very young children?

I think students can start science class from first grade because there is a lot of simple knowledge that they can learn. The information can help them to understand their living surroundings better and can solve many problems they have. Of course, as they grow older, more difficult and abstract concepts can be introduced.

7. Can you think of any examples of children learning about science outside of the classroom? (i.e., not at school)

Yes. Children can learn science in the park where the teacher can teach them a lot of science knowledge about the nature. Or, schools can have field trips for students to visit observatories to learn the knowledge of the sky and stars.

8. On average, in the whole world, more males than females study science in high schools and at universities. Why do you think more males than females study science?

Well, I think it's a hard question. More males study science is probably because of the stereotype that most people have for girls and boys. Most people associate science and math fields with "male" and humanities and arts fields with "female", this can definitely affect the way people choose what to study.

9. In your opinion, what is the most important area of scientific research?

I think the most important scientific research would be something that can improve human beings' living condition, for example, ways to solve the pollution problems and cure a variety of serious diseases. The government should definitely invest more money in these areas.

10. Do you think that different countries should share the knowledge they gain from scientific research?

It's a hard question. I know a lot of countries are trying to keep the knowledge they gain as highly confidential because the information can help a country to develop faster and better equipped in defense. But I still think some knowledge about improving our human living conditions or curing certain diseases should be shared, so that the world can all benefit from the new scientific research.

12. An interesting event in history

You should say:

What the event was

When and where it occurred

Who was leading the event

How you know about it

And explain why you think it was interesting

Sample:

The event I will talk about is well-known to the Chinese, which is rather encouraging to the female. It is the real story of Hua Mulan enrolled the army taking the place of her father.

Mulan was born in North Wei dynasty which was threatened by the invasion of the nomads. According to the law, at least one male of a family had to join the army to protect the country. At that time, however, Mulan's father was over sixty years old and Mulan's younger brother, the only son of the family, was too young to be a soldier. Mulan, having learned how to ride a horse and shooting on her childhood, decided to enroll in instead of her father. She fought in the war for about twelve years, during the time, she was awarded because of her braveness and talent. What is interesting is that she managed not to be discovered as a girl, which I think is incredible, but she did it successfully. Only after she returned from the war then was she known to the

public that she was a girl. It's said, the Emperor appointed her to be an official for her devotion to the county, but Mulan refused and went back hometown to serve her parents.

Mulan is a respected female of the Chinese. She was worshiped for what she did well demonstrate the virtue of China, being filial respect to one's parents and being devoted to one's country.

Besides a famous epic appraising her, her story has been adapted to history book as an example of the Chinese. What's more, Disney company adapted the story into canton, making it known to the people all over the world. More people will like this story.

Sample2:

I'd like to talk about an event about the second emperor of Ming dynasty, Zhu Yunwen. He was in power for only four years before his uncle revolted against and took the place of him. It's an interesting mystery in history, as he is the only emperor in Chinese history who disappeared without any evidence. Since no one knows for sure what happened to him after his palace being invaded, there were several versions about his suffering. People at that time, as well as the later generations, were all curious about his destiny.

It's recorded in historical materials that he set fire to his room and burned himself and his wife. His uncle, the new emperor, did make a funeral for him. However, it's said the dead body found in the fire was unable to be identified. However, another statement was more accepted by the public. It's believed he ran out of the palace through a secret passage he had workers dug, bringing his son with him, accompanied by his two attendants. The story was more convincing as his son was missing too. The new emperor is said made several attempts to find him. The following stories, based on the second assumption, about him were diverse. One story tells that he and his companions, adopted new names and travelled around the country. Since he had no idea of being an emperor again, the detectives sent by the new emperor left him go. The second story goes like that he hid in a remote temple and died of old age. The third one is more complicated. As said, he fled to an isolated island in the South Sea or Indian Ocean. Some of his supports therefore went to follow him. Worrying that he might come to power again, the new emperor even sent out fleets to trace him. The famous journey Zhen He made, travelling to Africa, India and Southern Asia, was the proof for the guess. Historians nowadays are trying to discover more evidence to prove a reasonable version.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Do you think it's important to know about history?

Yes, of course. Only by knowing clearly about one's history can the person be sure of his identity. History tells us the making and developing of the country, the events taking place, the life of people, the virtues people worship and so

on. To be a citizen of a country, one needs to know well and learn from history, and contributes to creating the history of the country.

2. What can we learn from history?

From history, people know the great inventions and achievements our ancestors made, of which people are proud. Also, people can gain lesson by learning the mistakes and misfortune our former generations went through and avoid suffering those again.

3. How do (or how can) people get reliable historical information?

People can refer to historical materials, like books, videos and other recordings. Also, people can visit museums where a lot of historical stuff is reserved. A number of museums have adopted videos with a commentator telling a certain event, accompanied by the showing of related evidence, which give a vivid description of the past.

4. Do you think any famous historical figures can serve as models for young people today?

To talk about famous figures in history, Premier Zhou Enlai is the first one coming to my mind, who will be forever memorized by Chinese people. He is a man of wisdom and devoted himself to the revolution and construction of China. What moves people most is that he never abuses his power to seek personal profit, as he always said that he was the servant of people and worked for the benefit of people. Another figure is Qian Xuesen, an outstanding scientist, who strove to return to homeland to make contribution. They are both models for young people to learn about.

5. Do people in your country like to visit museums?

Well, they do. It's said that to know a place, you have to visit its museum, therefore museums is part of attractions of a place. The majority museums, serving as a living textbook, collect local materials and stuff of the past for reserve. That's why parents are always seen to take their children to museums to have a review of the stuff used in the past.

6. What can people learn from museums?

People can learn diverse things from a variety of museums. Nowadays, museums have their own themes. For example, the history museum provides people with historical recording, traditional stuff which show people the life in the past. The fan museum, displaying fans collected throughout the history, where people can even be taught how to do one, is always an interest for people. The nature museum showing animals around the world gives a vivid presentation for children to learn the characteristics of creatures on earth and their living environment.

7. Who do you think like to go to museums more, children or adults?

Well, in general, more adults like to visit museums, but more museums aimed at children are welcoming the youth. For example, at some art museums where excellent handwriting and painting are shown, there are not many children, as the art works are hard for them to understand and less interesting.

While at nature museums where plenty of animals and plants are displayed, they are always enjoyable places for children.

8. Do you think museums should be free of cost to enter?

I am strongly for the idea that museums should be free to the public.

Museums serve as places to reserve ancient precious materials and stuff, which are the treasure of the country, therefore, all the collection should be open freely to people to appreciate. More and more museums funded by the government and charity are free of charge now.

9. Do you think local people and tourists should pay the same amount to enter a museum?

Well, the running of museums may be costly, that's why many museums are still not free to the visitors. To the museums funded or partly-funded by the government, local people should pay less to visit, as they have paid tax which is part of the revenue of the government.

10. How do you think museums of the future might be different to museums of today?

There will be many changes to museums today. The online museum which enables audience to appreciate the exhibits on display by photos, videos and words has already come into being, which will surely be improved with more application in the future. In addition, there will be more ranges of exhibits including modern ones, which is to encourage the work of contemporary people.

11. How do you think museums of the future might portray the 21st century?

People are not satisfied with the mere recording of the world any more. With advanced technology, people can achieve a multi-record. In the future when people visit museums, they will probably use the device like a simulator to experience life of the 21st century, to touch stuff, and to do things as people do now.

13. A trip you took by public transport

You should say:

When and where you went

Why you took the trip

What you did and saw on the trip

How you know about it

and explain how you felt about the trip

Sample:

On the first day of this May Day holiday, a friend and I had a short trip by bus to China International Animation and Cartoon Festival (CICAF). I can clearly remember that trip because it was really an awful trip.

We hadn't planned the trip beforehand, and we chose this destination just because we thought it would be comfortable to watch Comic Con indoors on such a hot day. You know, on holiday there would usually be congested on

the road and it would also be difficult to find a vacant parking space, so we decided to go there by bus.

We set off very late and not until about 10 o'clock in the morning did we get on the bus. On the bus, it was crowded and neither of us could get a vacant seat. We sweat a lot but the air-conditioner in the bus was not on. So a short while later our clothes got wet and our hair stuck together. What's worse, as we had expected, the traffic was heavy and it took us about 2 hours to reach our destination. So we had lunch immediately after we got off the bus.

Fortunately, there were lots of snack stands nearby cartoon square. After lunch, we headed for the CICAFA excitedly only to find that it was much more crowded than we had thought, and to our disappointment it was hot and stuffy inside the Animation Museum.

In that case, we were on our way back home soon. It was such an awful trip that both of us swore that we wouldn't go there forever.

Sample2:

The trip I took with my friends three years ago by public bicycle was impressive, when we rode around the West Lake for the first time.

Three years ago, after we graduated from university, my friend (schoolmate) and I came to Hangzhou and found jobs here. I was not used to the heavy traffic and crowded buses here. So I decided to buy a bicycle and ride to work. However, I didn't find a safe parking. Hearing my problem, my friend suggested that I could rent a public bicycle provided by the government. I had heard of the bicycle, but had no idea of how to apply for it.

On a weekend, my friend accompanied me to fill out some forms and got a card for renting a bicycle, and he too applied one. It was still early, so we rode bicycles together around the West Lake. I had been to the West Lake several times before by walking, and since it was so large, taking about 4 hours to walk for a full round, I never took a round. That time, by bicycle, we managed to do it. We stopped several times to have a rest, have lunch or walk while pushing bikes along so as to appreciate the wonderful scenery. On the way, we returned bikes several times since they are free in an hour, and we have to return them and rent again without paying the renting fee. Thanks to bikes, we had a happy day. Nowadays, whenever I go to places which are not far, I would ride a bicycle, for one thing bicycling saves me much time; for another, I can do exercise.

Sample3:

The topic reminds me of my trip to Beijing by plane. Last month, I got a discounted flight ticket and visited my friend who studies in China Agricultural University. I will never forget the impressive trip, for it offered me a completely new view of the earth. As I had never taken a plane before, I asked my sister for advice about what to take with me, how to check in and what to do in case I was air-sick.

The day I arrived at the airport two hours before the departure time, as I was a bit nervous and more excited. As it's still early, I walked around the airport, watching passers-by hurrying away with their heavy baggage. An hour later, I checked in by the instruction on information board. I had my ticket, ID card handed to the workers who asked if I needed to check my luggage. Then I went through safety inspection with my bag and went to the lounge. Everything went well, though I had difficulty at first in finding the lounge, as there are so many waiting areas. Thinking that I'd better turn off my phone forward, I called my friend telling him my plane seemed to be on time and I would see him later. While waiting there, I caught the sight of a plane taking off through the grand glass of the building, which was fantastic. Then came the broadcast informing the passengers to get on plane. Following other passengers, I went to boarding gate and finally I got on the plane. A stewardess kindly showed me to my seat and helped set my bag. Then I fastened my safety belt as I was required. I was lucky as I was seated by the window, which was unexpected. During the time the plane took off, I was a bit uncomfortable just as my sister warned me forward, but it didn't last long. When it's OK to use my phone, I could not help taking the gorgeous view of the cloud and the places on the land. All were so amazing. I enjoyed the special trip by plane.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Why do some people prefer driving their cars to taking public transport?

Compared with taking public transport, people can drive their cars to anywhere at any time more conveniently. Though there has been much development in public transport, there still be places where no or little public transport will reach. Besides, more people prefer to travel on their cars, as they can stop at will on the journey, whereas it will be impossible to do that by public transport.

2. Is it true that driving cars means a higher status?

No. If a person affords to drive a car, it simply means he's economically capable, not definitely means his enjoying a higher status. The status means the relative position a person enjoys in a society, so if a person is an excellent money-maker, while paying no attention to the society or showing no care of people around him, he surely cannot be respected by others or gain good status..

3. Should government take measures to limit cars?

Yes, it's urgent for government to take some measures to limit cars. Firstly, cars, vehicles using fossil fuel for energy, have been a major source of polluter. Secondly, the number of cars has increased rapidly in the past few years, which makes cities much crowded and leads to much more accidents. Thirdly, more cars means there is a bigger need for parking space, which aggravates the problem of land shortage. Therefore, the government shall somehow take effort to limit cars.

4. Do Chinese people like to travel overseas?

Yes, a growing number of people choose to travel overseas, as they are economically capable for the trip. People are curious about new things, especially those in foreign countries which are rather distinct. Chinese people know a great deal of the foreign world through TV and the Internet, therefore the curiosity of going to experience it in person increases. In addition, people make it a means to purchase local stuff so as to avoid paying tariff, that's why more people go to western developed countries rather than under-developed ones.

5. How does international travel influence the economy of countries (or a country)?

International travel has a big impact on the economy of countries. For one point, the receiving countries, especially those under-developed areas will benefit a lot from supplying visitors with food and accommodation as well as their purchasing of traditional stuff. For example, Nepal, well known for its ancient temples and palaces, is a hit tourist attraction with wonderful scenery. Tourism has been a pillar industry there, bringing a large sum of income for the country.

6. After someone returns from traveling overseas, what effect can they have on their home country?

People will gain a lot through the oversea traveling, on which they experience a totally different world with their particular cultures and customs. People impressed by the food they tasted abroad may adopt it and bring it to their own country; or people may accidentally choose some clothes on their travelling, which may start a new trend in their hometown. That is a way for globalization apart from economy impact.

7. What are some of the problems that people can have when they travel (including domestic travel)

Travelling to new places, people will come across kinds of problems which diverse from each other. People may have difficulty finding restaurants, or may not agree with the food served. Sometimes, people, not familiar with the local custom, may get into conflict; or if they meet trouble, they have no idea where and whom to turn to for help. Since things on the journey are unpredictable, people should get well prepared for emergency.

8. What are some the problems that could occur when one travels overseas?

Of the problems on travelling abroad, the main one is language barrier. Though English is the common language in the world, not all people can speak it. That is, the traveler and the people he meets on his journey may not be able to communicate with each other. In addition, weather may be another problem. Travellers may not agree with the local weather as the residents there do, maybe leading to illness, which will definitely cause uncomfortableness to the journey.

9. If a Chinese family migrates to a different country such as Canada or Australia, do you think the education of the children will be a problem?

Certainly, there will be a problem, as the education here in China is much different from that in Canada or Australia. I have a friend whose family

migrated to Sydney a year ago. She told me much about her life there, like her daughter, 10-year-old, and her study there. At the very beginning, as the girl is not so fluent in English and not accustomed to the way of having class, it's a bit hard for her. But she caught up well and soon, for children are quick to adapt to new environment and language as well.

10. Why do people like to travel to different places (or new places)?

People travel to different places to experience the various cultures, the tasty food and the special views. People visit Beijing to see the Summer Palace and eat the internationally-acclaimed Peking Duck. People go to Hainan to enjoy the beautiful beach and fresh coconut. People travel to Hong Kong for shopping and have a good time at the wonderful Disneyland.

11. Is there much information about these on the Internet?

Over the years, the Internet has been an effective means for people to find a variety of information. Nowadays, more people studying or working abroad share their life there online; more travel agencies organizing oversea travelling advocate the destination with loads of relevant information; more people tend to share their experiences of travelling. In a word, there is no shortage of useful information online.

12. Compare the value of traveling to new places for children and for adults.

Traveling to new places enables children to open their mind and have fun. Going to places enjoying a long history, children can appreciate the ancient constructions and have a better idea of history. While visiting places like Underwater World, children can get close to animals and learn to be friendly to them. As adults, visiting other places may provide them an opportunity for them to get away from their daily environment and have relax.

14. A competition you want to take part in

A competition (quiz , sports game) you want to take part in

You should say

What kind of competition it is

What you will do to prepare

Talk about your advantages

Sample:

I would like to take part in a singing competition held by the Student Union. Singing will be part of the program to celebrate the coming of the new year in January 1st. So the competition is set up to select singers who can perform in the final show.

I've enrolled in the first round, , which will take place in two weeks, time. Union members will be judges to pick out 20 contestants, out of 80 , to compete in the second round. On the first round, a competitor needs to sing a song as he wishes, and the judges will see if he is able to sing freely in the stage. I used to sing songs at KTV with my friends, so I won't be nervous of standing in public to sing. Besides, I've been learning songs by Jay Chou for six years, so I'm confident of performing my song. I've asked my friends to

help me decide the piece of song I am going to sing. The one I sing well and one that is popular with others, too. Also, I will invite my music teacher to give advice on my singing and wearing, so I can leave a better impression on the judges.

I am a big fan of Jay Chou, a famous pop singer who writes songs himself. Young people are familiar with Jay Chou and most people like his songs. I like him for his talent as well as the unique style of his songs. His songs motivate me to be active. His song is special, for he combines several music elements, lyric and rock for example, into one song. Therefore, it's a bit hard to learn his songs. But I did. I prefer to listen to his songs over and over until I know the rhythm well. Then I would follow his singing for times before I check out the lyrics. For years, I've been trying to imagine his feeling while he's singing, as I think the feeling can never be imitated, but to be felt. To learn a song well, I need to feel the mood he was in and come up my own feeling. I'm looking forward to the competition.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. What kinds of competitions do Chinese people prefer to take part in? Why?

Kinds of competitions are popular with Chinese people. People like to join the competitions related to their own hobbies. In general, most people like to take part in sports competitions, which people do in their daily life and is good to their health. Participating in the competitions, some people prefer to make friends with their rivals who have the same interest; some want to improve their skills, for they can learn from their opponents.

2. What can people benefit from competition?

People can benefit a lot from competition, like showing their ability, improving their skills, getting motivated and awards. A competition provides people an opportunity to show themselves, and they will be motivated to create new ideas or methods to better present their ability. During the competition, they can also learn from their rivals.

3. What kind of competition is popular at university?

Various competitions are popular at university. Sports competitions, such as basketball or football, are attractive. Performance shows like singing and dancing competition, as well as fashion shows are popular with students. Other competitions like science and engineering competitions are also held in universities, and representatives from different schools often compete with each other.

4. What can be done to reward the winner of a competition, besides awards?

Well, I think awards are necessary, but the awards can be different in different competitions. In general, a winner (winners) of a competition will get a certificate and awards like medal or money. I still remember a competition I took part in when I was in primary school. I got the first in the rope skipping competition and I received a high-quality textbook and a skipping-rope which made me very proud. Then at work, my team won the competition set up by

the company as we completed our project best. As award, we enjoyed a journey to Beijing.

5. Do you think children should join competitions? Why? / Is it good for children to take part in competitions?

I think so, because children can learn a lot in a competition. For example, children are divided into groups to participate in performance competition. Children then can learn to cooperate with their group members, and they can enjoy happiness with their peers. In addition, children can obtain certain skills in preparing for the competition.

6. Should we advocate or force children to take part in competitions?

No, we shouldn't force children to join any competition if they don't want to. What parents or teachers should do is to encourage them to take part in. It's meaningless to force children to do anything they dislike. To those shy but talent children, parents or teachers can show them the joy in the competition. Children gradually will be active and willing to join others.

7. What skills can you gain in teamwork?

First of all, I can learn how to work with others. To have teamwork done, everyone has to make contribution and sacrifice, for example, one has to make compromise. Secondly, I can learn the skill of communication with other members. I need to share my ideas with group members and turn to others for help if I have problem. Thirdly, I can improve my approach to work, by taking others' advice or observing their ways of solving problems.

8. Are the skills important?

Yes, they are. We live in a society where people have to cooperate with others, so the skill of working with others is helpful. Besides, no one is capable to have everything done by himself, and there are cases that they will have problem in dealing with certain stuff. At times like these, the social skill makes it easier for people to turn to others for advice or help.

9. Which is more important, pay or personal achievement?

Well, it depends. People have different pursuit and an individual pursues differently at different times. Many people involve in work they have no interest in, for the jobs provide money they need to make a living. There are also plenty of people keeping on their pursuit of their interest and dreams, though they do not receive good pay from the work.

10. Do you think Chinese people care more about money?

No, I don't think so. Everyone has his own pursuit and dreams. No one works just for money, and he works to get what he needs. However, China is a developing country where lots of people are working hard to make a living. Many former farmers, for example, no longer do farming, which brings them little profit, and they make money by their labor. Most of them work just for money which can provide them a better life.

11. What can employers do to motivate their employees?/ How can employers motivate employees?

Employers can invite employees to take part in establishing goals. Employees then will be more active and hopeful to achieve the goal they made. Also, employers should be open-minded and respect the employees' advice. On one hand, the advice is helpful as employees have more experience in their occupation; on the other hand, employees will be enthusiastic as they realize they can make work better. Of course, rewards can stimulate employee to work hard. The point is that employers should be sure of what the employees need, money, promotion or others.

12. How to improve the efficiency of employees?

To improve the efficiency of employees, employers, firstly, need to be clear of the ability of their employees, and put the employees in position where they can better or fully perform their skills. Then they need to set up reasonable goal for the employees. To achieve that, the employers can have the employees take part in the deciding of the goal, in this way, the employees will be more confident in making the goal come true. Thirdly, employers should offer the awards for the employees to achieve the goal. Lastly, employers should offer a good working condition for employees, making them in a good mood to work effectively.

REAL OBJECT

1. A Toy

Describe a toy that was special to you when you were a child.

You should say:

When you got it

What it looked like

Where you played with it

Who gave it to you

And explain how you used it (how you played with it).

Sample-Robot

I'd like to talk about the robot I had when I was a child. I had many toys when I was a child, but my favorite would always be the robot.

I still remember the day my parents gave it to me. It was on my sixth birthday. The robot was very special from all the toys I had. It was about two feet tall with five parts, and every part is a car. Each car had a different color—red, green, blue, yellow, and black.

I liked it very much and would play with it all the time. I would assemble and dismantle it whenever I could. My parents said this toy was good for the development of my brain. Sometimes, I would also show my unique robot to my friends and they all loved it.

I still keep it at home and I think I'll give it to my children to play in the future. I think good toys are very important for children because we cannot only play with them but also learn from playing.

Sample2:

Well, I have many toys, including several dolls, which are a favor for most girls. However, my favourite one is a tricycle, which my parents bought for me when I was 6.

I was born and raised up by my grandma in a village. Back to 20 years ago, on my childhood, the life of people was not so good as people now. My parents left hometown to work in the city Hangzhou to make a better living when I was five years old. The following year, I went to Hangzhou to visit them where I lived for a whole summer holiday and I made friends with the son of the landlord of my parents'. The boy was at the same age with me and he had a tricycle for children which cost about 100 yuan, a large sum of money at that time. Each day, I rode the tricycle with him in his back yard. Time flew. The date for my going back home for study was arriving soon. I had a long cry on realizing that I had to leave in three days. My parents asked for a day leave the next day, and took me to a shopping mall where they bought me some new clothes and bags of snacks. On the mall, I caught sight of a tricycle the same as the boy's, and refused to go while standing looking at it. Finally, my father bought it for me, spending about one-fifth of his salary.

I was proud of the tricycle, for I was the first one in my village to have such one. Years later, my father bought me a bicycle as a gift for my going to middle school. Thanks to the tricycle, I had no difficulty in riding the bicycle without any instruction.

I treasure the happy memory bought by the tricycle, and more on the love of my parents.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Are educational toys helpful for children? How can toys be used in education?

Definitely, educational toys are beneficial to children. For instance, puzzle games can develop children's creativity and imagination.

2. Do you think it's good if parents only buy "educational" toys for their children?

I think it's not a good idea, because children have their own opinions. Sometimes they like playing what they like. This can cultivate their interests in some areas and is important for their future life. It's not necessary for parents to only buy educational toys.

3. What's the difference between watching TV and playing toys?

I think watching TV is a way to relax, while playing toys need imagination, creativity, and sometimes even communicating skills if they play with others.

4. Are there any differences between toys in the past and now?

Yes, in China in the past most toys were simple and had fewer functions. Sometimes children even had to create their own toys, but they could still have a lot of fun. While now, children might feel less happy although they have all kinds of beautiful toys. Maybe it's true you only value what's hard to get.

5. Do boys and girls play different toys?

I think so. Many boys like to play guns and cars because they can play with their friends and have games or competitions. However, girls prefer to play beautiful dolls alone or with friends because they like quieter games and beautiful things.

6. Do children in the countryside play different toys compared to children in the city?

Yes, in the countryside, most toys are simple and have fewer functions. Sometimes children even have to create their own toys, but they can still have a lot of fun. While in the city, children might feel less happy although they have all kinds of beautiful toys. Maybe it's true you only value what is hard to get.

7. Should parents encourage children to share their toys with others?

It's very important. In this way, parents can teach their children the importance of teamwork. If they don't know how to share in their childhood, they will have a hard life when they grow up because nobody wants to be friends with selfish people.

8. Have you ever played electronic toys? Are they good for children?

Yes, I had many electronic toys. I still remember the remote control toy car my father bought me. I really liked it because I could control it with only one hand when the car was running around. I think electronic toys are good for children because they can bring surprise to children and make them feel excited.

2. Special clothes

Describe a piece of clothing you enjoy wearing in a special or formal occasion

You should say:

What this clothing looks like

Where you bought it

On what occasions you wear it

and explain why you wear it on those occasions or what other people think about this item of clothing

Sample:

The piece of clothing I'd like to talk about is a plaid skirt, a bit like a suit. It's the first piece of formal dress I had, and wearing it, I went through my internship, attended my job interview. Now I still wear it for working. It's said, wearing formal clothes makes people appear more professional, and on some occasions, dressing in formal also shows respect to others.

While attending university, I was casual with my dressing, and jeans and shirts are my favourite. As I had no idea of making up, people, on first meeting, always made me for a teenage girl. Since I was training to be an English teacher, on the fourth year of schooling, I was arranged to be an intern in a middle school.

Before I enrolled in the school, I was suggested to buy some clothes, for it's better for me to look more mature, so that I would not be mistaken as a student. Besides, it's said to appear serious was necessary for an intern teacher, otherwise it's difficult to win respect from teenager students. Then, accompanied by my elder sister, I went to the shopping mall. The whole morning, I was busying trying on and taking off clothes, however, of which none was good enough to satisfy both me and my sister, for I believed, those my sister thought was OK, was too formal, while what I liked appeared too naive to her. Then we went to the shop, recommended by her friend, where the owner was a tailor, designing and making all the clothes selling in the shop. We were attracted by the unique styles of dresses on display, and I bought the plaid skirt, which was not so special but fitted me well. I have many clothes suitable for formal occasion, like a party, and the plain skirt is always my favourite one.

Sample2

I will talk about special clothes my family wear on the day of my father's birthday, also the Mid-autumn day. We made it a family day and we wear Hanfu to celebrate the day every year. Hanfu, Chinese traditional clothing, dates back to Han Dynasty when the Chinese got the name of Han people. Han Dynasty is recognised as a peak time of Chinese civilization in history, during which traditional rituals achieved great development. That's why China is called the State of Ceremonies. People nowadays seldom wear Hanfu in their daily life, and the majority of people get the idea of the kind of clothing from the TV dramas telling the events happened in the past dynasties. The traditional clothes of Korea and Japan had been influenced by Hanfu, which enjoys its own characteristics. In general, Hanfu is relatively plain in color, appearing to be elegant. No buttons are used, instead, exquisite belts are made to fasten the clothes, well showing wearers' good figure. Thirdly, Hanfu

enjoys wide and loose cuffs, which are decorated with delicate embroidery, as well as the neckline and hem. Besides that, Hanfu, either for male or female, has various types available. People of different age and status wear different types of Hanfu in different occasions.

My older sister majored in Costume Design and she is fancy of Hanfu. Four years ago, she spent a month's time making Hanfu for our whole family. Since then, we prefer to wear the unique clothes to celebrate our Family Day.

Chinese gradually realize the importance of keeping our own tradition, including the clothing. In the past years, an increasing number of schools offer lessons teaching students of our nation's etiquette. Several schools hold the Adult Ceremony for students in traditional way when students wear Hanfu. There's a trend for people to celebrate the day for their children traditionally. In this way, the young generations will have deeper sense of being Chinese and understanding of our culture and history.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Do Chinese people spend much money on clothes? (Why/ Why not)

Yes, we do. We pay much attention to our appearance. Besides, people have to wear different clothes on different occasions. For example, many have to wear uniform while working, and people have to wear formal clothes while attending parties.

2. Do you think a person's job affects the kinds of clothes that person wears?

Of course. People are required to wear uniforms in a great number of companies, so they appear to be uniform and professional. Also, in some cases, people themselves think it necessary to wear special clothes. For example, a manager of a company has to wear suit, otherwise, the staff of the company will think he is not serious. Or if he wears casually while meeting clients or business partner, others might think he's not polite or capable enough.

3. Do you think you can learn anything about a person from the clothes they wear? (e.g. their identity, interests, income, personality, mood(feeling) etc.)

I don't think we can learn much about a person from the clothes he wears. The wearing of a person may show some personal information of a person, to some extent. People doing business are in suit whenever they are in public, so suit somehow is the symbol of people's job. However, I think clothes only make people see the side of the person in public. It's well known that each person has different sides, and he appears to be the one in conformity with his job.

4. What are the differences between formal and casual clothes?

Formal and casual clothes are different in three main aspects. Firstly, formal clothes tend to be in single and dark colour, while casual clothes are colorful. Secondly, formal clothes have high requirement in the fabric, while casual clothes can be made of linen, cotton, or any kind. Lastly, the style of formal clothes is not so various as that of casual clothes.

5. In China, what are some occasions when people wear casual clothes?

Well, people wear casual clothes when they are at home, when they are out travelling around. Also, sometimes when they go out with friends, they would wear something casually. In a word, most people prefer to wear casual clothes when they are off work, or get together with familiar people, for it's more comfortable to wear casual clothes without dressing up.

6. What style of clothes (formal or informal) do you think is most suitable for people working in an office? (Why)

It depends. There are offices requiring the staff to wear formally, and also there are many without that requirement. It's OK for people to wear in formal suit, which can remind people of their on working, and that they have to pay attention to their behavior, which also stands for the image of their group. However, more people prefer not to wear uniforms. I think people should follow the requirement, if there is one.

7. Why do you think fashions in clothes seem to be constantly changing?

I believe fashion, somehow, equals to novelty. When some famous designers make some creations, which are approved by the public, the creations will be in fashion. However, people are always curious about new things, making designers keep on creating, otherwise, they will be out of fashion.

8. Why do some large companies or organizations require their employees to wear a uniform?

There are several reasons. For one thing, wearing a uniform, staff will develop the sense of belonging and make contribution for the group. For another, a uniform is a sign or identification of people in a certain group, making them more recognizable for others.

9. Do you think employees should have the right to choose what they wear as a uniform?

I think so. It's necessary for employees to wear tidily. However, every one is different, which means that one kind of uniform could not suit all staff. Therefore, it's better for a company to have several styles of uniforms for employee to choose from.

10. Do you think employers have the right (or should have the right) to say what people wear at work?

It's not a question of whether they have the right. Most people would not question that if employers have the right to do that. The fact is that employers will be made to wear uniform, as one of the rules in a company. It's just like a conversion in a work place. If a new employer doesn't wear the same clothes with others, he may not have the sense of belonging.

3. A photograph that you like

Describe a photograph that you like

You should say:

When it was taken

Who took it

What is in it

and explain why you like it.

Sample:

The photo I'd like to talk about is the one taken two years ago when I was still at university. It's a cool photo as my roommates and I performed a mini form of the Thousand-hand Bodhisattva. We asked a student passing by to take it for us. We, all together six persons, then stood in a line. I acted as a bodhisattva and made Zen gesture in front of my chest, standing in the front. My roommates reached out their arms with their palm upward; at the same time, they lowered their bodies to have their heads hidden. So I was the 'only' person appeared in the photo, but with twelve hands stretching out in the air. Whenever I saw the photo saved in the album, I could not help laughing.

I still remember the day when the photo was taken. It's a week before our graduation ceremony, and it's the only sunny day in half a month. Taking photos was just part of what we did to say goodbye to university life. As senior students, we were busy with internship and finding work, and we got together just the week before the final ritual for our graduation. We decided to make the days special. As planned, we spent some time sitting in classrooms, library and students' center, just as we did in the past years. We hanged out on nights to sing KTV, to taste the specialty at our favourite restaurants, and to have good-bye parties with other classmates, though it kept raining for days. The raining made us feel depressed, making us feel much sadder about the coming separation. So on the day when the sun came out, we rushed to campus, and took photos in the playground, in front of the teaching buildings and school gate, hoping to take down everything at school. Then one of us suggested taking a special one, and finally we decided on the one I described forward. I will never forget them hidden behind me in the photo.

Sample2:

The camera, I believe, is one of the most wonderful inventions in the world. The photos keeping moments forever make our world more colorful. I have several albums full of photos which always remind me of the unforgettable past. One of my treasures, a photo of my whole family, is the one taken on my grandma's seventieth birthday, almost 15 years ago.

I have a big family, for my grandma gave birth to five children, each of whom then had two children. So at the time of my grandma's birthday, there were 25 people in all. Most of the adults were busy with their work, but we managed to get a get-together on that day. We had a big party, which, of course, made us rather happy. My uncle bought the first camera, kind of novel at that time. He took photos of grandma blowing out the candle on the cake, uncles and aunts giving best wishes to grandma, us kids eating and playing with cake. He took down every enjoyable scene. By the end of the day, all the grown-ups stood together with grandma sitting in a chair surrounded by us kids, and we said "cheese". In the photo, everyone was with a big smile.

Whenever I put some new photos to the albums, I will take a look at the photo and have a recall of the very happy day.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Do you like to take photos? (Why/ Why not)

Yes, I am fond of taking photos. Whenever I go out for a trip, I will take my cameras to take pictures of beautiful scenery, which I will share with others. I also like to catch the happy moments of my friends and relatives, whose smiling gives me much fun and comfort whenever I review the photos. All those make up a better record of my life.

2. What is the purpose of taking photos?

Well, different people have different purposes to take photos. For professional photographers, for example, press-photographers, they must cover a series of photos to provide visual evidence for the news related to make it vivid. For most ordinary people, they, in most case, just take photos to help them remember things, such as their day of wedding, and share them with others.

3. When do people take photos?

People take photos to record the happy and valuable moments, on occasions like anniversaries, ceremonies, celebrations, and so on. Besides, more people prefer to share what they encounter every day, so if they eat out in a restaurant, they will send pictures of what they eat online, and make a recommendation to others who may have interest to eat the dishes. Taking photos is gradually becoming a daily activity of people.

4. Where do people take photos?

There are lots of places where people would like to take photos. If people visit somewhere, they will surely photograph what are special, such as the Great Wall in China or the Eiffel Tower in Paris, which is kind of symbol of the certain country. Besides, to those who will leave a place, people will take photos of the place where they lived or worked for a period of time as a memory.

5. What kinds of photos do Chinese people most like to take?

To those professional photographers, no doubt, they will take photos related to their work, while ordinary people will take photos related to their life, of special occasions. When they are awarded, they will take down the proud smile; when they are on a trip, they will cover what they see and do on the journey; when even they have lunch out, they can take photos of the dishes to share with others.

6. How has photography changed over the years in China?

There have been significant changes on photography here in China. Years ago, after taking a photo, people had to wait for days for it to be developed, and, also, the quality was not so good. With the development of the technology, people now use digital cameras which can take rather clear image, and some advanced ones can produce the image in a few seconds. What's more, people can take a video not only by a camera, but with a phone. In this way, people can take pictures wherever and whenever they want.

7. Compare photos taken by professional photographers and typical family photos.

The photos taken by professional photographers are either related to their work, for example, photographers offering pictures for news reports need to take photos as materials and evidence; photographers taking photos of models or

celebrities will have to catch the best instants to meet demand. Or related to their interest, some photographers are attracted by rare animals, diverse buildings and so on, of which keep track with tremendous enthusiasm. While on family photos, people are the main characters, who may be having a birthday party, on a graduation ceremony, on a hiking trip or getting married. In other words, family photos are those of people's personal life.

8. What role will photographs play in the news media?

Photographs have always been an indispensable part in providing visual materials in traditional news media, like newspaper and TV. With the rapid development of technology, the Internet is taking a role in news media, where not just journalists, but ordinary people can reveal news with photos taken by themselves as proof. It means photos as supplement are and will be inputting more vitality to news media.

9. What kind of person would make a good professional photographer?

To be a good professional photographer, the person should be determined, careful as well as having a special insight. Sometimes, the work of photographers can be tough and difficult. The stories of fans who take a close observation of what they like and take valuable photos are not rare. I heard the story of a bird fan who spent days out in the wild, just to take photos of birds which are exotic. To some famous photographers, what they photographed is ordinary but through their unique perspectives, they always give audience a different and special view.

10. What do you think is the value of historical photographs?

Historical photographs provide a real view of the past. Photos, which people see, are more convincing than words to some extent. Those records of the events and people in the history will remind people now of the hardship and contribution our ancestors made to make a better world for the later generations. The photos of people's life in a certain area are also a valuable source of culture, which record the particular tradition. That's where the meaning of photos reserved on local museums lie, offering a useful way for people to appreciate the developing of their hometown.

4. Electronic product

Describe an electronic device that you have (or want to have in the future), such as a CD player.

You should say:

What it is how you use it

When you use it

and explain how you benefit (or will benefit) from using it.

Sample:

I'd like to talk about the X-box I bought for my family when I was in Japan. It's white in color and just a little bigger than a book. The Xbox is a video game console manufactured by Microsoft.

My friends recommended me this amazing device and I also did some research on the internet. After seeing it and experiencing it at my friend's home,

I really wanted to have one for my family. And the price was comparatively cheaper, so I bought it last year on my trip there. Now, we have tried many of the functions the product provides. For example, I can use it to practice driving with an emulated world it provides. When driving with this device, it's like driving in the real world. My father and I love playing tennis with it, which helps us stretch our arms and release the tension from using the computer all the time. Now, our family would usually play the games together very often, which is good for our body and mental health. Besides, it has become an important part of our family life because we could have fun together.

I think X-box is a great electronic product in this modern society, which allows us to have fun and gives us a great opportunity to exercise without leaving the house.

Sample2:

Well, months ago I bought a desktop for my family. I bought it as a gift for my father on his fiftieth' birthday party. My parents worked hard to fund my study, and they tried their best to provide me a happy life. I received a laptop by them on my twentieth's birthday as a present for my entering into university. I have been working for almost 3 years, whenever I want to buy something for them, they would refuse with the same excuse that they have no need.

It was my father's birthday on March. I thought about many presents and finally decided on a computer. After the computer was installed, I taught them how to use it. They were not used to it, but gradually they began to make use of it. My mother prefers to talk with me online where we can talk face to face as we sit together. She finds it very convenient and she enjoys watching films, too. As shopping online is becoming more and more popular, she even asks me to teach her how to do it. While my father has little interest in online shopping, he'd like to play cards and mahjong on computer. In the past, he is afraid of getting addicted to playing cards and mahjong, which is energy-consuming and may cause money losing. Now, with the available of computer, he can play online to kill time, and he can stop whenever he likes.

The computer makes my parents' life richer and happier. I'm glad I chose an excellent gift.

Sample3

Weeks ago, my friend who made a visit to Hong Kong bought a camera for me. To buy a good SLR camera in a reasonable price, I'd spent a long time surfing online about the model of a camera. Since the price of digital product in Hong Kong is lower than that in mainland, I asked my friend to do me the favor. I bought the camera for my Dad who recently has great interest in photography.

Dad got retired early this year, but he's not used to his retirement. Occupied with work for decades, he does not have many hobbies. This October, my older sister invited him to travel to Haerbin with her in the tour organised by her firm and they had a great time there. Dad, in particular, was impressed by the various old western buildings in the city and the beautiful

scenery. The camera we bought years ago is out-dated and can only save a total of 80 pictures. The photos taken are not so clear compared with those taken by a SLR camera of a colleague of my sister's. Looking at the photos sent from the colleague, Dad sighed that high technology product did work better. Then one of my father's old friends, Uncle Li., from Jiangsu Province paid a visit to us a month ago. He's a great fan of birds and he came on purpose to Hangzhou to take photos of the mandarin ducks that came to live in the West Lake to pass the cold winter. Dad kindly showed him around the West Lake to shoot the lovely birds. Uncle Li is an amateur photographer, and he enjoys a full equipment of photography, which as he said brought him much fun. He even suggested my Dad taking up photographing. All my family agreed that it's worthwhile for him to have a try. So I bought him a camera, which I hope will help make his life more colorful.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Do schools in your country use electronic equipment in the classroom?

Yes. Nowadays, classrooms are full of electronic equipment. It's very often for classrooms to have TV sets and computers. And some good ones even have projectors installed. I think multimedia equipment can definitely help teachers to teach well.

2. How does that compare with schools (in your country) in the past?

Schools now are much more different than schools in the past. Teachers can show students pictures or even web pages without leaving the classroom now. In the past, teachers would seldom use visual aids and they would play the role of a lecturer all the time. Now with the electronic equipment, there can be more interactive learning in the classroom.

3. Are computers very useful in high school? (For students and/or for teachers)

Yes, I think computers are very important for both the students and teachers. Teachers can use the computer to prepare their lessons better and they can find all kinds of teaching resources on the internet. For students, they could get online during their breaks and can also use the internet to do some research for their homework.

4. What are some examples of modern, hi-tech equipment or devices that people in your country use at home?

Well, nowadays, almost every family has computers and they could use it to get online, chat with friends, and search for information they need. Also, some families have X-box, which allows them to do family activity at home. Besides these, there're also other things, such as ipad, ipod, and some fitness facilities.

5. How is this different to homes in the past?

It's very different from the past. When I was a child, it's actually not common to have telephone at home, a lot of people visit friends in order to get information communicated. And TV was usually the mostly used way of entertaining. It's hard to imagine what the world will be like twenty years from now.

6. Do you think these things have improved people's lives?

Yes, I think so. Of course, it's on the condition that we can make good use of them. If we don't know how to use them well but be controlled by them, our life will be more miserable than before. For example, some people are addicted to playing computer games and they can't concentrate on their study or work. Also, a lot of people are complaining about being interrupted all the time by cell phones, so it's really a dilemma.

7. What are the various ways that mobile phones can be used?

We can use the mobile phone in many ways. The most common and original one would be making phone calls. If we have some emergencies or need to talk with someone, we could always use the phone. Also, nowadays, text messages are very popular among young people because you don't need to spend much time to talk, and one message can solve your problem. Besides these, it's also becoming common to use the mobile phone to surf the internet.

8. Do students use mobile phones very much to cheat in exams?

I've never heard of it because students are not allowed to use their mobile phones during exams. But I've heard of other ways to cheat, something like hiding a mini earphones in the cars. I think cheating is not only bad for schools but also for the students, because they pay to learn not to get a good score on the test paper.

9. What do you imagine the future of hi-technology equipment (or devices) will be like?

I think in the future, hi-tech equipment will make our life even more comfortable. We can do almost all things through them and our homes will be full of them. We'll be dependent on them more and more. I think it's a good thing and a bad thing because sometimes hi-tech equipment can make us busy and we'll tend to use them more than we need.

5. A book you like to read/a book someone recommended to you

Describe a book you like.

You should say:

What book it was

What the book was about

Why you read it

What you learned from this book

And explain why you would like to read it again.

Sample :

I like reading biographies because we could always learn a lot from other people's life, especially famous and successful ones. I recently read the biography of Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple Inc. I think it's an inspiring book and I would like to read it again when I have time.

The book started with Steve's life as an unborn baby. Actually his life wasn't very smooth because his biological parents gave him up and a nice couple adopted him. As a young man, he was full of energy and also very rebellious. He quit college and started his own company in the garage. It was hard to

imagine how bad the working condition must be, but because of his dream and hard work, eventually his company became successful and influential all over the world.

However, the book didn't stop here. It also talked about how Steve was driven away by his own company and how he started other companies and eventually went back to Apple Company and made it even more successful. I think I've learned a lot through this book. Although Steve didn't live a long life, he really impacted the world and had great contribution to the computer industry. I think this biography is a must keep one and I would recommend it to my friends in the future.

Sample2:

The kind of book I like most is Chicken Soup for the Soul, a series of books released since June 28, 1993, by motivational speakers Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen. The books, usually featuring a collection of short and dense inspirational stories and motivational essays, became a holiday favorite by the end of December that year in America. There are now over 100 million copies in print and in 54 languages worldwide. I like the book, for it helped me in improving my writing and pronunciation.

Studying in university, I read a lot, especially novels, the reading of which benefited me a lot in my reading speed and vocabulary accumulation. In spite of that, I was afraid of writing and there were many mistakes in my composition. So I turned to my teacher, Mr. Li, for help. Hearing my problem, Mr. Li gave me a book, Chicken Soup for the Preteen Soul, suggesting me to read a story everyday out loudly, and to retell the story to him after his class. I had no difficulty in understanding the article, but I was not good at reading aloud. Gradually, I become more fluent in reading and got better in pronunciation, what's more, I made up sentences by imitating the sentences I read in the book. My writing improved unexpectedly. Later I read out the books of the series on reserve in school library.

Whenever I go to bookstores and libraries here in Hangzhou, I will spare some time to look at some stories in those books, some I have read before, some are newly published. I am always deeply touched by the stories and they remind me of the happy moments of my schooling.

PART 3 : Discussion topics:

1. Can you give some examples of different types of books and the reasons why people read them?

Yes, of course. There're books for studying and entertaining. There're many different kinds of books, such as novels, documentaries, science fiction, biographies, and history books. Some people reading books for fun and others want to know more about the world and their professions.

2. Can you give some reasons why people read different things?

Yeah, people have different interests and purposes. For example, some girls are interested in love stories, so they might read more novels about

that, but for some boys, they want to learn something about the world history, so they'll choose this kind of book. If a doctor wants to improve his profession, medical books will be his first choice.

3. How is reading a book on the internet different to reading an ordinary book?

I always feel reading on the screen is bad to our eyes. And it's just not as convenient as reading paper books. You can fold your books to whatever ways but not your laptop. Also, I guess a lot of people just got used to reading actual books, they may feel reading from the screen is a little unreal and weird.

4. What's the influence of the internet on book publishing?

Well, the advent of the internet does exert tremendous influence on the book publishing industry. For example, in many cases, people may like to obtain information on the internet, rather than read books, and so the decrease in demands for books will surely lead to the decline in book publishing. Also, to cater to the readers, publishing companies may also publish electronic books. In this way, the influence is great.

5. Do you need to choose carefully of the information you get online?

Well, it's a must. The internet provides us with so much freedom that almost anyone can put forward their opinions, by which some may be misleading, profit-oriented, cheating, eye-catching, or truly informative. To seek out the one we are really in need, a picky eye is surely needed.

6. What books do old people and young people read?

Well, the old and the young do have some difference in their choices of reading material. For instance, the old may like to read newspapers to keep up with the time, while the young may like to know about this from the articles on the internet. Also, the old may like to read something of their ages, to remind them of the past years, while the young may like to read more about fashion, about cartoons, about the future life.

7. Do you think government should build free libraries?

Yeah, it's a good idea for the government to build free libraries. In this way, the government does not only show its service to the public when using the public money, and so improve its image and win support from the citizens, but also helps to create a cultural atmosphere and enhance the quality of the citizens.

8. Do you always trust the information from the internet?

Not really. The internet provides us with so much freedom that almost anyone can put forward their opinions, by which some may be misleading, profit-oriented, cheating, eye-catching, or truly informative. To seek out the one we are really in need, a picky eye is surely needed.

9. Are there any other sources to read besides paper book and electronic books? = What are other ways to obtain information besides reading books?

Thanks to the development of technology, now various ways are available for us to obtain information. For example, the TV reports, the radio programs, the internet broadcast, and even short messages on the mobile phones, all contribute to our knowing about the world.

10. What kinds of books did you read when you were a child?

Like many other children, I liked to read books about cartoon figures, about fairy tales, about heroic deeds, about detective stories. Reading these kind of books left me a very happy childhood, and even now, the memory about my childhood is related to many stories about those books I read.

11. What do people in your age read now?

Well, it differs widely. Some people, especially girls, may like to read about fashion, shopping, travelling, or love stories, while boys, may like to read about sports, science fiction. And in some other cases, some people may just like to read books about their major, to help them further their career.

12. What books do children, adults, or old people read?

Well, these people may have a different preference in their choices of reading material. For example, children may like to read books about cartoon figures, about fairy tales, about heroic deeds, about detective stories. The old may like to read newspapers to keep up with the time, or they may read something of their ages, to remind them of the past years. In comparison, the adults, having a strong purpose in their reading, may choose to read books to get information for their careers, to help them earn money, or solve their problems.

13. Is it illegal to download things from the internet?

Well, it depends. When someone upload the document onto the internet, if their purpose is to share their interest with others for free, downloading these kinds of things is surely acceptable. However, when others upload something, when they have a patent for their work and just hope to let more people know about their products, decoding those things and download freely is illegal.

14. What's the advantage and disadvantage of reading online?

Reading online, of course, has many advantages, such as the wide choice of reading material, the free access to the latest updated information, and the share of opinions of many other readers of the same content. However, reading online also has its disadvantages. For example, some free information online is misleading, too much exposure to the computer screen is harmful to our health, and it is inconvenient to continue reading when we have no access to the internet.

15. Which way do you think people prefer, reading actual books or electronic books?

To be frank, it's hard to say for sure. Some people like to read actual books because in their minds, reading in this way is quite convenient, and they can make notes and underline the highlights when reading. However, others may like to read electronic books, because with the huge volume of their gadgets, they may take a lot of electronic books with them, and so enable them to read for what they like at anytime and anywhere.

16. How old did you start reading?

Well, I am now in my twenties, so it is really something far away from my memory. I think I may start reading at 3 or 4 years old, when I started my

education in the kindergarten. I think the reading later in my childhood did bring me great happiness.

17. Do you think old people will read online or hold a book?

Generally, I think the old may like to hold a book, because they may not be used to those new things, including reading online. However, things are changing along with the fast change of the world. Now it seems more and more old people are beginning to learn to use the internet, and read on the internet.

18. Do girls and boys read different kinds of books?

Yeah. Because of their different interests in life, girls and boys may have some differences in their choices or reading material. For example, more boys than girls like to read books about sports, detective stories, career planning and science fiction, while more girls than boys like to read books about love stories, fashion, and superstars.

19. Is it important to read extensively?

Yes, I think so. Reading is one of the important ways for us to acquire knowledge. Nowadays, the society requires us to know many things in order to be more competitive. If we read extensively, we'll definitely know more about our life and the world, which will be helpful for our future development. However, reading is time consuming, so we have to choose the most suitable materials to read so that we won't waste our time on something that's not helpful to us.

20. Why do you think Harry Potter series are successful?

Basically, I think Harry Potter series are very well written novels. I read most of the volumes and I like them a lot. Successful novels all share something in common. They should have good story lines and be attractive enough to the targeted audience. Harry Potter is targeted to young children and teenagers. As a matter of fact, these children are curious and love adventures and magic. Harry Potter series can definitely satisfy children's need for these.

6. A family business

Describe a family business

You should say:

What kind of business?

How do you come to know it?

What kind of clients it targets?

Why it is successful?

Sample:

I'd like to talk about a family business selling a full range of clothes. It's the one run by the family of my brother-in-law's, and I got to know it after my sister was engaged to her husband. Their shops are those in small cities and towns where people care more about the quality and price of clothes, rather than the brand. Mother of my brother-in-law's, together with her family started to open retail-chain selling clothes in Xi'an about fifteen years ago. His mother was responsible for selecting and purchasing clothes from the wholesale

merchants', and his father was in charge of selling and other affairs. The competition was not so fierce at that time, and they did well in running their first two shops. Then they succeeded in persuading their relatives in investing in them, and more than twenty shops are in running. Family members, especially the young generation, the peers of my brother-in-law, gradually take up the business.

I had a visit to one shop of theirs, which is about 100 square meters, with four sections selling clothes for children, male, female and the old respectively. My brother-in-law told me the success of their business is that they are strict with the quality of clothes from very beginning which won them loads of customers who are regular customers, and that with so many chains available, people trust in their clothes. Because of the increasing competition and the huge influence of the e-business, however, their business is not so successful as before. My brother-in-law has started a shop online which is not bad, which I think highly of.

Sample2

I will talk about the Zhejiang Semir Garment Company, a family business, set up by Qiu Guanghe eighteen years ago in the city of Wenzhou. In 1996, Qiu Guanghe convinced his son, who was then working in a bank, to open a clothing firm with him. The company mainly markets casual clothing, ornaments for clothes decoration, and leatherware, such as belts for men and bags for women. Teenagers and adults below 35 years old can buy their year-round clothes there. I think his business was successful for his special idea for running. He was an electronic producer who had much experience in marketing, however, he did not own any manufactory. He then came up with the idea of relying on clothing factories to make clothes, while his own company in charge of making design and marketing. What's more, they succeeded in opening retail chains in cities around the China in the next few years by taking in cooperative partners. The brand was then made known.

It's my favourite brand. I got my first coat of the brand when I was fourteen years old. That day, my Mum and I went to the shopping center in the city to buy me a few clothes for my birthday. With the help of a sale girl in the Semir shop, I put on the coat, which suited me well. It cost Mum 280 RMB, which was not a small sum of money at that time. I was hesitated at first as it's too expensive, but Mum said the clothes were of high quality, as she was told by her colleagues. The fact proves the saying, as the coat is still in shape and its color fades slightly after my six-year wearing. Many of my friends are also fans of the clothing brand. There was a time when we bought different kinds of clothes in the shop and exchanged our clothes for wearing. It's such an interesting experience.

Sample3

I'd like to talk about the family business of my friend's, Li's. The business,

mainly manufacturing and marketing cement, was set up forty years ago by Li's grandpa, starting as an agency. The business is successful for that it targets on the building materials which is in great need of the society. Besides, it has gradually made a range of products except for its original one, and a number of improvements have been achieved.

On the very beginning, his grandpa's business was in charge of communicating cement manufacturers and construction firms. At that time, the country was under rapid development as well as the urban sprawl, and there was a great demand of cement in building factories and residential lots. The business, therefore, was prosperous; however, his grandpa didn't have his own factory to produce cement, for the lack of adequate fund. Then twenty years ago when Li's father took over the company, the first measure that he took was to invest in the building of his own plant. By doing that, more profit was made and the business was more independent, for the business no longer had to rely on other producers. Step by step, several plants were constructed, making it a well-known company in the local city. Li's father then decided to invest in steel producing and established good business relations with several steel factories. In addition, the company enjoys a good reputation through his father's effort. His father purchased a building for housing the workers in the company; the longer an employee works for the company, the better pay and treatment he gets.

Li is expected to take up the business in ten years and he's working hard in management. I am hopeful that he will make it better.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Do you think what the business men need most to run companies?

Well, to run a company, a business man needs to have an insight into the market, to know well of the need and future demand of people. Also, he must catch up with the social and global development, so that he could be active and open to new ideas which are beneficial to his company. Besides, it's best for him to be good at managing, getting along with his staff, especially the time at the start of his company.

2. Do you think which is better, to go into a big company or to go into a small company for a job?

Well, I think it might be better to go into a small company. Although there are more opportunities and resources available in a big company, the competition among staff is much fiercer, and there may be more regulation in a big one, making staff enjoy less freedom.

3. What does the leader need to do in a small company when the business fails?

There are a lot of things the leader needs to do. Firstly, the leader has to find out the causes of the business fail and comes up with effective measures. Secondly, he needs to spare effort in making his staff believe they could make it through if they try to, and be confident of the future of the company.

Otherwise, some staff may leave, causing a great loss or even the bankruptcy of the company.

4. Do you think what the causes for the success of a family business are?

There are various causes. Like any successful company, a family business must develop with the trend of the world, so it won't die out. To achieve that, the young generation of the family must be able to take the lead and have their new idea in managing and running the company, rather than just relying on the experience of their parents and grandparents. Secondly, the family members should be in conformity, otherwise, the company won't enjoy a further development with members fighting for their own interest.

5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of a family business?

On the positive side, most people in charge in a family business are members of the family, therefore they sincerely care about the development of the company, as its development is closely related to their family. However, there may be problems because of that. For example, staff, those not belong to the family, may not be pointed to important positions even they are professional and capable, so the development of the business may not be so rapid as it could be.

6. What are the relationships among the members of a family business?

In a family business, members may be direct or indirect relatives. A man, or with his wife, founded a business, then his children and grandchildren may be likely to take part in the business, in charge of managing. Then if the rapid development of the company is in need of more people in management, then other relatives, such as relatives by marriage, will gradually join the business if they are able to.

7. A piece of art word

Describe a work of art you have seen (e.g. a painting or statue/ sculpture)

You should say:

When you (first) saw this work of art

Where you saw it

What it looked like

And explain your feelings about this work of art when you saw it

Sample:

I'd like to talk about the painting of the famous painter, Qi Baishi, the one called Shrimps. There are several shrimps swimming in the picture, and they are so vivid that one may mistake them for real shrimps, but for the signature of Qi on the side of the painting. I got to know the painting from the painting album shown by my teacher. From the work of Qi, I came to appreciate the beauty of Chinese brush drawing and the importance of observation to a painter.

I was interested in painting and joined a workshop on weekends while attending primary school. My teacher used to show us students a painting on each session, asking what we could see in it and how we feel about it. Looking at it, I felt the shrimps were not still but were playing in the water, for

it seemed that their feelers were moving. Then he would introduce its author and its characteristic forward, describing the beauty of the painting. Though it's black and white, I was attracted, for the first time I realized a painter could be wonderful without bright color. After class, I found materials of Qi, and appreciated other pictures of him. Born in a poor family, Qi was educated for a few years, and he started to make a living at the age of fifteen as a wood carver. Ten years later, he fell in love with painting and turned to learn from teachers. He was known to people in his 40th, and was famous for painting fruits, vegetable and animals like birds. He was honored 'an artist of people', for the stuff he painted was used or seen in people's daily life. It's said, Qi spent months on observing the shrimps he fed in a bowl before he got the idea how to do the work. Qi is one of the great artists I admire.

Sample2

I'd like to talk about the statue of Qiu Jin—a heroine in Chinese Xinhai Revolution, located on the side of the West Lake. The statue, made of white jade, is actually Qiu Jin's tomb. Set on a two-meter high square stone, the statue is about one and a half size of an ordinary person. On the stone, the account of her life by her best friends was engraved, as well as the inscription, praising her contribution, by Sun Yat-sen. As carved, she wears a popular hair style in her age, wearing Tang suit and a dress. Her left hand rests on her waist, and her right hand holding a sword. The statue is vivid and impressive.

Qiu Jin was a famous revolutionist, who received good education and devoted to overthrow the Qing Government. Also she was an excellent poet. Died at 32, she was an influential person in history and her life story was written in the textbook, being known to all the Chinese. There was a long story of setting up of the statue. Qiu Jin was beheaded and buried in a hurry in Shaoxing city. Half a year later, her best friends bought the site to rebury her. As a year ago before she was sentenced, Qiu Jin made a visit to Hangzhou and she said it would be her honor to be buried somewhere in the area, where situated the memorial museum of Xuefei, a national hero. In the last five years, however, her tomb was moved to the hometown of her husband's after he died, since it's a tradition in China that a couple should be buried together after their death. Not until the October of 1981 then her tomb was rebuilt in the original site and the statue was made for her by the government.

It's good for the statue being built in Hangzhou, as more people can have the opportunity to appreciate it and honor Qiu Jin.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. What are some examples of (the various forms of) art?

Besides painting, other popular forms of art would be music, sculpture, craft, architecture, dancing, literature, drama, photography and films. Art can be seen everywhere in our life, but we often do not regard them just as art form, but elements of our life.

2. What forms of visual art (e.g. paintings, sculpture) are popular in your country?

Paintings may be the most popular form of visual art, followed by sculpture and photography. Throughout Chinese history, the works of famous painters were highly valued. Painters preferred to draw their daily stuff: what they saw and what they did. Painters appreciated and showed their pursuit of certain character of the stuff they'd drawn.

3. Do you think art adds anything to the lives of people?

I think art makes people's life more colorful and enjoyable. For example, the various designs of buildings make them appear more attractive and keep people in good mood. Then kinds of songs can make people relaxed and singing is a good way for people to release their pent-up emotions. Films, especially those foreign ones, enable people to experience the life around the world without going out.

4. How important is art in the culture of a country (or a cultural/ ethnic group)?

Art is one medium in keeping and passing the culture of a country to its follow generations. Also, art reflects the social development of certain period. For example, on the first decade of the founding of China, people sang songs to praise the contribution of the Party, set up sculptures to memorize the heroic soldiers, made films about the victories of the war. In a word, all the art forms vividly reflect the life of people and social atmosphere.

5. Are there any differences between the art in your country and the art in Western (i.e. European culture) countries?

Art is unique for its national character, so does the art in my country. For instance, the most famous painting works are those Chinese brush drawings; the classical songs are Chinese folk songs. However, art develops worldwide. The Chinese art is influenced by of western art and gradually combine some western elements into its own style.

6. Do you think people should be able to see these exhibitions for free?/ Do you think the government should (or has a responsibility to) pay for the creation of art?

I think the government should spare some fund in supporting the development of art. Also, people should be encouraged to get access to more free art exhibitions. Some artists are very creative and they can show a different world to people by their works. For example, some photographers can take a totally different perspective of some stuff which is familiar to people, and people are surprised to see the stuff at the particular angle.

7. Do you think it's important to cultivate an appreciation of art in children?

Not necessarily. The ability of appreciating art cannot be cultivated easily and there is no need to do that. It's the same case with that- children can be trained to be an artist and his hard working may bring him fame, but I think no matter how hard he tries, he would not be as excellent or outstanding as those born with gift in art.

8. Do you think art should be included in school curriculums? (Why?)

Well, I don't think so. Currently, singing and painting are included in school curriculums, and people can get access to other forms of arts in particular art schools. Not everyone is born to have interest in art, and if one does, he can be sent to art schools to get further development, but there is no need to get all children to study art.

8. An important letter

Describe an important letter you received

You should say:

Who wrote it

What the letter was about

How you felt about the letter

and explain why it was important

Sample:

The important letter I'd like to talk about is the one from my pen pal, an old man fifty years older than I am, who was a member of charity, looking for students of poor families and bringing them clothing as well as money donated by others.

Actually, I had several letters from him, most of which, however, got lost except for one, the first letter from him, which I keep till now. In the letter, he thanked my family for treating him at my home, shared his experience of visiting children in other areas in the past weeks after saying goodbye to me, gave me best wishes, and his wish for receiving my reply. The letter is important to me, for it brought me a special experience, somehow having much influence on my life. The letter saved in the bookshelf always reminds me of the day when we met and became friends. I was in grade five and on the day I was called to the teachers' office to see a strange man, wearing a head of white hair. My teacher introduced him to me, saying he was impressed by the handwriting of mine showed in the exhibition of students' work. I was curious of making friends with a kind grandpa who told me he was a voluntary member of a charity organization after he retired as a lawyer. At that time, I had no much idea of charity, but heard of people donating to help children in poor, so I was glad to know him and more proud of being a friend of him who did good deeds.

By writing to him, I got to know more about him and his work, and was thankful for people like him, who offered help and hope to those in need. It's regretful that we lost contact, somehow, and the letter was the only memory for me.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Do you often write letters to your family and relatives?

Well, rarely. I wrote my first letter to my parents who were working in another city when I was in primary school. I kept doing this for about three years. Then I could contact my parents by the fixed phone installed later.

2. When do people usually write letters by hand?

Letter is no longer an important way for people to keep in touch as it used to be. However, people do sometimes write letters by hand. For example, when they travel to somewhere, they prefer to buy some local postcards and write to their family and relatives; on occasions like birthday and New Year Festivals, people like to write cards, too.

3. What can we learn from looking at handwritten letters that are hundreds of years old?

By looking at letters hundreds of years ago, we can learn the writing style of that time. Besides, if they are personal letters, we can know the life and attitude of the writer. Or if they are social, maybe letters between officials, we can know about the social events. Also, by studying the material for the letter writing, we can get more information of social development during the period in history.

4. What is the value of reading letters that famous people in history have written? (=what can we learn from such letters?)

Letters are true recordings of a person, which helps a lot for people to better know him. There is a saying in Chinese- the words written by a person can clearly show his psychology. By studying the letters, we can better know the personality of the person and his mood while writing the letters. Letters recording famous people's affairs are valuable resources for us to understand the person, without being misled by other materials written by others.

5. Is the handwriting of children today as good as it was many years ago?

The handwriting of children nowadays is not as good as it was. People pay less attention to their handwriting. The main cause for that would be the available information technology. For example, when hunting for a job, one can write his self introduction and experience on the computer and have it printed, which is much neater than hand-writing. Besides, he can save the copy and have it printed again whenever he has the need.

6. Are letters (not necessarily handwritten ones) important when doing business? (Why)

Of course. Phones get people in touch in no time, and people can make the deal while talking on the phone. However, no business can be fully done without the written protocol. That's why people would send e-mails (letters online) to confirm the details and send faxes to be signed for security.

7. What skills are needed to write good business letters?

First of all, people have to pay attention to the form of a letter, making letters appear formal and professional. Then they should be careful on the use of appropriate words in writing. Doing that makes it easy for receivers to understand the purpose of the letter.

8. Compare the strengths and weaknesses of letters with those of phone calls when doing business.

Nowadays, letters have taken up other forms, like e-mails and faxes in business. It's obvious that letters can record every detail by words, decreasing the misunderstanding among people. Phone calls are strong in that people can know and deal with problems and needs of each other in no time. Through talking, people can realize others' mood and attitude, which is impossible by using letters.

9. What are the differences between business letters and personal letters?

Firstly, the content of business letters and person letters is different. The former one is about the business details, while the latter can be anything relating to people's life. Secondly, in business letters formal words are used and the letters enjoy a standard form. Besides, almost all the business letters

are done on computers and be printed for use. However, people are casual with the form and word, and they can even write spoken words in personal letters.

9. An ideal home

Describe the ideal home (house or apartment) that you would like to live in

You should say:

Where it would be

What type of house it would be

Who you would like to live with

And explain why you would like to live in this (kind of) home

Sample:

An ideal home, in my mind, would be one on the foothill of a mountain, with roads connecting to the city where I work. It should be a three-storey house with a yard in front. The ground floor would be made into a store room and a garage, for a car is needed which can make life much convenient. Then the first floor is used for dining room and kitchen, where we have dinner together and receive guests, and it should be big enough even to hold an indoor party. Then the second are designed to be bedrooms with two bathrooms on each. My grandma, parents, brother and I will live in the house, so there's a need for four bedrooms on the second floor. The rooms in third floors are reserved for guests, as well as a study, a place for working and studying.

Besides, stairs will be built, through which we can directly go to the yard, without going down to the ground floor. Some space will be cleared up to lay a wooden table and chairs with shelter, so we can enjoy sitting outdoor even it's raining. A small pool will be constructed to save rainwater, and to store water running down the hill. Half of the extra land of the yard will be used for planting flowers, and the other half for vegetables, with a path in the middle leading to the house. Then grandma could enjoy herself by planting vegetables, and I could appreciate the beautiful flowers sitting in the chair. The water in the pool could be used for watering the plants.

How wonderful it will be to own a house like that! I may be woken up by the singing of birds and get to sleep by the soft wind outside the wind. Being close to nature, living in a house there is enjoyable.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. How is modern home design (both inside and outside appearance) in your country different to that of the past?

Modern homes appear to be the same, for they are in high buildings, created by concrete and steel rods, like boxes rising from the land. The traditional Chinese homes in the past are separate ones, in the shape of a quadrangle. Three sides of the quadrangle are constructed to be rooms, connected by wall, with a wooden door on the fourth side. The middle of the quadrangle is open as an inside garden. The inside of homes is not so different. Divided into several rooms by function, modern homes are painted and equipped with

modern furniture. The older homes, enjoying separate rooms for different use, are decorated with wooden furniture.

2. In your country, what type of home do most people live in?

In the city where the housing is in great demand, most people now live in apartment in a high-rise which can sometimes be over twenty storey. But in villages, people enjoy a bigger house, and most people have one three or four-storey house of their own, sometimes with a yard.

3. Do people prefer to live in modern homes or the older-style homes (e.g. from 50 years ago)?

Well, people now may prefer to live in modern ones. The older-style homes of the 50 years ago do not have the modern facilities constructed. For example, there is no running water, not enough sockets for various electrical appliances, and even no close-stool connected to the sewage system. Therefore, people having been used to the modern life will be uncomfortable to live in old ones.

4. How are modern homes different to older homes?

First of all, modern homes are in smaller size than older ones, for the land is in short supply. Then modern ones are always those in a high building, and people will share the lifts to go up and down, while older ones are separate and in most cases, there are yards or gardens around. Thirdly, the modern ones are well-equipped and furnished.

5. What do you imagine people's house will be like in the future?

The houses, where people live and work in the future, may be multi-functional. Maybe concrete and steel are no longer needed, and new materials will be invented to construct houses, so they will be sustainable to earthquake, or other disasters. The high development of science development may make houses changeable. People may make their four-room house change into a five-room one, just by pressing a button.

6. Do people (in your country) prefer to live in cities or in rural environments?

People prefer to live in cities. Though cities are crowded with people, many people would like to live there, for there are more jobs available, as well as complete infrastructure. More people, however, have been tired of city life, and they prefer to live in suburb and commute to work in the city, for they like the clean air and quiet surrounding in a rural environment.

7. What are the differences between living in the countryside, compared to living in a city?

Life in the countryside may be more relaxing and simple. People get up in the singing of birds, and they will go to work without worrying about being blocked on half way, as there is not so much traffic. At nights, they can enjoy a walk out with family after supper. Then they may do some reading or watch TV before they go to bed. There are not so many evening activities as in the city.

8. How do you think cities will change in the future?

An increasing number of people come to live in cities, which means that there is no choice but to develop outwards of the cities to house and supply the need for the people. Therefore, the cities will get larger and more crowded,

and more flyovers will be constructed to relieve the heavy traffic. At the same time, there will be high-rise all round to house people for working and living.

9. What problems do you think such large cities would bring?

In large cities, various problems will occur. The shortage of land is getting severe, which will surely lead to higher housing price, causing heavier living pressure. Besides, more cars will be needed, for it may take hours for people to travel from their living area in suburb, to their working place in city center. Thus, traffic problems increase as well as the need for fuel.

10. Do you think the government should limit the size of cities?

Yes, I think so. Many cities have been developing outwards and becoming larger, which means that more roads need to be built, and more transport should be needed to make the cities connected. It's a waste of resources, and the government should try to limit the growing of cities.

11. Can you suggest any ways to restrict the growth of cities?

Well, one way of restricting the growth of cities would be to develop rural areas. People rush to cities where there are more job opportunities, better infrastructure and welfare. Therefore, the government should make more investment in countryside to create more jobs, and improve the living condition for people there, then less people will leave their hometown to make a living in cities.

10. A house or apartment you like

Describe a house or apartment that you like (not your own home)

You should say

Where it is

What it looks like

When you saw this home

and explain why you like it

Sample

The house I'd like to talk about is my cousin's home. I paid a visit to the house this summer after my cousin and her family moved in to it. The three-storey house is located by the side of a river which runs past the city and each floor enjoys about a hundred square meters. I like the house for its beautiful surrounding and enough space, making me feel closer to nature.

Being on the bank of a river, it's comparatively cool there in the area. The house was surrounded by the wall, which separated the houses in the community. I rang the bell on the door, and my cousin unlocked the door through the button installed in the house. As she was busy with housework, she asked me to walk in by myself. I walked through the front door, and entered a garden, where flowers and vegetable were planted. Going along the path in the middle of the garden, I came to the ground floor, which was designed as a garage and a store room. I went up to the first floor by the open-air stairs on the left of house. The steps led me to a terrace on the first floor, where a set of wooden table and chairs were set. Standing on the terrace, I could enjoy the wonderful view over the river, and it's comfortable

because of the soft wind sent by the river. Then my cousin greeted me and invited me to the dining room. A dining room, a kitchen, a bathroom and a lounge made up the first floor. My cousin had a good taste of decoration, and she'd spent a lot of time selecting the style and color of furnish and lights, which suited the house well. I also visited the study and three bedrooms in the second floor, which were decorated warmly and specially. I'd like to have a house of my own like that in the future.

PART 3: Discussion topics

1. Do most people in your hometown live in a flat (an apartment) or a house?

I was born in a village where people live in houses. People used to live in bungalows which were built decades ago by the generation of my grandpa's. In the past ten years, the bungalows are gradually being replaced by three- or four-storey houses.

2. In your country, do rural and urban people both live in the same types of homes?

No. People living in rural areas usually have their own houses, as there is plenty of land for housing. However, most people live in flats nowadays in urban areas like cities, where constructions as factories and office buildings take up a large part of land. Meanwhile, loads of people flow into cities to work for a living. Therefore, more housing should be built to house people in the limited land, so flats with less space are popular.

3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of living in an apartment?

Well, there are several advantages living in an apartment. For example, people can enjoy a safe and convenient living environment. Apartments are constructed in high buildings, usually in over twenty storeies, situated in communities under charge of property management companies. There are workers responsible for sanitation and safety. While, the weaknesses are those: first of all, the space in an apartment is limited, only up to 120 square meters. Secondly, people now hardly visit their neighbors, even those next door. In another word, people lock themselves in their apartments, and the sense of neighbourhood is weakening.

4. Why there are not many houses in China?

Houses are being displaced by apartments in China, and they are less seen in cities. The main cause for that is the large population in China. Besides, about sixty percent of the population lives in towns and cities where there are industries people working at. To house the people, high-rise buildings have been constructed for people to live.

5. Do you think it's a waste of money for the government to maintain historic buildings?

I don't think so. Historic buildings are indispensable part of a country's history and culture. I think the government should spare enough money to main them. For one thing, they can be live materials to teach the young citizen. For another, they can be special attraction for foreign tourists.

6. What are the advantages of high buildings?

The obvious of a high building is that it saves plenty of land. Secondly, there is low risk for people to be disturbed by insects like mosquitoes and cockroaches. People living in the tenth floor or higher can enjoy more privacy

and lighting, as well as better ventilation and view. It's wonderful to enjoy the night view when the surrounding is lighted.

7. Do you like the design of the buildings (or homes) in your hometown?

Yes, I do. The design is simple but practical. In my hometown, most people enjoy a three or four-storey house. The ground floor is designed as garage and store rooms. The first and second floors are for living. What's special is a concrete container set on the roof, which is used for water storing, as there is no running water system available. The villagers pump underground water from their wells to the container for use.

8. Do you think the (outside) appearance of a home is important?

I don't think the appearance of a home is important. Besides, the apartments now in a community are the same. However, people used to care more about the appearance, which offers visitors the first impression of the house and its owner. As a result, people in the past paid a bit more money in the design and decoration of the outside of their home.

9. What are the characteristics of traditional Chinese architecture?

Firstly, the traditional Chinese architecture was mainly made of timber. Take the Summer Palace as an example. There are various wooden buildings—palaces, temples, corridors and bridges, and so on. It's cool in summer and warm in winter living in wooden constructions. Secondly, the architects were good at making buildings in harmony with their surrounding. It saved many materials by doing that, besides, the constructions were made to be a part of the nature. Thirdly, the constructions are in different shapes, like round, vaulted, rectangular or square, according to their particular functions.

10. Do you think the city centre is best used as a commercial centre or a place for living?

I think the city center is better used as a commercial center. City center is usually located in downtown where there are complete transport system and infrastructure. Both the local people and visitors will go there for shopping or sight-seeing. The heavy transport and crowded people will more or less disturb the residents living in the area. Therefore, it's better used as a place for shopping and entertainment.

11. Sth. you cannot live without

Describe sth. that you cannot do without (except for phones or computers)

You should say:

What is it (are they)

When you got it (they)

Why you cannot get away from it (them)

Sample:

The stuff I cannot get away from is my watch, without which I feel that I lose control of myself, as I keep on thinking what time it is. My watch can keep me calm and it's an indispensable part of my life.

I got my first watch on my tenth birthday from my grandma. It's a lovely pink watch designed in the shape of a Hello-kitty, which, however, I lost while playing with friends, for which I was sad for a long time. At that time, watch

was just a beautiful decoration to me, since I had not much idea of time as a kid. Then on my enrolled in secondary school, I received a special watch from my cousin, which was in blue, my favourite colour. It's unique for it only had two hands, one for hour, the other for minute. What's more, there were no numbers in the watch, but just four short lines in the places of three, six, nine and twelve o'clock respectively. At first, I was not used to it, and had difficulty in telling the time, but at night I could see the lines clearly. I got to used to it gradually, and I could tell exactly what time it was. Others, however, were confused at seeing my watch. It seemed that telling time was the secret between my watch and me, of which I was proud of. The watch broke, accidentally, before I graduated from secondary school, causing my heart broken, too. From then on, I found that I could not get away from watch, as I couldn't help looking at my hand where the watch used to be, making me abstracted. I got a Casio watch, afterwards, which I wear all the time, except for the time I have to touch water.

Sample2

My glasses have been an indispensable part of my life, without which I cannot live for a day. I'm near-sighted and I could not see things beyond a meter clearly without glasses. I've been wearing glasses for over thirteen years. Everyday, the last thing for me to do is to take off my glasses and put them on the desk bedside, where I can reach while I'm in bed. Therefore, I don't wear my glasses only when I'm in bed sleeping.

I was curious of glasses and thought it's interesting to wear a pair, since one wearing glasses appears to be knowledgeable. When I found that I could not see the words teachers wrote on the blackboard, I urged my Mum to take me to the optometrist who checked my eyes and made me a pair of glasses, which cost over 200 RMB, a bit expensive at that time. Actually, I did not see things clear because of pseudomyopia, as told by the optometrist, who told me to relax my eyes from time to time to prevent them getting near-sighted. However, my eyes didn't get better as expected. The result is that I have to wear glasses daily.

At the very beginning, I was quite excited about wearing glasses, as time passing by, however, I realized the inconvenience of that. For example, the glasses tend to slide on summer days when I am sweaty. Sometimes when I go into warm rooms from outside, I could not see anything because of the misted glasses. Anywhere, like them or not, I could not live without them.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. What can't children live without?

There are many things children cannot live without. The most important thing would be the company of adults, whether they are parents or grandparents. Children are not mature enough to live healthily without the care of family. Also, children can't live happily without playing, playing with other kids or with their toys.

2. Why do children always carry about toys?

Well, to some extent, toys are playmate of children's. Children learn a lot through playing. However, nowadays there is only one child in a family, leaving him playing by himself. Instead, various toys have been invented to keep children busy playing, like building block. To some children, toys are the closest friends who can share their happiness and sadness, that's why children always carry about toys.

3. Why is it difficult for people to give up their own things?

It's mainly because people have been used to certain things, or the things have been part of their life. For example, loads of people are fancy of playing computer games everyday, and if they don't do it for a single day, they will feel uncomfortable. Another example, there are lots of people wearing glasses, without which many people cannot see clearly and have normal life.

4. Why do people buy something that they don't need?

People buy things they have no need for different reasons. While for me, I did store some stuff which I may never use, just because I fell in love with it, and could not help owning it. I used to buy a lot of things online. Once I found a beautiful dress on the shop, and I could get a discount for it, as I was a regular customer of the shop. Though I was clear I may never be able to wear it, I bought it at last, thinking that I may give it to my sister as a gift. However, it's been in my wardrobe for the last two years.

VIRTUAL OBJECTS

1. A subject you dislike

Describe a subject you didn't like in high or secondary school

You should say:

What subject it is?

Why you didn't like it?

Sample:

The subject I disliked in high school was Mathematics, in which I believed I had not much talent.

Math was a bit hard for me, but I did it well until the time my Math teacher introduced the concept of function. I was impressed of the relation between variables X and Y, and more confused of how to figure out their relation by the aid of the special graphs in the coordinate. What's worse, an experience

made me lose confidence in Mathematics.

That day, I made many mistakes in Math exercise, which my teacher thought I could do better, so I was asked to correct the exercise on the spot. At that time, it's a rule in my school that any teacher should spend some time sitting in a class to supervise the students in the class. Then it's time for him to go to Class three, next to my class. Seeing me half done with my correction, he required me to go to Class three with him and to have it finished by standing in front of the platform where he sat checking homework of other students. I had no choice but did as told. Standing there, however, I felt everyone was looking, whispering and laughing at me, though it's not true. I found it impossible to concentrate to do my work, though I made it done in half of hour. After that, whenever I tried to do Math exercise, the scene of the students whispering came into my mind which was frustrating.

Since then, my Math got worse and I had little interest in the subject.

Sample2

The subject I disliked while studying in high school is Chinese. I don't like Chinese for one thing that I never did well in the exams, causing me lose my confidence of learning. For another, an incident happened in the class making me lose interest in it.

I went to a primary school in my village, where I was taught by my head teacher for five years. Old as she was, she was in charge of teaching us students both Chinese and Math. As a child, I was naughty and I always dashed my homework quickly. I seldom did reading except for homework. I came to realise my problem in Chinese after attending junior high school. Then I had trouble in the spelling of Chinese characters, an important part in any test. What's worse, I was afraid of writing a composition which counts thirty percent in a test. Since I had not done much reading, I didn't know what to write and I had to make up all the times. I did poor in exams from time to time, as a result, I believed I would never learn Chinese well and writing has been torturing to me.

Sadly, once I was punished by my Chinese teacher, which made me hate her and her class as well. I had a stomachache that day, so I leaned over the desk. Thinking that I was sleeping, she asked me to stand up. I was mad of her punishing me without asking me why I was doing that. I just stood there for the whole session even I was suffering the pain. From then on, I got distracted in her class; sometimes, I even did exercise of other subjects in her class. As a consequence, I became a real problem student. Things turned better when I had a new Chinese teacher, but it's too late as I had fallen far behind others.

My experience of Chinese learning was sad. If I had a choice, I would make it different.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Which subject should not be taught in class?

Science, including Biology, Chemistry and Physics, should not be taught in class. Though I have studied science for six years, I find not much of subject

is practical in my life. The only thing impressed me was the experiment of making electricity through friction. Of course, I learned the lever principle in the use of scissors. However, those can be obtained through social experience, and I have no difficulty in using the stuff without knowing the exact principle.

2. Which subject should be taught in class?

I think Geography should be made a compulsory subject, besides, more related knowledge should be included. I have a friend who is great in geography. He can tell the exact location of every province in China, foreign countries on earth as well. I really admire him for that, and I believe geography is part of a country. Learning geography helps people learn better of their country.

3. How do teachers help students who have difficulties in studies?

First of all, teachers should talk to students to find out why they have those difficulties, and take up different measures. To those slow learners, teachers can help by offering classes after school for those students to catch up; to those students having no interest in a subject, teachers should come up with more various teaching methods to make class more interesting, in this way, students may find the interest of the subject.

4. What subjects are most popular in high school in your country? (Why)

Chinese, Maths and English are most popular, and all students have to learn those three subjects. Those subjects are popular because students are made to learn. Chinese is our mother tongue, so there is no doubt we should pay much effort in learning it. English, considered a useful tool in helping students learn more about the world, has been put more emphasis on. For Maths, I do not understand why it's compulsory, maybe it's helpful in cultivating students' ability.

5. How has education in your country changed in the past few years?

Firstly, the education facilities have great improved during the past few years. More qualified teachers are working at schools and they can make use of multimedia for teaching, while loads of teachers a decade ago could only use blackboard and chalk. Besides, students have more choices after graduating from secondary schools. A growing number of students go abroad for further study.

6. What are some differences between university education and high school education?

For one thing, students have one main subject, their major, to specialize on. Other subjects are, comparatively, minor or optional. But each student has to study four major subjects in high schools. For another, students in university have more free time. They have few classes as they do at high school, and teachers are not always there to supervise their daily study. In a word, university education focuses more on student's major development and self-discipline.

7. What factors do people consider when they are choosing which university to attend (to go to)?

There are two main factors. The first one must be the reputation of the university. The key universities offer higher quality of education, and

students studying at those schools are always considered to enjoy better ability than those from ordinary schools. The other one is the major of schools. Each school has its own specialty and dominant majors. People majoring in those subjects will be given priority while hunting for a job.

8. What do you think of teaching, as a profession (or, as a job)?

I think teaching is a professional job, especially those involving pre-school and primary school education. Teachers can have life-long influence on a child. I believe man is basically good, and what he learns at his youth will determine who he will be. Teachers are responsible for leading children to develop interest in study, and to be able to judge right from wrong. Without the proper guidance of teachers and their co-optation of parents, children will easily go stray.

9. What are the qualities of (characteristics of) a good teacher?

First of all, a good teacher should be patient enough, especially those teaching children below fourteen, as it's impossible to reason with little children. What's more, children are active and naughty, so teachers should have patience to cope with them. Secondly, teachers should be capable to individualize children's learning, for each child is unique and could not be the same at study. Therefore teachers should pay more attention to those slow learners and make them not to lose interest in learning.

10. In what ways does a good teacher have an effect on the students?

Firstly, teachers' words have great effect on the students. Students respect teachers for they are knowledgeable, and they believe all what teachers say is right, especially when they are children. Any praise from teachers will make students happy, and students probably will do better in study for their love of teachers. Secondly, teachers' behavior also does. Students prefer to imitate their teachers who they admire, and in most cases, they believe what their teachers do is right.

11. Which do you think is better, studying alone or studying in a group? (Why)

It depends. Some people can concentrate better while studying by themselves, without the interruption from others. Others, however, prefer to study in a group, by discussing with other students, they can be active and can come up with more ideas. Personally, I'd like to study on my own, for I am not a quick thinker, and I may just follow others' ideas put forward, while taking no time to think myself.

12. Do you think young people learn better than old people?

In general, young people are better in learning than the old. It's believed that enjoying a good memory, young people are more energetic than old people. However, young people may not be persistent on learn, and they may be distracted by other things. Though old people are slow in learning, they, however, enjoy more time, and they can concentrate better on learning what they are interested in.

2. Your favourite season or time

Describe your favourite season or time of the year

You should say:

What season (or time of the year) it is
What the weather is like at that time
What you usually do at this time
and explain why you enjoy that season or time of the year

Sample:

My favourite season of the year is summer, when the weather is hot, and there are occasionally heavy showers. Though some time the temperature will reach over 40 degrees Celsius, making people suffering even sunstroke, I think summer is the most interesting time, for I can enjoy the two-month summer holiday, during the time I can relax from study, as well as try something new.

This year, together with three friends, I set up a workshop in my neighbour. It's common in China, in many families, both parents are busy with their work, and plenty of children are left by themselves. A large number of children indulge themselves in playing computer games or watching TV, which is harmful to their health. What's worse, many children lose themselves in playing and avoid doing their homework, troubling their parents.

Then on the outset this summer holiday, I came up with setting up a workshop to take care children in the neighbourhood, and my friends were happy to join me. We had all together fifteen children, aging seven to thirteen. Early in the morning, the children were organised to play outside for about one hour, then they would do their homework at my backyard where it's cool, and we 'teachers', taking turn, were responsibly for helping them if they're in trouble. Then before the lunch, it's time for movies, when we showed them interesting movies, and children were encouraged to discuss about what they thought of what they saw.

It's the most meaningful holiday I had, for it's joyful to be with children and I was happy to do a favor to my neighbours.

Sample2

My favourite season is spring, when the weather is warm and continuous drizzling wets the land. Spring is regarded as the beginning of a year, since plants start to grow and animals recovering from the cold begin to reproduce. I like spring, for I can go outside to enjoy myself, after months of winter time staying indoors. There are many interesting activities to do outdoors, of which I enjoy having a picnic with my classmates on Spring trip in late March or early April most.

Every year, schools in China will organize a trip outdoors, when all the students and staff of the school go out to have a picnic. Younger students will take the food prepared forward by their families, and older students above the fifth grades are encouraged to bring cooking stuff and raw materials to make a meal themselves, which is the favor of all students. Students will be divided into groups. Some students take cooking stuff, some prepare food to cook, and some are in charge of carrying firewood.

We students will stay in line and walk to picnic site, guided by teachers. On getting the site, we will take turns to cook a meal, which usually takes about two hours. In general, noodles are the ideal food to cook, as it's easy. Many of us, who never cook at homes, are eager to have a try. However, we are always in a mass. Sometimes, the fire goes out; sometimes, we run out of water; sometimes, we are confused of what to do next. Meanwhile, teachers are busy walking around, telling students what to do. Luckily, we succeed in making noodles, which is not so delicious as that done by our families, yet we enjoy eating. After the meal, we will play games for hours before we leave for homes.

It's been years since I had my last school trip, which I miss a lot. I now prefer to have a picnic with friends on spring day.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Is there anything you don't like about that season (the one you just talked about)?
(What/ Why)

Well, I hate the mosquitoes and flies in summer. Summer is hot and favourite time for the pests to live. I don't know why I am under attack of mosquitoes wherever I go, and I really suffer a lot because of the itch caused by their bites. Besides, it's disgusting to see swarms of flies around, and they are the ones to blame for people's diarrhea.

2. What's the difference between 'season' and 'weather'?

A season, as said, is a subdivision of the year, marked by changes in weather, ecology, and hours of daylight. There are four seasons in many parts of the earth and the temperature during each season is stable. However, climate is the pattern of variation in temperature, humidity, atmospheric pressure, wind, precipitation, atmospheric particle count and other meteorological variables in a given region over long periods. The weather in a single day can change a lot. The city of London is known having fickle weather every day.

3. Please briefly describe the different seasons in China.

In most parts of China, the distinction between seasons is clear. Spring begins since March, when the weather is warm and plants come to life, with ample rainfall. Spring is also the time for farm work, and people start to grow crops for living. Summer is the hottest season when the daytime is long. The high temperature and rare rainfall have caused serious drought in the past years. Then comes summer, called the season for harvest, the time when all the plants are ripe and people gain food stored for the cold winter. In northern part of China, the temperature sometimes falls to minus twenty degrees and some places will be covered with snow for over two months.

4. What are the signs that the season is changing (for example, from summer to autumn)?

In the perspective of meteorology, if the average temperature of a day is below twenty-two degrees, which continues in five days, the autumn comes. It's time when the whole field is yellow, for the rice is ripe and ready to be harvested. Then the leaves of some trees begin to turn yellow and gradually fall down, and some birds, such as the swallows, will fly to the Southern part.

To ordinary people, they will feel cool and have to wear a coat for it's a bit chilly in the mornings and at nights.

5. What's the climate (or weather) like in your hometown?

My hometown is in Zhejiang province, south-eastern of China. It's warm in spring and autumn. The highest temperature in summer is a bit over forty degrees, and the lowest in winter is several degrees below zero. In a word, the climate in my hometown is mild.

6. How does the climate in your hometown compare with other parts of China?

Compared with that in my hometown, the climate in HaiNan province (the southernmost province) is warm where the year-round average temperature is between twenty-three and twenty-five, without winter; the climate in Hei Longjiang province (the northernmost province) is cold where the coldest time can be over minus thirty degrees in winter.

7. In general, do you think people prefer to live in (very) hot places or in (very) cold places?

If there is a third choice, people would not live in hot or cold place, for it's uncomfortable to live under the extreme weather. Besides, people are different, those who are born and raised up in cold area are used to that and they may prefer to cold places. That's the case with people who will choose to live in hot places as they have accustomed to that.

8. How does the weather (or the seasons) affect people's work?

Well, to people involving in farm work, their work is greatly affected by seasons. Spring and autumn are the busiest seasons for them to plant and harvest crops, and to raise livestock. Of course, they also have farm work to do on summer and winter, but there is not so much to do because of the weather. While to those doing other work, their work is not so closely related to the change of season.

9. What kinds of (examples of) work are highly dependent on the season?

Farm work, as mentioned above, is highly dependent on the season. Fishery is another example, for fishing is forbidden from time to time for the reproducing of fish. However, more work is affected. For example, the beverage and air-conditioning manufacturers will definitely need more work of employers in producing enough products to prepare for the hot season.

10. In the future, what do you think will (possibly) be some of the effects of global warming?

I think more extreme weather condition will occur because of global warming. In recent years in China, the number of the days over 40 degrees is increasing with the decrease of rainfall, as a result more places are in suffering of severe drought. Years ago, a great loss was caused in northern part because of the devastating heavy snow, and it's the heaviest one in decades. Disasters like those will threat the living of humans.

11. Which seasons or season do old people prefer?

Old people prefer warm seasons. Summer is too hot and winter is too cold for them to go through. Old people are not physically strong enough to stand the hotness and coldness. When it's warm, they can go out to do some exercise which is helpful to their health. When they are out, they can enjoy the

company of others, making them in good mood, which is beneficial to their living, too.

3. a group

Describe a group you would like to take part in

You should say:

What the group is

What you will do in the group

Who you did it with

And explain why you want to take part in it

Sample:

The group I'd like to take part in is a travelling group, with a common name Donkey Travelling, that is, a group of people get together going expedition, trekking, hiking, something like that, which is rather popular nowadays. Loads of groups are available online, and people can join the QQ discussion, a main form of communication, to be members of groups they are interested in. Some experienced travelers are there to organize the various trips. Members come up with places to go, and decide on one final destination and on the time to take it. Then people who had relevant experience will take the lead, and members who'd like to take part in will prepare the equipment needed, and bear the cost themselves. I joined one group, and early this year some suggested to go for a visit in Mountain Mogan, an ideal mountain for hiking, which is about eighty kilometers away from the city I live. I didn't make it for the unexpected emergency at work. I was rather regretful on seeing the pictures they took on the trip. I'm looking forward to join them sometime in the future.

I love to have a try of Donkey Travelling, for there are many advantages. For one thing, we no longer need to be guided to rush from one spot to another, instead we can do it in a much freer and relaxing way. For another, the cost of Donkey Travelling is much less, compared with that by joining a tourist group. Besides, walking, the main form of travelling, is beneficial to us who are in lack of exercise in daily life. To get away from the modern surroundings, and to get close to the nature, Donkey Travelling is a no better choice.

Sample2:

I want to describe a special group I want to join. It's not an ordinary one with stable members, and there is no group leader but a voluntary organizer. Most of the members are dwellers in the nearby communities, and they stay in a group to do exercise if they have time. In general, they meet at seven on Sunday mornings, if weather permitting. Also, activities like hiking and having a picnic are made once a month. Members are free to propose activities online by MSN, and then they will vote about the proposals to make a choice, and "sign up" for an activity to take part in. I got to know the group by a friend, a member of the group, and joined them to climb a nearby mountain last week. Having much fun with them, I made up my mind to keep on doing exercise with them.

It's a walking group started two years ago, when the group organizer posted a message on the MSN for residents in the neighborhood and tried to find a peer to do morning exercise on Sundays. As he explained, it's hard for him to keep on doing exercise as he'd prefer to sleep all day, however, his declining health left him no other choice. At first, two other young men joined him. The photos of each exercise uploaded by the organizer attracted a number of young people in the neighbourhood, many of whom became regular members. Then they came up with the idea of starting a group open to everyone; and finally came into being the group "Enjoy with us". I assume that most members enjoy the group activity, for they share the idea that it's better to do exercise with others, as they can get motivated to persist. Group work makes exercise more enjoyable and members, meanwhile, can know different people.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Besides sports, what are some other group activities that people in your country engage in?

Well, there are so many groups, I just give some examples. Some artistic groups are popular where people perform, play various musical instruments, do painting and handwriting. Also there are people interested in creating stuff, and they share their models and learn from each other. Besides, there are virtual groups online, and members of the groups, from all over the world, get a game mission completed together.

2. Do you think some people behave differently when they are in a group, compared to when they are alone? (Why)

Yes, some people do. There are people who are active in a group; however, they prefer to stay at home by themselves. There are people who always wear neatly; however, they pay no attention to their wearing at home. Every one wants to leave a good impression on others, and sometimes they behave completely different while with others and by themselves. People are said to be complex, and they just want to impress others the side they want to show them.

3. Why do people join these groups when they could do these activities alone?

Joining group activities, people can enjoy more fun and get support from other members. For example, my friend took part in a fitness club. Her diet is rather restricted and she has to do a great amount of exercise in two months. I wondered whether she would give up, however she did it. When asked how she could persist to the end, she told me she had a partner in the club, and they encouraged each other though sometimes it's rather painful.

4. Do you think joining a group/ club is a good way to make friends?

Yes, I think so. The members of a group have the same interest, at least in the group activity. It's common for people to make friends with those having the same interest. Besides, taking part in activities together, people will get to know each other and find more things they are in common.

5. Why do some parents want their children to become members of a group?

Parents send their children to group activities for different purposes. In general, however, they want their children to have fun and become interested

in the activity. For another, they may want children to get to know more people, so that the kids can get better in interpersonal communication. Being used to be with a group of people, children may be more outgoing and active.

6. Do you think it's beneficial (or important) for children to take part in group activities?

I think it's beneficial for children to take part in groups. On one hand, they can enjoy themselves while playing or working together with others. Sometimes, they will learn how to be cooperative and helpful to others. On the other hand, children, being used to be in a group, will not be afraid to show themselves in public.

7. What sorts of group activities do teenagers like to do?

Teenagers prefer kinds of group activities. Some are fond of sports, like football and basketball. Some play with music, and they make up their own bands and give performance. Some are fans of computer games, many of whom make a team of over thirty people and compete with other groups. Some prefer painting and they work hard to realize their dream of being an artist. Some like to dress up to be a cartoon character, and they are crazy of cosplay.

8. What benefits do old people get from doing these activities in a group?

There are many benefits for old people taking part in a group. Retired from their work, they have much free time. Some enjoy the company of others in the group, so that they won't feel lonely for their living alone. Some prefer to pursuit new dreams so as to make their life more colourful. For example, many groups of old people make up their own music band, though they are amateur, they enjoy themselves while practicing with group members.

9. What are the pros and cons of working in a team?

On the positive side, working in a team one can learn from others and he won't be self-centered, for he knows the importance of conformity to make a successful team. However, one has to make sacrifice to be a member. For example, sometimes one's idea, though proper, may not be accepted by the team which may be upsetting. Or one has to give up his free time for the rehearsal or training of the team.

10. Can you think of any examples of group activities on an international scale?

I want to talk about the Roots & Shoots group, sponsored by the Jane Goodall Institute, which provides young people with the knowledge, tools and hopeful inspiration to improve the environment and the quality of life for people and animals. Since its founding in 1991 in Tanzania, the program has been introduced into over a hundred countries, including China. I got to know the group while attending university, and became a member of the program to call on people to protect our earth and other creatures.

4. A website

Describe a useful website that you like to visit. (Or, that you have visited)

You should say:

what the contents of the website are (or, were)

how and when you first found this website

how often you go to this website

and explain why you think this website is (or, was) useful.

Sample:

I like the website called Discovery Asia, which is in both English and Chinese. I started surfing this website when I was in middle school. It teaches us a lot of things around the world, from biology to astronomy, from history to culture. There're a variety of video clips about different areas for us to choose from. Every video clip has a short description to help you decide if you want to watch it. Because of the website I began to know that the world was wonderful and there was so much more to learn. I've added this website as my favorite and I would always go to visit it to explore their up-dates.

I especially like the part featuring Egypt. At first, I was attracted by the beautiful pictures showing the ancient Egypt, like how they might built the pyramids and make mummies. They also suggested many possible reasons for making these things, which showed the unique culture and philosophy of the ancient Egyptians. Through that, I began to feel interested in history.

I've learned a lot through it. I think it's really a good educational website, not only for children but also for adults. I hope one day China can also make such a good website to show our history explorations to the world.

Sample2:

I'd like to talk about a website called One Day The Chinese People coming into being on the first day of 2010, whose slogan is "a day, 24 hours, 1440minutes, 86400seconds. I came to know it about two years ago.

The website shows one day life of people from all walks of life. It is unique, for everyone, professional or amateur, can contribute to it as long as he can write and take photos. The pictures making vivid recording of people's life are real and persuasive. Diverse stories of people are displayed on the website.

The website serves as a medium for people to know the work of others in different occupations and as a means for people to get approved or help. For example, a recent report of a rural doctor Zhangbo caught much attention, which tells about his devotion to his hometown and his kindness to his villagers. The photos shot show people him working at the clinic and the transport, a shabby fishing boat and an old motorcycle which he uses to visit patients. On another ease, the report of an orphan from an impoverished family who studies hard wishing to go to a university so as to payback her grandparents moved many people, many ofwhom donated to help her.

Whenever I have time, I would log in the website to read stories available, and I expect to photograph a person I know, and share his story with others online some times in the future.

Sample3

Whenever I open my computer, I would login on the Huijiang network school, my favourite website for English studying. It's useful, for there is a full range

of materials and online lessons for language learning. It's free to read the materials and join the programs available, and lessons on offer are convenient to learners and much cheaper than those provided in ordinary school. I found the website, accidentally, when I was searching for the audio recording of NCE (New Concept English) three years ago. I succeeded in downloading the recording, as well as text files of NCE. There were various free English materials online, but it's in the website that I found a whole collection of what I needed. Furthermore, I gathered exercises relating to that, which I thought were available only in paper books. I saved the website immediately and joined in twelve English programs I liked most.

The website is attractive, as it provides learning programs for several languages- English, Japanese, French and Korean, and so on. In the English programs, there are projects for English learning, ranging from elementary English, such as phonetic sound, slang and business oral communication, to English tests like IELTS and TOFEL. I prefer to play the Vocabulary Test, in which I will finish a quiz of 30 questions relating to word meaning, grammar and special usage in a limited time. The moment I finish a test, information about my scores- the numbers of questions I get right, the time I use and my ranking among people participating will appear on screen. After that, I can check the questions I missed. It's rather challenging, and I learn a lot in the process. English learning turns to be fun in programs like that. That's why I think the website is useful.

PART 3: Discussion topics

1. Is the internet used very much by people in China?

Yes, I think so. It's like a miracle. I still remember ten years ago, the internet was still not very common, but now, it's just everywhere in our life. We could find almost everything on the internet, and the internet allows us to write emails to our friends and use facebook to give our friends and family our up-dated information. Also, online shopping is popular, which makes our life more convenient.

2. Some people say that different age groups have different tastes in internet content.

What do you think?

I think so. Different people like different things. Children would play some simple online games or watch some funny videos. Young people are more interested in some interesting news, and blogs or twitters of celebrities. For some professionals, academic information is really important for them. They would use the internet to do online research and try to improve their professional skills.

3. What influence can (or, does) the internet have on children? And what about teenagers?

There're both good and bad influences. Children can have access to all kinds of information, so they can learn from the internet by using some search engines. However, there're also some bad stuff on the internet, such as sexual and violence web pages, which could be viewed by everybody, so it's really important to monitor what children can see on the internet. I think it's

the same worry that we have for teenagers. It's really important for the government to screen the internet and only allow healthy and good stuff to appear on it.

4. What (kinds of) people don't use the internet and what are the disadvantages that these people suffer because they don't use the internet?

A lot of old people don't use the internet because it's hard for them to accept new things and they think it's very difficult to pick up all the details of using the internet. For example, my parents don't use the internet at all. They can't view my blog or chat with me online. They used to like writing letters to me, but now most people are using emails, so hand written letters are out-of-date. They would feel very pleased if they could write emails to their children and friends.

5. How do you think the internet might develop in the future?

I think the internet will be even more powerful in the future. Now, online shopping and online courses are still not the main stream compared to actual shops and schools, but in the future, these services will be made more professional and user friendly, so they will become the major means to provide service for people. Of course, a lot of businessmen are going to make a fortune from it.

6. Do you think people can freely express their opinions on the internet?

To some extent, yes. In the past, people were more careful about what they would say about the government or some highly debated matters, but now with the internet, people could express their feelings and points of view anonymously, which helps more people feel free to say what they really want to. However, the government is still keeping an eye on everything appear on the internet, so sometimes some too radical expressions will be blocked or deleted.

7. Have you ever bought anything on the internet?

Definitely. Compared to many of my friends, I'm on the slow side. I started online shopping two or three years ago and found it very convenient. For example, I bought a phone card online for only half of the price compared with the one from an actual store. And I could find books I want with only a few clicks of the mouse. It's really amazing.

8. In China, is the internet used much in schools or colleges/universities?

Nowadays, yes. A lot of teachers or professors begin to post homework online for students to see and there are forums for students to discuss their course work and communicate with each other. For some universities, they also offer online courses for students who are busy with their work or can't come to class because of the distance. I think the internet will play a more important role in education in the future.

5. Important information/message

Describe an important message you received by phone, email or text.

You should say:

What the message was

Who it was from

What you did after you got this message

And explain why the message was important.

Sample:

I still remember the important message about my college admission. After my college entrance exam, I began to worry about whether I could get in the college I applied. I had a lot of free time at that time, but I could hardly enjoy myself.

I still remember that day. I was on my way to my friend's home. My father called me because he received my college admission letter. He was very excited, so was I. I didn't go to my friend's home but got home directly because it was so important for me. I wanted to see the admission letter myself. When I held the admission letter, I didn't know how to express my feelings. It was the most exciting message I have ever received.

For many high school students, it's the most important thing to get in the ideal college. It was the same for me. There're no other things more important than this message during that time. Until now, the moment is still very vivid in my mind.

Sample2:

Days ago, my best friend sent me a message asking me to check my e-mail for a surprise. As that time I was at work, I did not open it until night. While I could not stop guessing what the surprise would be, since she'd like to share everything with me, like her new dressing, a dish she learned, or a haircut she made. The surprise later I found out was her wedding invitation, which was unexpected. It's the most important information I received this year.

Opening my e-mail, I click on a video showing up. It's a collection of photos of her, her being a baby, a kid and a lovely girl, and later some photos of her dressing in traditional Chinese wedding costume and white wedding veil appeared, with the company of her Mr. Right, an old friend of mine, too. Then an invitation appears asking me to attend their wedding in October. On seeing those, tears rolling down my face, for I was happy for her and meanwhile, admired her to be so brave, since she'd suffered a lot to be together with him.

Then I called her up, pretending that I was angry for not being informed until then. On the phone she apologized happily and told me about her making of the video, so as to make it a memorable part of their wedding.

I look forward to her wedding, and will always keep the e-mail as a special

message from my best friend forever.

PART 3: Discussion topics

1. How important do you think communication between people is?

I think communication is the basis on which people build up any relationship. Communication makes it possible that people introduce themselves to others and get to know others as well. We deliver our thoughts in communication, and solve problems through it.

2. Do you think it's important to have good communication skills?

Yes. Good communication skills help make good impressions. People need it to make their ideas delivered and make themselves understood and accepted. Meanwhile, having good communication skills, people may find it easier to solve problems.

3. In what situations do you think communication is very important?

It is needed in every situation. When people first meet, they have to communicate with each other so that they can gradually know each other. Once a relationship is founded, constant communication maintains the closeness and friendship. So it is important in every aspect of interpersonal relationships.

4. Would you say you are a good communicator?

Well, I think I am not good enough. You see, I am a little introverted, so I sometimes hesitate to practice communication even though I know clearly the importance of it. Meanwhile, since I am a student/working as an accountant, I stay in a relatively simple environment. There are not many circumstances in need of communication. So my communication skill still needs to be improved.

5. What sorts of skills do you believe are important for good communication?

The skill to talk is a primary skill in communication. Short and logical speeches make it possible that the speaker expresses his ideas clearly without bothering other people. And the skill to listen is equally important. Listening to others with patience and attention is half of communication. It makes others feel respected and accepted.

6. Is there much difference between the ways young people communicate and the ways old people communicate?

Yes. Young people communicate with all kinds of tools, like cellphones, social networks, or chatting software. However, old people prefer face-to-face talks to communicate with others, despite the fact that a growing number of old people are also learning to use cellphones and computers.

7. What sorts of jobs (or work) especially require good communication skills?

In fact, all kinds of jobs require communication skills. No matter what job it is, we have to report the work we have done, and get others understand. Of course, some jobs such as the sales job especially need good communication skills. People doing those jobs should have more practice of communicating with others.

8. Do you think communication skills can be taught or are they part of the (inborn/innate) nature of a person?

Perhaps it's mainly nature whether a person has a strong will to communicate with others or not. But skills are mostly acquired capabilities. The living environment, guidance of surrounding people and self-awareness all have influence on the proficiency in people's communication.

9. Do you prefer to communicate face-to-face or to communicate by texting message, e-mail, etc.?

It depends on whom I communicate with. If I am contacting my relatives or close friends nearby, I would like to be with them face-to-face. However, messages and e-mails are more suitable when I am communicating with friends living far away, or with ordinary friends.

6. A plan

Describe your plans for the future (such as your career or study plans)

You should say:

What you plan to do

Who you plan to do it with

How you will do it

And explain why you want to do this

Sample:

I'd like to talk about my plan for the next three years. I'm working to be admitted into a university in London in September next year. Learning English enables me to know more about the English-speaking countries, and I am eager to experience the real life of people there. To study abroad for two years will not be easy, but I am hopeful to learn a lot about what I aim for.

I am interested in education abroad, especially the education for children in kindergartens and primary schools. There has been a trend that wealthy people immigrate to western or developed countries so that their children could receive a better education. There are enough reports about the relaxing study for children at school where they learn through playing and pupils are encouraged to discuss and talk about their own ideas at class, which is rather different from that in China. That's the main attraction of studying abroad to me, which I think will be helpful to my teaching of children who have difficulty in English learning in China.

I expect to live with a host family, and it's better for them to have kids. Maybe it will take half a year for me to adapt to the new environment and studying there, and after that I will be more capable to communicate with the locals, and I plan to do voluntary work or part-time job, something like that, at schools if possible, so that I can have a better idea of schooling there. After finishing my study, I prefer to do English training for children, and I look forward to setting up a training school of my own. I hope more children will enjoy learning English with me.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. How did you form this plan (the one you just spoke about)?

I made the plan based on my willing and advice from my relatives and friends. It's been atrend for people to study abroad, and my parents approve of my idea of spending some time to do what I long for. It's not predictable of what I will confront abroad, and I may have to change some part of my plan, but I am hopeful to gain what I aim for.

2. What different sorts of personal plans do people usually make in their everyday lives?

To a student, he will plan to spend some time reviewing what he learns forward, and finding out what he still has problem with, and have plans of making use of their free time after class. For a worker, he needs to plan the goal of the day- what to complete, what ways to take to have work done, and what problems he will face during the process.

3. Why do people have these plans?

People make plans to make it clear what and how they will do in a certain period of time. Everyone has his goal, for a single day or a whole life. However, to complete a goal, one needs to take action, and the plan is schedule for the details of the action. When he finishes as planned step by step, he will get closer to his goals.

4. When a student is doing a big assignment or a rather large-scale project, why do you think it's a good idea to make some plans before they start?

Since it's a big assignment, it must involve many parts. It's advisable to make some plans, otherwise, he may not be clear of which part to start with and the finishing time of each part, and he may even find many things undone by the end of the deadline. With plans made, he will be sure of what to do step by step and make adjustment at the same time.

5. In general, what sorts of plans do governments all over the world usually have?

Governments make a range of plans for domestic development. They will plan for the economic development for short and long terms; they will plan for the annual budget to invest in various fields, to improve the education, welfare and living of people. Also, they will consider a lot of taking part in international affairs. For example, they will plan for the trading and cooperation with foreign countries.

6. What are some of the major problems facing the whole world today?

The first global problem would be environmental pollution, which is influential to the future of the earth. Besides, humans are paying for the damage that they did to the earth. Global warming and various disasters have brought humans much suffering. Another problem is the increasing energy consumption around the world, which has caused several conflicts between countries. The increase of conflicts may lead to wars among countries.

7. Who do you think should be responsible for solving these problems?

I think every nation and each human has the responsibility in solving these problems. However, developing countries should contribute more to that, for they did make use of a large amount of resources and caused many environmental problems in past decades. But those problems cannot be solved without the cooperation among countries and the effort of individual.

8. What do you think is the major environmental problem facing the world today?

The major environmental problem must be the pollution. Pollution has made great damage to the earth. Many animals die out or lose their habitat which is no longer suitable for their living. Besides, more polluted animals and plants are consumed by humans, and the long-time consumption of polluted food will, sooner or longer, cause health problems to humans. All the creatures on the earth are influenced and hurt by pollution.

7. An interesting radio program you like

Describe an interesting radio program you like.

You should say:

What the program is

When and where you listen to it

How often you listen to it what types of people enjoy it.

And explain why you think it is interesting.

Sample:

I'd like to talk about a popular program among drivers in Hangzhou. It is literally named My Car Has Something to Say.

The program is broadcast by Hangzhou traffic radio station every noon at workdays. It is hosted by Yu Hu, a famous local host with profound professional knowledge on the cars and the laws. This program is aimed at providing a medium for common audience to complain about problems relating to their cars.

During the program, the audience can call the program team and complain directly to Yu Hu about the problems of their cars or the problems they meet when having their cars repaired. Responding to the complaints, Yu Hu will ask the program director to contact the car manufacture or sellers immediately. Then three parties will negotiate during the program. The negotiation is usually very effective and can solve many problems which remain unsolved for long time. With his efficiency, Yu Hu is considered as "the spokesman of the drivers". Moreover, Yu Hu's sharp but humorous style also contributes to the popularity of the program.

In fact, in this age of Internet surfing, videogames and reality television, there is no shortage of mindless activities to keep people occupied and we seldom listen to radio. But this program attracts a lot of audience, including me. From the program, I can learn abundant professional knowledge on cars and I am frequently amused by the host. It is my favorite program.

Sample2

I'd like to talk about my favorite cross-talk radio program broadcasted on FM92.1, by Tianjin Cross Talk Broadcasting Channel. The channel has programs on show, starting at a quarter to six in the morning till the midnight every day. There are all altogether 14 programs, relating to famous shows or amusing talking. A full range of popular cross talk shows are collected, from those classic ones relating to historical works to those modern ones talking about people's daily life. Plenty of professional cross talkers and cross talk

lovers enjoy the program. Others like me who listen to the program for relaxing can also enjoy much fun. Of the 14 programs, my favourite one is called (in Chinese) "Baoguo doubuwan", broadcasted at 9 o'clock in the evening. Lasting for about one and a half hours, the program taking up interactive sessions with the audience in several ways is very interesting and attractive.

Years ago while I was studying in the university, a friend of mine recommended it to me as I was preparing a cross talk show. I felt in love with the program, which I kept listening to in my following school years. I now sometimes will also turn to the program when I am free. The program begins with the host Mr. Pei and the hostess Ms. Mu, chatting about interesting events on the day amusingly. Then two different types of cross talks will be broadcasted. One question will be put forward according to each episode, to which the audience are encouraged to send messages or leave a message online on the website of the program about their answers. The attraction is that both the one who comes up with correct answer first and the one who has an innovative answer will be awarded. All the audience are enthusiastic about taking part in. During the process, the listeners learn something about cross talk and have fun at the same time.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Do people in China prefer to listen to the radio or to watch TV?

In general, more people in China prefer watching TV to listening to the radio, as people have convenient access to TV. At leisure, sitting on the sofa comfortably, people can enjoy watching the various programs on TV, together with friends or family, which is really a pleasure.

2. Please compare TV and radio program.

They are both effective media and are important part of people's life, and they cover varied programs to keep people well informed of what's happening around the world, making people's life more convenient and colourful. However, the radio can only be heard, so the programs displayed tend to be attractive through voice and words of hosts, while TV program aided by the photos and videos, tend to be attractive by vision. Comparatively, people can get an idea of what's happening better through watching.

3. Does radio have any advantages over TV?

Well, the most obvious advantage of radio over TV is that the radio is more accessible for people being outside. Nowadays, the radio has made great adaptation to the developing world. The wireless radio has been smaller and easier to take, so people can be seen jogging or walking while listening to the radio. Besides, the radio has been installed in cars, which enables drivers to listen to programs they like at will. There's no need to mention the cellphones being able to receive radio programs. In a word, people can listen to the radio whenever and wherever they like.

4. Do you prefer to watch TV alone or watch it with other people?

It depends. I enjoy watching sports games with people having the same

interest. Often, we sit together with food and drinks aside; we talk about the exciting moments of the game, making judges of the players, sharing happiness of making a shoot or a goal. Without companion, there will be halved happiness. While watching programs for news, however, I prefer to be alone, so I can have a better understanding of the news.

5. How are radio programs in China today different to those of in the past (e.g. 20 or 40 years ago)?

There have been many differences between the radio programs at present and those in the past. Dating back to 40 years ago, when TV was not accessible to everyone, the radio was a main medium for people to get information, so, at that time, the radio focused on spreading news at home and abroad. But now, with the fast growing world providing people a richer life, and various media, such as TV and Internet, keeping people informed, the radio has gradually adopted more programs like music and helpline programs to entertain and offer suggestions to audience.

6. Which is the best way to get information, TV or radio?

Well, TV or radio has its own strong and weak points in giving information, so the idea which one is the better way differs among people. Some people prefer radio, for it gives information through voices, so people won't be distracted by the pictures as shown on TV, while to others, voices only cannot make them concentrated. So the suitable way is the best way.

7. What types of radio programs are most popular in China? (Why?)

There are three kinds of radio programs being the most popular among audience. They are Traffic Broadcast giving information to drivers on traffic as well as on things relating to vehicles, Music Program offering audience a chance to listen to music to relax or to kill time on their boring journey, and the Helpline involving several kinds as a public medium for people to tell about their problems and probably get some advice, while no one can know who they are.

8. What are the contents of these programs?

The first one is the traffic broadcast whose main function is to provide audience the latest news of traffic on the road, helping drivers to avoid the crowded region and choose a better way. The second one is the music program with a host answering to the audience who call in to have a song played, while all the listeners can share the diverse ranges of music, old and new, in Chinese and in foreign languages, together. The last one being helpline, which deals with personal problems people encountered. Audience with the same or similar matter or experience can have comfort there and even share advice to solve them.

9. Is it a good choice to listen to the music program?

Yes, surely it is. Music helps people relax, and they are moved and activated by the rhythm or lyric. While people walk on the way, do chores or drive on a crowded road, they can all listen to the music which can offer them better mood. What pleasure it is to listen to music program!

8. An outdoor activity

Describe an outdoor activity you want to do for the first time.

You should say:

When you want to do it.

Where you want to do it.

What things you need to take

and explain Why you want to do it.

Sample:

Well, it reminds me of an outdoor activity I've never experienced but want to do— rock climbing. Participants in rock-climbing climb up, down or across natural rock formations or artificial rock walls.

I became interested in the activity when I was watching a rock climbing competition on TV several years ago. I was deeply attracted by the winner's sense of contentment of conquering the nature. And I came to be fascinated by the activity because I think it's thrilling and it can test a climber's strength, endurance, agility and balance along with mental control.

I think it is a both physically and mentally demanding sport, so I want to try it when I am strong enough and have sufficient knowledge. To avoid the potential danger, I think I should be equipped with knowledge of proper climbing techniques and take specialized climbing equipment such as specialized ropes and shoes with me. As to the place to do it, I think a cliff in the realm of nature would be better although it would be more dangerous.

In a word, although I know little about rock climbing now, it's an outdoor activity I've dreamed of for a long time and I would do it for the first time when I make enough preparations for it both physically and mentally.

An outdoor activity

Describe an outdoor activity that you like doing (or do regularly).

You should say:

What this activity is

Where you do it

When you do it

And explain why you like it.

Sample2:

I would like to talk about tennis, which is my best love among all the popular sports. Tennis is popular all over the world, especially loved by teenagers. There is a comic book named. Prince of Tennis, illustrated by a Japanese artist. The spread of this book made tennis more popular.

The spirit of tennis is practice makes perfect, and we should never give up. When I was in sixth grade, I began to learn how to play tennis because I was a fan of the comic book. When I play tennis, I will devote myself to it. I have entered for many tennis competitions. I like winning so the procedure seems exciting. At that time, I was not good at sports. But after playing tennis, my

PE grades became the best in my class. Because of tennis, I learned that I should never give up when I faced difficulties. I still have lots more to work on. Tennis is my favorite outdoor sport.

Sample 3:

I want to take part in World Walking Day, an international walking activity. The activity, advocated by the TAFISA, is to raise people's awareness of the importance of daily exercise. People are encouraged to walk 6000 steps, about 5 kilometers, which can help them to exercise their muscle and ligament, keep their ankle flexible, and stimulate the blood circulation of their body, benefiting their metabolism and protecting them from chronic disease. I think activity is very meaning, for people nowadays are too occupied, either by work or other things, to take enough exercise. It's said an increasing number of people around the world, at 30-50 years old, are in face of diseases like dyslipidemia, overweight and obesity, to which the lacking of exercise is the main cause.

I got to know the activity, accidentally. On June 1st, 2012, Hangzhou government held the second walking day, and the opening ceremony was hosted in Xihu culture Square near where I worked. I remembered the day on my way to work, I saw groups of people, even some children, wearing the same T-shirt, with the slogan World Walking Day in Chinese printed on their back. I was attracted by them, and surfed on the internet and found more about the activity.

I look forward to joining the walking day next time when it's organized again in Hangzhou.

Sample 4

The outdoor activity I'd like to try for the first time is to ride a solo-wheel, a tool becoming popular transport. I'm interested in the convenience of the solo-wheel riding, and I've bought one online which will be sent to me in days. An experienced rider offered to train me and I could not wait for taking my solo-wheel to practice on the square.

About half a year ago on my way to work, I caught sight of a young man riding a solo-wheel. He seemed to be enjoying the riding and he rode through the crowd of bicycles easily, about which I was quite curious, so did all the passers-by. Pedestrians stopped, bicyclists and car drivers slowed down to watch him. Then a week ago, I found a group of people practicing solo-wheel on the square near my community. Some were experienced and they rode around joyfully, while some were green hands and were busy with learning to keep balance on their solo-wheels. Watching them riding for half an hour, I stopped one of them and talked about his riding. He told me solo-wheel riding was kind of novel, which was introduced to China a year ago from America. The solo-wheel is prevailing in cities for its safety, convenience and environmental harmlessness. A solo-wheel can carry a person below 120 kilograms, and it can cover a distance of about 20 kilometers after its battery being fully charged for 45 minutes. An increasing number of people take up

the riding, and they can stop at will since the fastest speed of a solo-wheel is 16 kilometers per hour. What's more, it's about 10 kilometers, and people can transfer to bus or subway, carrying their wheels with them, or when they are tired of riding. I've been tired of the crowding buses, and I decided to have a try, since the man told me it only took a person hours or days, it depends, to learn how to control the riding. It will be an interesting outdoor activity riding a solo-wheel.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Do young people (in your country) like sports? (Why?)

It depends. A lot of young people like sports, especially boys. Because of the lack of sport facilities, a lot of them would go to nearby colleges to play sports. Of course, richer people could afford private fitness centers, which could provide a variety of ways to exercise. There're still a lot of young people who wouldn't do exercise at all because they think it's not worth going faraway places to play sports and fitness centers are too expensive for them. I think it's necessary for the government to build more public sports facilities so that young people could have access to them more conveniently. This will definitely encourage people to do sports more often.

2. Do you think sport (or PE classes) are important (or, necessary) at school?

I think so. Students have to sit in classes for long hours. If they don't move around, they might become weak. Exercise during break or PE classes can help them feel refreshed and energetic, so that they could learn better when they go back to their classrooms. I think schools should put more emphasis on sports and PE classes and encourage students to exercise more even during their spare time.

3. Is there much difference between boys and girls when they do sport?

Yes, definitely. I have to say the percentage of girls who like sports should be much lower compared to boys. It's very often to see boys playing football and basketball during breaks but girls would prefer to play some mild sports, such as jump ropes or badminton. I think schools should encourage girls to play more sports by teaching some sports that will interest female students more.

4. What do you think are the benefits of having international sporting competitions?

These competitions can arouse people's love for sports. When they watch sports games on TV or in stadiums, they can learn many playing skills and feel that they should play more as well. A lot of countries care about these sports events very much because they know if the nation likes sports, the people will be much healthier physically. And these competitions can also bring people and countries financial profits.

5. Do you think international sport can help ease conflicts between different countries?

I've never thought about it, but I think it's possible. Countries will have a lot of opportunities to communicate with each other during sport games, and people can get to know other countries through sports events as well. Also, I did see some sports players who could treat each other very nicely and they could build their friendship through some competitions, which would eventually help their countries build relationship.

6. Some companies spend a lot of money promoting (or, sponsoring or investing in) sports events. Why do you think they do this?

I think they can get money from these sports events. For example, if the players wear something with the company logo, people will want to buy the products from the company. We can also see a lot of advertisements at the stadium where the sport event is held. These advertisements can definitely bring the companies fortune because people are getting more and more interested in sports and these ads can definitely draw their attention.

7. What benefits can big sport events, such as the Olympics, bring to a country? = Why does China care so much about big sport events, such the Olympics?

Take the Olympics as an example. In 2008, Beijing hosted the Olympic Games. People in China were proud of our country. During that sport event, all the mass media paid a lot attention to China, which enhanced the international status of China. Apart from this, business sponsorship helped promote our economy at that time.

8. Why do you think that some countries are good at certain sports?

There're many aspects, such as culture and weather. In china, a lot of people like playing Ping-Pong since they are little children. So there're more excellent Ping-Pong players in China. If a country has a long winter, they will likely to be good at winter sports.

9. Should companies invest in sports to help their employees stay healthy? If companies invest in sports, what can they gain? =Should companies sponsor sport events?

Some big companies would build their own gyms to provide different kinds of sport facilities for their employees. The employees can go there after work or during their weekends and holidays. In addition, companies also can host some ball game competitions to encourage their workers to exercise more and promote their team work skills. There're many advantages. Healthy employees can work more effectively, and good team work skills can also contribute to their performance.

10. What do we learn from doing sports?

There're many things we can learn. Group sport games can help us learn team work skills, which is very important for our social life and careers. Some sports, such as running, can teach us endurance.

11. Why do some people like risky sports?

Risky sports can make people feel excited. By doing risky sports, people could cultivate their courage and can also release their stress from work and study.

12. Should parents encourage their children to do risky sports?

I think parents should encourage their children to do risky sports because children can learn a lot of things from the process and risky sports can cultivate their courage and help them learn how to be independent.

13. Should fast food companies invest in sports because junk food is harmful to our health?

I think they should. They make a lot of money by selling junk food. If they invest a little of their earnings, they can reduce the damage they have done. I think the government should have laws to make the fast food companies invest money in healthy sports and some public facilities.

14. Do you think sport classes are necessary at school?

I think they are necessary, because children can stay healthy by doing sports. Apart from this, children can also learn how to cooperate with others through sport classes. This is also important for their later life.

15. What are the international sports?

Now because of the globalization, a lot of sports are internationalized. The most common ones should be basketball, football, snooker, and table tennis. I heard football is the most popular sport in the world and football stars can make a handsome amount of money. I really want to play (or learn to play) football well in the future.

16. Is it good to work outside?

It's hard to say. A lot of people think it's not good because people who work outside have to be exposed in the sun and it's hard to control the temperature outdoors. But nowadays, a lot of people have to work in the office and stay in front of the computer for most of their working time. If we compare these two kinds of jobs, I would say it might be healthier to work outdoors because you can breathe the fresh air and exercise your body more.

9. A job

A future job=ideal job

Describe your ideal job.

You should say:

what it is

what people would do

how can you get it

and explain why you like it.

Sample:

My ideal job is to be a writer. Being a novelist, I can create a mysterious world

in my novels. In novels, my characters can fulfill what I can't do in my real life. Things can always be wonderful. I have been reading long novels since I was in elementary school. The famous Chinese writer, Jinyong, is my favorite. I have read all the novels he wrote. When I read them, I would feel very excited and want to write novels just like him. Actually, I started writing novels when I was a freshman in college. I shared my novels with my classmates and they all liked them. I think I have the potential to be a writer. I hope one day my novels can be published.

Of course, it's not easy to be a successful novelist. I need to practice more and keep writing everyday or at least every week. If I can do this job well, I can also enjoy many benefits. Being a novelist, I can have a flexible schedule and can have my own fans. I can also make friends with a lot of famous writers. I hope my dream can become true one day and maybe I'll meet my favorite writer, Jinyong.

Sample2:

As a child, I used to dream of being a gastronomist. I was fat when I was in primary school, since I was fond of eating sweets. Whenever others made fun of me because of that, I would say I would be a gastronomist in the future. I admired those gastronomists on the TV program who taste and judge the dishes on competition by cooks from around China. Though I didn't have much knowledge of being gastronomist, I was really envious of them being able to taste the delicious food. Meanwhile, I found most of them were thin, so I was curious why they could keep thin while eating tasty food every day which I longed for.

Growing up, I know to be a gastronomist is not that easy. It's said, to be a gastronomist, first of all, one must be proficient in the origin and history of food in different areas and the eating habit of local people so as to fully appreciate the food. What's more, they should keep learning to catch up with the development and fashion of food.

Though I am not a gastronomist as I wished, I still have great interest in eating. Whenever I go to a new place, I will surf online forward to find the special food on offer there and have a taste there if possible. Usually, I prefer to watch the programs on cooking and I try different recipes. Sometimes, I myself even invent a new way for cooking, which is approved by my family. I enjoy being a happy eater.

A childhood dream job

Describe a job you wanted to do when you were a child

You should say:

What it is

What people would do

How can you get it

And explain why you like it.

Sample:

When I was a child, I always wanted to be a tour guide. I remember watching a film about how wonderful a tour guide life could be, which must have planted a seed in my heart and from then on, I would always tell people I wanted to be a tour guide when I grew up.

I always think being a tourist guide is fun because you can travel to different places and meet people from all over the world. I'm interested in history and geography and reading books about these areas is always one of my hobbies. Through the reading, I've learned a lot. If I become a tour guide, I believe I'll be able to introduce all the interesting things I've learned in books.

However, being a tour guide is not that simple, I also need to learn a lot of knowledge about the local culture and customs. If I try my best, I believe I'll be a professional tour guide.

Now, my major is not related to tourism; however, being a tour guide is always my dream and I hope I can try it one day. Maybe in the future, I will just quit my job and join a tourist agency to travel around the world.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. What careers (or jobs) are popular with young people in your country?

I think many careers are popular in China. Nowadays, a lot of young people are interested in studying law, medicine, economics, accounting, and engineering because they believe these majors can help them find good jobs and could give them bright future prospects. However, some people still follow their heart and choose the things they are interested in the most, something like art, music, and literature. I don't think it's good to choose the careers just because they're popular. We should know what jobs can satisfy us the most and help us gain a sense of achievement.

2. Do you think there's any difference between males and females when it comes to choosing a future career?

Yes, I think so. A lot of people have stereotypes for certain careers. For example, it's common for women to be nurses but not for men. Most the engineers are males and we don't see many female taxi drivers. When people choose careers, they'll think about their physical and mental advantages. A lot of men care about how much money they could make because it's considered important for a man to support the family. And when women choose careers, they might need to consider if they could have enough time to take care of future family.

3. What factors do males (young men) consider and what factors do females (young women) consider when they are making this choice?

I think a lot of men care about the salary they are going to make and they want to have more promotion opportunities. Usually they don't mind taking jobs that require a lot of business trips or over time working. However, women usually care about their family time and they don't want to take super busy jobs. Women are also not physically as strong as men, so women don't want to choose jobs that involve heavy lifting.

4. Do you think money (the salary) is the most important factor to consider?

It's definitely not the most important factor but we can't deny salary matters a lot when we choose jobs. Our bosses recognize the work we do through the amount of money they pay us. If we earn minimum wages (not for non-profit organizations), it means we're not that important. Also, money can satisfy us materially, which could provide us with a comfortable life. However, money is not everything. We want to do jobs that we enjoy and can give us enough opportunities to use what we have learned.

5. Do you think parents should let their children make their own choices about a future career or should the parents make the choice for the children?

When children are old enough to decide what they want to do for their future, I think parents should give them the freedom to choose their future careers. It's easier for people to succeed in something they're interested in and it can also give people more satisfaction. If the children are forced to learn something they don't like, they won't feel happy and it also creates conflicts between parents and kids in the family. However, since parents are older in age and have more experience, it's good for them to give some suggestions or advice to their children.

6. Are there any other ways in which young people can get some guidance on what career to choose?

Yes. Young people could use the internet to search for answers from some experienced people and they can learn what the careers they are interested in are like through reading books. Some good schools also have counselors to give students professional guidance for what to choose for the future. I think it's really crucial for young people to make a wise decision at that point in life, so the society should give them a lot of help so that they will not regret when they grow older.

7. What jobs can be seen as dangerous jobs?

There're a lot of jobs that are dangerous. Police have to fight with criminals who are dangerous and sometimes even violent. Firefighters have to go to buildings on fire in order to save other people's lives. Taxi driving can also be considered a dangerous job. There're so many car accidents each day. Since taxi drivers drive more often than others, the chances of having an accident are higher.

8. Should people do these dangerous jobs receive high salaries?

I think so. Since people are risking their lives, they should be paid better. Although some people don't care about the salary because they have passion to do the jobs that can help others, it's just not an excuse to pay them less or mediocre. If these people receive low salary, I guess we'll need to worry about the quality of people who are doing these jobs, which is something that we don't want to see.

9. Does advanced technology help people work better?

To a large extent it does. With the modern technology, people are enabled to work more efficiently due to the automatic operation system. Also, people are ensured more safety at work, thanks to the replacement of machines for working in dangerous areas. In addition, the modern technology helps people

to work in a more comfortable environment. However, potential risks do exist when people are too dependent on those high technologies, in case they stop working.

10. How do you think about the jobs that can protect public safety?

I think those work at positions that protect public safety need to be respected. Firstly, throwing themselves into those high risky jobs to ensure our safety, those people have shown us what unselfishness is and what courage is. Besides, thanks to their hard work, we are able to enjoy our life with fewer worries about being hurt in the society.

11. Do you think the profession of policemen is important? Should they receive high salaries?

Police are definitely important for us. If we don't have qualified police force to protect us, criminals will do whatever they want and the society will be in a state of chaos. I think being good police is not easy because it requires high moral standards and the willingness to fight with the evil power, so good police should be paid well. However, we should also note some bad eggs in the police force are degrading the police image as a whole, so I think the government should deal with it and make citizens more willing to see that police receive good salaries.

12. What are the factors that people consider when they choose jobs?

There're many things to consider when choosing jobs. The location and payment are all important for people who have a family because they need to stay close to their family and they need to have enough money to support the family financially. For many young people, they also care a lot about the advancement of their career. They want to gain experience and need opportunities to learn more, so for these people, the pay will probably rank the second.

13. What kind of jobs can produce pollution?

I would say a lot of factories will pollute the air and water, so the jobs in these places might be responsible for the pollution. For example, recently a battery manufacturer is closed in my hometown because it polluted the nearby water sources. I think people who need to handle chemicals a lot should be careful and pay more attention to the environmental protection. It's also important for them to take care of themselves because it's also risky for them to work in such environment. If all the factories can follow the safety procedures, we'll feel safer to live on this planet.

14. What kind of job is interesting?

It might be different for different people. I think the most interesting job would be the jobs that can fulfill our dreams and agree with our interest. If we do something we really like, we'll feel the time is going very fast when we're working. I have a friend who loves playing computer games and now his job is to develop game software. He's very happy about his job because he loves this area and he can draw energy and strength from his work place. It's very lucky for him.

15. What kinds of skills do students need?

Students need to learn many skills. I think students must have good

communicating and teamwork skills in order to be successful in their future jobs.

16. How can school help students to master necessary skills for their future career? Please give concrete examples.

I think schools should have classes about these necessary skills so students can learn at school. Also schools can organize events to cultivate these skills. It's very important for the students to use these skills because practice makes perfect.

17. What kinds of jobs are hot in China now?

Management positions are always hot in China. With the development of many small companies, they need good managers to save money and help the companies operate smoothly. However, being a good manager is not easy. It requires professional training and experience

18. What kinds of jobs do not require higher education?

There're many jobs. For example, waiters and waitresses don't need to have higher education. However, if you want to find a good job, education is necessary.

19. How do people usually find jobs in China? What about in the past?

Nowadays, people have many ways to find jobs. Using the internet is very popular because you can search the jobs you're interested in all over China or even in other countries and you don't need to go to job markets in person. Submitting application forms are easier now. You only need to press a button. However in the past, the government would assign jobs to people. A lot of people stay in the same job for their whole life.

20. What's more important, salary and self development?

They're both important, but for young college graduates, self development might be more important because they need to gain some experience so that they can be more competitive in the future. For the people who need to take care of their family, they will probably consider the salary more.

21. Is it easy to find a job?

It depends. When you are well-educated, when you are not picky, I think, it is easy to find a job in China now, because job chances exist everywhere. However, many university graduates now, wasting too much time in their four-year schooling, expect too much from their first job. To them, it seems not easy to be employed.

22. How can you succeed in a job interview?

To succeed in a job interview, we have to be well prepared. For example, it is a good idea to know something about the company, in this way; we can share opinions with the interviewers. Also, we need to wear clean and neat clothes, to show our respect to the interviewers, and they may have a favor on us. Thirdly, we should be confident in our knowledge and ability, showing our competence in doing the job well. By doing so, I believe we may have a higher possibility to be employed.

23. What kind of employees do companies want to hire?

To be honest, I am not sure about the answer. But according to my understanding, the employees who are loyal to the companies, who are well

educated for the positions, who are good in interpersonal skills and who are clearly aware of the work, will be better needed by the companies.

24. Should schools teach more skills than knowledge?

I don't think so. For schools, the main purpose is to educate students of their common knowledge about the world, the moral standard in their behaviors, the ways of studying. These help lay a solid foundation for the students to pursue a career in the future. As to skills, they can learn from their parents or just by themselves in the spare time, or accumulate on their later job positions. Teaching too much about skills in schools will make students be worldly or sophisticated, which is not good to create a positive social living atmosphere.

25. Is it reliable to search jobs online?

Yeah, searching jobs online is a good idea and is growing popular these days. But we have to possess a picky eye on it. Sometimes, the internet may be taken advantage by some ill-willed people, we should be careful enough not to be misled by them. But thanks to the stricter censorship from the government, and increasing warning from the media, the environment on the internet is much healthier these days.

26. How could governments solve the problems of labor shortages?

I think it's the time for the government to pay more attention to the low class workers and help them get more benefits in the city. Otherwise, a lot of farmer workers will prefer to stay at home to attend to their land because even if they labor for their whole life and save most of the money they earn, a lot of them still can't afford to get settled in cities.

27. Should we always do the same job or change jobs?

It depends. If you like the job, it's good for you to do the same job, but if you don't like the job very much, it's also possible for you to change jobs. The purpose of changing jobs should be finding a suitable job, but not for changing jobs.

28. Is it difficult to change jobs?

I don't think so. If you have certain skills, and do not mind salary problem, you can easily find a job. But sometimes if you care about the salary, the work place, and the colleagues, it will be hard for you to change jobs.

29. What kind of job can make the most money in China?

I think jobs related to finance, economy can make the most money. For example, if you are doing works of front office in an investment bank, you can earn one million for one year. Normally a few people can earn 100,000 yuan for one year, so one million is really a lot of money, and it's hard to find such a job.

30. What kinds of jobs are popular in China?

I think jobs that can earn a lot of money are popular in China, because nowadays under the pressure of buying house and cars, most people need to earn more money to live. So people will choose jobs related to finance and economy, for those jobs usually can earn a lot of money.

10. Sth(A TV program or a film) that made you laugh a lot

Describe something (a TV program or a film) that made you laugh a lot.

You should say

What it is

When it happened

Who was with you

And explain why you laughed/ why you still remember this event.

Sample:

In an age of computer games, reality show and microblogs, I think there is no shortage of activities to keep us occupied. Yet the topic reminds me of a TV program that I often see. Happy Camp, an entertainment TV program broadcasting every Saturday evening, is produced by Hunan Broadcasting. It's pretty popular among Chinese audience.

Happy Camp is hosted by the so-called Happy Family: five funny hosts and hostesses. He Jiong, one of the hosts, is also a singer, an actor and an Arabic teacher in Beijing Foreign Studies University. One hostess named Xie Na is very humorous, quirky, cute and girly, and is good at making the audience laugh. Du Haitao, a little heavy, is a host upon whom the joke is played. Each episode features several popular celebrities as guest stars. Sometimes even some celebrities from Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, or Taiwan are invited. They participate in interviews, performing, and games. The program is so entertaining that I often burst into laughter at some scenes and I frequently recommend it to the others.

I am really attracted by the program and I'm unwilling to miss every episode because it makes me relaxed and laugh a lot. Now I am under constant pressure from my daily life and seeing such kind of program is a good way to help me relieve the pressure.

Sample2

The TV program I enjoy watching is a new recreation program, "Dad, where are we going?", directed by the Hunan Channel. Five fathers (popular actors) and their children were invited to have a three-day living in a totally new place, a remote village or a deserted area, for example.

The program is attractive for the idea of fathers taking care of their children is quite new, as fathers are thought having not much experience of looking after children. The funny incidents between a father and son always make me laugh to tears.

Every Friday evening, I will lie on the sofa watching the program. On the last program, the five couples were driven to an isolated village in a mountain, where villagers had no idea of who they are. The couples were organised to spend three days there. On arrival, the children were required to hand in the toys brought with them, and fathers hand in their phones. Therefore, they were cut off from the world outside. During the time fathers had to cater to

their children who always made trouble for their fathers. The children, aging four to seven years, were encouraged to collect cooking materials from the villagers for their fathers. Being separated from their fathers, a girl cried for tiredness, a boy lost patience and a little boy just didn't move at all. Watching them, I could not help thinking of my childhood. After getting the materials (a box of flour, some meat, some eggs, vegetable and kinds of ingredient), the fathers, four of whom had never cooked before, had to make something out of the stuff. Inexperienced as they were, they got mixed up on how to make food. The tough assignment the fathers took amused me a lot.

It's relaxing to watch programs like that, making me enjoy what were filmed and laugh on the amusing incidents.

Sample3

Days ago, I watched an amusing film One Night Surprise online, in which my favourite actress Fang Bingbing played the lead. Fang Bingbing acted as a creative director, Michelle, in an advertising agency. The film tells the story of her trying to find the father of her unborn baby, during the time, funny things happened successively.

Michelle is a successful white-collar beauty, yet she is too busy to have a boyfriend. She enjoys several admirers, including her assistant Tony, a handsome and talent young guy. Yet, Michelle likes her boss, a man got divorced recently, who actually is admired by every female in the company. The story begins on her 32nd birthday when she had too much wine and totally forgot what went through. The only thing she remembered was that she woke away the next morning naked in the bed of the hotel. She doesn't realize anything unusual until about one and a half months later, she is told by a doctor that she is pregnant. Then she goes about finding out the guy who made her pregnant. After chatting with her colleague, she found four suspicious men present on her party. Embarrassed as she is, she could only indirectly coax information from them, and misunderstandings between them led her to make wrong judge from time to time. The actors' wonderful performance makes me laugh to tears. What moves me most is that Tony asks her if he can help her as long as she needs help, even though Michelle claims that the baby is not his. The time when Tony accompanies her to do exercise for pregnant women, to buy clothes and stuff for baby, to paint a lovely nursery is full of happiness, moving her a lot. However, they set apart for misunderstanding. A couple of months later, Tony returns to ask her to marry him and the moment Michelle tries to say Yes, her water breaks. Tony puts her on a trolley to the hospital through crowded streets. It's so interesting to see the chaos they cause. What's unexpected is that they finally figure out what happened on her birthday and the baby is theirs. The incredible affair turns out to be reasonable.

PART 3: Discussion topics

1. What is humorous to you?

I am easily amused. For example, I will laugh at the jokes my friends tell me and cross talk the comedians perform. When I am in bad mood, I would watch a comedian film which always brings me much happiness and gets me out of depression. I will always laugh to tears whenever I see the performance of clowns.

2. Are males and females different in thinking what is humorous?

Well, studies show that it takes different time for males and females to judge what is humorous. It's reported that males tend to have high expectation of humor, and when they think something is not so funny, they won't laugh at all. Females, in comparison, have lower expectation. It takes longer for them to realize funny things, and then they will feel much happier than males.

3. Are comedy TV shows very popular in your country?

Yes, there are now more comedy TV shows nowadays, which are welcomed by audience and achieve good ratings. For example, Ipartment, a joking comedy, tells the story of several young people who experience and do unexpected unusual things together to amuse audience. Audience always laughs with glee at their funny words and somehow wacky actions.

4. Is laughing good to people's health?

Yes, it is. Physically, laughing helps people improve the function of lung and release tension. Mentally, laughing keeps people in good mood, making them adapt to their life better. As a saying goes in Chinese that the happier, the younger, people who are optimistic can face up better to daily problems and have a happier life.

5. What often makes children laugh?

Well, things which are insignificant and common to adults will make children laugh. For example, if a child gets a toy he longs for, he will laugh; sometimes, when a child is crying, giving him a piece of cake or sweet will make him burst into laughter. Or when he is watching his favourite canton, he may lost himself and cannot help laughing at what he thinks is funny.

6. Do children laugh more often than adults?

Yes. Children may laugh for a simply reason that he gets what he likes. Compared with that, with many things to worry about and more substantial needs, adults are harder to be contented and amused. Moreover, there are times when adults laugh not because they feel happy, but that they have to do that to truckle others.

7. Are adults and children laughing at different things?

Yes. Children laugh when they get what they want and when they enjoy the game with others. Adults, however, may be made to laugh when they hear funny jokes, watch comedy and amusing program, which entertain them and let them relax from their daily pressure. Moreover, when they manage to do something successfully, they will laugh for satisfaction. Or when they receive something unexpected, such as a surprising party, they will probably laugh to

tears.

8. Do teachers tell jokes in the class?

Well, it depends. Some teachers, especially primary teachers, tend to tell jokes to amuse students. If they are always serious, young students easily get bored and distracted. Laughing gets them refreshed. Teachers who are optimistic and are used to amusing others, will probably share funny things with their students in the class and offer them a relaxed learning environment.

11. Something you do to keep healthy

You should say:

What you do

When you do it

How often you do it

Whether you enjoy doing it

and explain how it benefits your health.

Sample:

In fact, I don't prefer to any sports in particular, neither do I believe in any health care products, so the only thing I do to keep healthy is going to bed and getting up early. It seems that it's easy to go to bed and get up early, but actually it's not the case. Nowadays, an increasing number of pressures from study or other aspects of life make it hard for us to do so. Firstly, going to bed early is not easy to do. For example, when some of my classmates stay up late preparing for an exam, I will feel great peer pressure. More than once I have the impulse to learn from them and stay up late together with them. And lots of temptations such as computer games make it worse. Sometimes all the people in the dorm stay up late engaging in those mindless activities. But I am usually able to control my impulse and desire to go to bed late in the last minute and stick to my own lifestyle. And, early to rise isn't that easy either especially in winter when it's comfortable to linger under the covers. I sometimes manage to do so by convincing myself of the benefit of early rise.

In this way, I've kept sleeping 7 or 8 hours a day for years. I think early to bed and early to rise can help me keep healthy physically and mentally, and can avoid wasting electrical power as well. So, it has become the only thing I do to keep healthy, and I am proud I can do so because it also requires considerable persistence and strong will.

Sample2:

I enjoy a healthy lifestyle. Having a regular diet and resting, I do a lot of exercise every day.

I have meals three times a day, unlike many of my friends and colleagues who often go to work without breakfast or have lunch late to midnight. Besides, I hardly stay up late at night. I used to getting up 6.30 o'clock in the morning and going to bed 11, occasionally 11.30. Doing this, I am energetic enough to

cope with my work every day.

I stick to doing exercise. When I was at college, weather permitting, I would go running on school campus in the morning which offered me a fresh day to begin with. If I didn't make it in the morning, I would do it at night. Otherwise, I felt uncomfortable. Now, however, I have to work on weekdays and there isn't a park or place like that suitable for me to go running, so I turn to bike riding. Except on days when there is heavy rain or snow, I prefer to ride to my company rather than taking a bus. It takes me about 50 minutes to get my company, while it will cost me at least 80 minutes by bus. Thanks to that, I am rather healthy and seldom fall sick. Riding also helps me to get out of my sadness and pressure. Seeing people and scene on my way, I feel released.

My bike has been and will always be my first option to go somewhere around. I appreciate it bringing me a healthy body.

Sample 3

To keep healthy, I keep making meals for myself. I live by myself since attending work. As many working people, I used to have meals outside. After a day's work, I just wanted to relax or squeeze time out with friends. So I was careless of eating. One day last year, however, I had an allergy after a gathering with friends. Pimples came out overnight, covering my chin. I was surprised and much more shocked, so I turned to a doctor who told me I was allergic to something unidentifiable, since I ate various foods the day forward. A good way for me to avoid being allergic again, told by the doctor, was to cook meals for myself, so that I could pay more attention to what I eat.

Cooking was the last thing I'd like to do, for I thought it was boring and time-consuming. Besides, I didn't have many experiences of going to market to buy food. I didn't know how to pick fresh vegetable, nor did I know any dishes. However, I was pushed by my Mum to take up cooking, who showed me how to judge if the vegetable was fresh and the steps to make a dish. Gradually, I found cooking was not that tiring and it's joyful to make a tasty dish. Days of practice later, I made my own lunch and shared with my colleague who gave a high praise. Since then, I keep cooking meals after work.

Sometimes on weekends, I prefer to invite my friends to my apartment and treat them instead of eating in restaurant. I now have much interest in cooking and I'd like to try new ways of cooking. Cooking makes me eat more healthily and it's also a good way to relax. I forget the trouble bothering me while making dishes, and the sense of pride when I succeed in making a new dish comforts me a lot.

PART 3: Discussion topics

1. What are some of the things that people do that are harmful to their health?

Many things people do in their daily life are harmful to their health. Just talk about two things here. Firstly, a large amount of people are used to getting to

sleep late or even staying up, which interrupts people's biological clock, leading them to a bad sleep and tiredness the next day. Secondly, plenty of people often go to work without breakfast, as a result of which people don't have enough energy to cope with their work. In the long term, it will cause diseases like gastritis.

2. What are some things that people can do to help them maintain good health?

People nowadays are gradually aware of the importance of maintaining good health. First of all, people can do more exercise. They can ride bikes to work instead of taking buses or driving cars. Besides, whenever they have time, they can go for a walk after dinner rather than sitting in front of computers playing games. Apart of exercise, people should pay attention to food they eat, to take in enough nutrition, by having three meals a day regularly.

3. What do you think is the best way to maintain good health?

To maintain good health, the best way is to keep a healthy lifestyle, which can be achieved from three main aspects. First of all, people should pay more attention to what and when they eat, and have regular as well as healthy meals. Secondly, people should have at least six hours' sleeping a day to keep them energetic during daytime. The last is that people need to do at least an hour's daily exercise to get

4. What do you think are the differences between healthy food and 'junk food'?

Healthy food is those that can bring much energy and nutrition to people. For example, the rice is full of carbohydrate, the source of energy, and micronutrient copper, an indispensable element in human immune system, as well as digestible protein. While 'junk food' refers to those provide only energy without nutrition, or even contain harmful elements to people, especially something over- fried and roasted.

5. What things do you think people in China need to do(or need to change) in order to improve their health?

On one hand, the government should open up more free space to encourage people to do exercise, or even organise some regular competition, such as basketball and ping-pong matches, among communities or cities. On the other hand, people themselves should spare more time to exercise, taking time off their work for hiking is a good choice, which will enable them to be in high spirit.

6. Why do some people have unhealthy lifestyles?

I believe a large part of people are made to have unhealthy lifestyles because of work. They are ones who have to work at least eight hours a day, five or six days a week, among whom a great many have to commute a long way between their homes and working places.

That makes them too tired to take any exercise or do cooking, so they just buy something to feed their body taking not much consideration of nutrition. What's worse, many people have to stay up all night to do the work undone during the day, which is a cause for people feeling weary.

7. Do you think modern people do enough regular exercise?

No, the majority of working people don't have enough regular exercise. For one thing, they are too busy with their work to have exercise; for the other, there are not much space for them to do exercise. Tired of working, whenever they have time, many will choose to have a good sleep or relax at home. For people having retired from work, they have enough time, but they could only go to public parks or squares, maybe far away, which is inconvenient. As a result, not many people keep regular exercise.

8. What are some things that people do(or can do/ could do) in order to get exercise?

There are various kinds of things people can do to get exercise. Doing skipping is convenient and efficient exercise that could be done every day at home. The only thing needed is a suitable skipping rope, and there is no much need of space. During weekends or holidays, people can enjoy themselves hiking or bicycling, at the same time, getting close to nature to enjoy the fresh air. What's important is that people should develop a habit to do exercise and keep doing it.

12. A party

Describe a party you would like to arrange for your family

You should say:

Who you would like to invite to the party

When and where you like to hold the party

What you (or your guests) would do at the party

and explain why you would hold this party or what preparations you would do for the party

Sample:

In fact, I have a long-cherished wish: I want to arrange a New Year Eve Party for my family.

The party would be arranged on the eve of the Spring Festival. Because, in my country, this is an important festival for people to get reunion and we will have enough time to enjoy our party. As to the location, I think the party should be held in a spacious box in a KTV or a hotel room so that we wouldn't be busy preparing dishes or washing plates. Before the party, I would buy some flowers and ribbons, and I would decorate the room in person. Of course, all of my family members would be invited to the party.

At the party, we would sing and dance as well as have some delicious food. We would certainly eat our traditional food—dumplings, meaning the transition from the old year to the new. Besides, among other dishes, fish would also be an indispensable one—in Chinese, the pronunciation of fish makes it a homophone for "surpluses", so fish is one of our favorite cuisines. I would also elaborate some interesting games to amuse everybody. Both the elderly and the young would be entertained. You see, the pace of life is becoming increasingly fast, and I find that I

seldom have much time to accompany or to communicate with my families. So this is the party I would like to arrange for my family and I am sure we would have a great time at the party, but it's difficult to achieve this wish because all the hotels are crowded on the eves of Spring Festival.

Sample2:

I would like to arrange a birthday party for my grandma who will be ninety years old in the coming September.

Healthy as she is, my grandma enjoys playing mahjong and watching opera. She once said the happiest thing is to have family around, so I will plan a big family unite for her. I have informed family members of the plan, and children are encouraged to prepare to give performances. Besides, an opera troupe will be invited to entertain her and other elder guests.

The schedule of the plan will be that: the opera troupe will be arranged to perform in the morning when guests will come to congratulate her. It's traditional here in China, little children shall kneel down to wish her a happy long life, and she will surely give the children red pocket. Then, a big birthday cake will be placed on the table, after all the people at present singing the birthday song for her, she will blow out the candle. Buffet will be prepared for the guests, so guests will be free to eat while enjoying performance. However, a table of traditional food will be prepared too, as grandma and other elder guests may be not used to the way of eating. Noodles meaning a long life will be a necessity, of course. During the meal, I will act as a host and get children to perform, to take part in games like "get stool" and puzzle, which, no doubt, will make grandma laugh a lot.

After the meal, tables will be cleared up for grandma and guests to play mahjong. At night, fireworks will be arranged to entertain grandma, as she loves the beautiful scene.

I expect to bring grandma a special birthday, when all the family get together to share happiness.

PART 3: Discussion topics

1. On what occasions (or when) do people in China have a party?

There are several occasions for Chinese people to have a party. The most common one is wedding party where all relatives and friends of the couple get together to witness the happy event; another one is birthday party, which may have a big difference for different birthday persons; the third one may be the celebrating for one's moving into a new house when relatives and friends will conic to the house to share happiness with the host.

2. When people have a party in China, do you think it's the same as a party in foreign countries?

Parties in China are different from those in foreign countries. Here we hold a

party to welcome our relatives and friends to share our happiness, for which we may prepare food days ahead. So a party can be considered as a big event to the host, kind of. But in foreign countries, giving a party is not such a serious thing, people can buy food and drink to treat the guests, who may even be strangers dropping by, which is impossible to happen in China in the past. But now, more young Chinese tend to have that kind of parties.

3. What do people in China do when they have a party?

In the past, guests would take part in activities like playing cards and mahjong; people haven't seen for a long time may prefer to have a talk; children may watch cartoon together. Now, there are other options. At some parties, people can enjoy the food while appreciating the performance of a music band; children will be organized to play games where they can receive gifts.

4. In China, are parties today the same as parties 20 or 30 years ago?

No, there have been several changes to holding parties in China. People used to cook food and treat guests at home, but now an increasing number of people tend to have parties at hotels or restaurants, saving them much effort to prepare food for guest. Besides, there may be special performances arranged, such as singing and magic during the celebration.

5. Are parties for old (or older) people the same as parties for young people?

Of course, the parties won't be the same. For old people, they would rather have a meal together, talk about family affairs and relax. For young people who are energetic, they will surely do something for fun. Dancing to the music and singing is normal, and competing in the video games is not bad. They enjoy themselves to the most.

6. Are parties in rural parts of China the same as parties in the city?

No, there are some differences because of difference in location. Just take wedding as an example. In rural area, most people still invite their relatives and friends to their house to have a gorgeous meal, and they will get married in traditional ways. Sometimes, people set off fireworks to celebrate wedding. While in cities relatives and friends are invited to a hotel, where they witness a couple getting married with a professional person hosting the marriage. Performances like dancing and magic are arranged to entertain the guests.

7. On what occasions do people (in China) come together for family gatherings?

There are several occasions for people to have family gatherings. Spring Festival, no need to say, is one of the cases. It's a tradition for Chinese people to get together on a day or days when a couple taking their children to go to visit their parents. Another day is the Mid-autumn Day when family have a meal and eat moon-cakes together. Other occasions like wedding and birthday also gather people together for celebration.

8. What would you say is the importance (or the value) of these celebrations?

Celebration is a way to have relatives and friends get together to share

happiness. We Chinese believe, having more people around, there will be more happiness. Also these provide a great opportunity for them to have fun together, for now people are busy with their work, and there are fewer chances for them to relax.

9. Do people in the countryside have the same kinds of family celebrations as people in the cities?

The difference of family celebrations between people in countryside and city is not so obvious. When people come across happy events, like having newborns, birthday, marriage and so on, they will invite and offer relatives and friends a dinner. However, people in cities tend to have the meal in restaurants, for they do not have enough room at home to treat all the guests, as people in the countryside do.

10. Why do people celebrate festivals?

Well, people celebrate festivals to follow the tradition as well as enjoying the pleasure. Each festival has its own history and meaning. For example, the dragon-boat racing is a tradition on the Dragon Boat Festival which was to memorize the famous poet Quyan, and now it's a time for people taking part in or enjoying the racing. Even communities can hold a race, not so professional but with much fun, to entertain people.

11. Do you personally feel that traditional celebrations/ festivals are important? (Why/ Why not?)

Yes, I love the celebrations, for traditional festivals are an important part of our culture. Through the celebrations, young generation will learn about and appreciate their culture. Besides, particular activities are held during the festivals, which are special and bring people more colourful life.

12. Would you like to see more international festivals?

Yeah, I'd like to see as many international festivals as possible. Each nation has its old traditional festivals which are special and somehow attractive. I'm curious of new things, festivals are no exception. I heard of HOLI DAY in India when people, males and females, smear colourful paints on each other to welcome the spring, which must be interesting.

13. Describe a rule in school you agree or disagree

You should say:

What the rule is

Why the rule is needed

How the rule is enforced

and explain why you agree or disagree the rule

Sample:

Well, I would like to talk about the dormitory sanitary inspection rule. In our school, just like most other schools, there are many rules. Some of them, according to me, should be cancelled while others are reasonable and indispensable. For example, the dormitory sanitary inspection rule.

According to this rule, students in the Students' Union and some of our

teachers would inspect our dormitory sanitary twice a week and rank on our sanitary condition. Some students don't agree to this rule because they think it is their right to decide how often to clean their own dormitories; it shouldn't be interfered by others. But I strongly agree with this rule.

We all want to be comfortable and relaxed in the dorm room. However, some students are so lazy that they seldom clean their rooms if there's no inspection. And some boys even put their dirty socks under their beds for many days, making their dorms look like a war zone: messy, dirty and smelly. It makes other students uncomfortable and unbearable. In contrast, with the inspection and under the teachers' supervisor, they are compelled to clean their dorms at least twice a week. They themselves would find it more pleasant to be living in a cleaner environment. So I strongly support this rule and think it is indispensable for ensuring that our living environment is kept clean.

Sample2:

I'd like to talk about a rule in primary and secondary schools, which requires students to wear uniforms on school days.

It is common in China, when they go to school students are made to wear uniforms where the school badge or logo is printed. In this way, students are identified easily which schools they belong to when they are out of school. Besides, students, regardless of their family and background, wear the same clothes, and they won't compare their clothing, which is a main concern of schools operating the rule. Many parents especially those whose families are with low income, approval of that, since their children can better concentrate on their study without the trouble being looked down because of their wearing. Students themselves, however, do not agree with the idea, for one thing, they dislike the style of uniform which shows no personality. For another, they think they can compete with each other in everything, like their schoolbags or shoes if they intend to. Therefore, it is meaningless to do that. Other parents disapprove the wearing of uniform, too, as it is impossible for uniforms to fit all students who are of diverse size and are growing at different speed.

I think it's better for students to wear uniforms, which show their identification. What's more, students now enjoy priority in determining the style of their uniform. Having considered the opinion of students, many schools make compromise and students are allowed to purchase unified clothes as their uniform for their class as a group. So students will enjoy wearing uniforms, rather than being required to.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Do you think the rule is important?

Yes, I think the rule is of great importance to make a comfortable and safe living environment for students. Living in clean dormitory can keep students in good mood and protect them from some diseases caused due to unhygienic conditions.

2. Is the rule suitable for all students?

The rule is suitable for students over thirteen years old who are physically capable to do cleaning by themselves. Some primary school pupils are not old enough to take care of themselves, besides not many of them go to boarding schools. However, all students should be taught to keep their place clean and tidy, as it's a good habit.

3. What rules are there in your school?

Cutting down the power of all dormitories is one of the rules in secondary school, which aims to get students go to bed at 11 o'clock. The rule is made to make sure students have enough sleeping, however, causing many students to be short-lighted. As many students cannot finish their homework before bed time, they have to do it lying on bed lighted by electric torch whose light is weak. Therefore, schools should take that into consideration and come up with an effective solution.

4. How do people obey the rules?

People are taught to obey the rules at young age. They keep them in mind and do as demanded. Gradually, the rules become somehow the standard for living. In general, people obey the rules just by following the standard.

5. Should students be involved in the making of the rules?

I am for that. Getting older, students gradually have own their ideas. And there are some rules against their will. For example, many primary and middle schools have students wear uniform at school, making a great many students feel no freedom and personality. To this matter, I think schools can make compromise which will enable teenagers to enjoy characteristic happiness.

6. What rules are there people should obey in the society?

The society is made of rules and laws which keep people in harmony and things running smoothly. Traffic rules are an important part of the rules. In daily life, people need to obey the traffic rules, without which the traffic will be in a mess, and people will be in great danger and difficulty to get to where they want to go.

7. Are rules different between primary school and secondary school?

The rules in primary schools are sure not to be the same as those in secondary schools. As students are in different growing phases, there are particular requirements for them. Pupils at primary schools are required to be honest, to respect the old, to develop a good habit. In contrast, secondary school students should have self-discipline, to be hard-working and to take care of others.

8. Are there any rules in company?

Surely there are rules in companies. First of all, all employees should be punctual. That is to say, they should arrive at the company no later and leave it no earlier at set time, or they will be punished. Besides, they should complete their work well and on time. Sometimes, they have to be transferred

from one section to another, one branch to another as long as needed by work.

14. Childhood story

Describe a story that someone told you when you were a child

You should say:

Who told you the story

When and where someone told you the story

What the story was

and explain why you still remember the story

Sample:

I'd like to retell a story of three monks. Have you heard of the story? Well it may not be familiar to you, but most people in China must have heard of it. When I was about 8 years old, my head teacher in my primary school told it to me for the first time. At that time I quarreled with one of my group members while preparing for a role play and decided to quit.

In her office, our head teacher didn't blame us; instead, she told us this story. It goes like this: A young monk lived a simple life in a temple on top of a hill. The abbot of the temple arranged the young monk to fetch two buckets of water every day and he did so. Soon, another monk came to the temple and the first monk shared the job with him: they carried the water with a pole, only one bucket one time. The arrival of a third monk prompted everyone to expect that someone else will take on the chore. Consequently, no one fetched water though everybody is thirsty. At night, a rat came to steal food and knocked the candleholder, leading to a fire in the temple. The three monks finally united together to put out the fire. From then on, they cooperated with one another to fetch water.

Our teacher tried to awaken us to the importance of cooperation. We were led to live a harmonious life with our pals. Until now, I can remember the story as well as our teacher clearly.

Sample2:

The story my mother told me when I was seven years old has great influence on me. It was about the experience of a little monkey who, for the first time by himself, went down the mountain where he lives, leaving deep impression on me.

It's autumn, time for harvest. When he goes through a stretch of land with fully-grown corns, little monkey selects the biggest one and carries it back home. On half way, he comes across a field planted with water-melons. Attracted by the delicious water-melons, he has to throw away the corn to carry the water-melon he picks. On the foothill, however, he catches a sight of a lovely bunny, which he runs after immediately. Finally, the bunny runs into bush missing. Little monkey goes back home with empty-hands, for he loses the water-melon on chasing.

Mum told me the story when I asked her for advice. At that time I was, like the little monkey, choosing and quitting what I tried to do. Together with my

friends, I went to play volleyball, which I gave up after a month's time, for I thought I was not tall enough to play volleyball. Later I took up dancing since I like dressing up and dancing to the music, which, however I stuck to for three weeks. Then I thought about learning drawing or handwriting. Finishing the story, Mum told me whatever I decided to do, I should keep on or I would end up learning nothing. From then on, I am more careful of choosing what to do and hold on to the end as long as I make up my mind.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. Why do children's stories always have happy endings?

Stories are made up to bring happiness to children, so, in general, most stories have happy endings. Stories lead children to experience the goodness of human, which enables them to be cheerful and hopeful of their life. For example, the Ugly Duckling tells children that one will be a beautiful swan no matter how ugly he is. The belief offers children the courage to face up to the hardship and difficulties in their growth.

2. Should we tell children the reality when telling a story?

No, we needn't. There is no need to push children to know the reality which they haven't experienced. Their understanding of the world is limited, and, if they are frightened by reality, they may avoid the real world. Basing on their observation and experience of daily life, they will gradually know the difference between the world in a story and that of reality.

3. Why there are bad and good guys in the stories?

For one thing, from stories children can learn that there are both good and bad people living in the world. For another, bad guys are designed to contrast with the good, so as to show the kindness of the good. For example, in the story of Cinderella, Cinderella is kind and optimistic though she is mistreated by her evil step-mother.

4. Is it necessary for children to have bedtime stories?

Yes, bedtime stories can keep children quiet and fall to sleep in the plot of stories. There are many advantages of telling bedtime stories. Firstly, stories enlighten children's understanding, imagination and logical thinking. Secondly, story-telling is a wonderful time for parents to make communication with their kids, giving kids comfort and sense of security.

5. What can children learn from stories?

Children can learn a lot from stories. According to Freud, stories pass on human wisdom, social custom and virtue of real world to children in a way they can understand. Children experience life through stories, in which they can vent their unhappiness, acquire wisdom and be hopeful of the future.

6. Are there any differences between stories now and those in the past?

Well, there are. Stories now enjoy a wide collection of sources. Fable is a major form of stories in the past which aims to educate children and makes them to meditate on the ideas the stories transmit. Nowadays, integrated with social knowledge, stories are more colorful, teaching children in various ways. For instance, on hearing the fairy story of three stars, children can learn the function of traffic lights unconsciously.

15. A TV program you want to watch again

You should say:

What it was about?

When did you watch it?

Why do you want to watch it again?

Sample:

I'd like to talk about the TV program, Chinese Dream Show broadcast on Zhejiang CZTV, that I watched two years ago. I watched it on its first broadcasting on April 2nd, 2011. I, at first, had no idea what the program was, but I'd known much about it from advertising. As advertised, the program originates from a BBC Saturday night entertainment television program called Tonight's the Night. As the original show, it based around making audience members' wishes come true, featuring ordinary people living out their fantasies for real. The program aims to help those ordinary but special people-for they enjoy great interest in performing- realize their dreams. At the same time, some celebrities would be invited to help the dream pursuers. I want to watch it again as it moves me a lot, making me be more hopeful of life.

I still remember the several dream pursuers and their performance. One of them was a lovely girl who dreamed of performing dancing in a formal stage. The 8-year-old girl was active and she learned Melbourne Shuffle Dance by watching videos. Her father, who had much influence on her. was also a lover of dancing, and he registered to the program, hoping to make her dream conic true. One of the hosts with a team dressed up to be a canton character and went to the girl's school to pick her up. The girl enjoyed dancing in the activity organized by the team, and she was rather surprised when the host took off the costume and invited her to take part in the program to be broadcast a week later. A well-known dancing teacher was invited to instruct her for the following week before her final show on the stage. That day, the girl with a big smile on her face shared an amazing dance with the audience. Her father sitting in the audience could not help crying for joy. His daughter's dream was somehow also a dream of his.

I kept watching the program which is on show every Friday, for months and was moved again and again by the stories of the dream pursuers. Then as my favourite host of the program was transferred to another program, I gradually gave up the program.

PART 3: Discussion topics:

1. How often do you watch TV?

Well, I rarely watch TV. I'm studying in university and there are no TVs in dormitory. But I do watch TV programs rebroadcasted on the internet. But when I am at home, I prefer to watch TV, by myself or with my parents.

2. Are there many advertisements during TV programs?

Yes, there are. Advertisements, in general, are broadcasted between two TV programs, lasting for about half an hour. Also, there are ones played at intervals of a TV program, lasting for three to five minutes each time.

3. Do you like the ads?

I don't like most of the ads. Actually I hate the ads when they appear and stop my enjoying of a program. During times like that, I would turn to another channel for a few minutes till the end of ads. However, some ads are special and interesting, such as those advertising new products or films. I think ads are an effective means of spreading information.

4. People in which age groups like the program? Why?

The program caters for all age groups. Because audiences are interested in witnessing people like themselves to achieve their dreams. I heard loads of people, young and old, men and women, talking about the program on restaurants, buses and markets since its first broadcast. Before that, only famous or talented people, like actors, authors or professors, would appear in programs. But then ordinary people took the role and they came to the program to have their dream achieved, which was rather inspiring.

5. What types of TV program are popular in China?

There are various popular programs people like. For example, many recreational programs like talent shows and singing competitions attract loads of audience. Also a variety of quiz shows are in favor with people. Of course, TV series are a great help to many people, in particular women who are crazy about Korean dramas and those in English.

6. Do young people like the same TV shows as the elderly do?

I don't think so. Young people would prefer entertainment programs, some of which are amusing, some are thrilling. Young people are in favor of fashion and unusual experience; they are fans of famous artists. That's why many entertainment programs prefer to invite celebrities to their program. However, old people are not so energetic and many of them prefer traditional programs. For example, my grandpa likes watching cross talking and programs telling the history when he's free.

7. What kinds of programs do children like?

Most children prefer cartoons and interesting programs for children. The CCTV 14 in China is a special channel broadcasting programs only for children. There are educational TV series of animals and stories about young heroes in history. There are wonderful cartoons from home and abroad. Besides that, programs like making craftwork are on show to teach children.

8. Should the government restrict ads?

The government should take measures to restrict ads. For one thing, many ads are misleading or are exaggerated, and many children are attracted to buy toys and foods, some of which are even harmful to them. For another, the great amount of ads disturbs people in enjoying programs, reducing people's interest in TV programs. Therefore, it's high time for government to supervise the ads and limit the time for broadcasting ads.

9. Most people dislike ads and think that they're just a means to make money, what do you think?

I agree that most of the ads are made to make profit for manufacturers. Various products and services are introduced through ads to audience, attracting their attention and making them to buy the certain products.

However, there are other ads for public welfare. For instance, ads were created to spread the harmfulness of smoking. Ads like that are educational.

NEW TOPICS

1. Something special you saved money to buy

You should say
What it is?
How did you save money?
How long you've been saving for it

Sample:

Days ago I bought a gold ring for my Mom as a gift for the coming New Year. I'd planned to buy gifts for my parents since I graduated from university and got a job last July. I'd saved for the past months to buy the ring for two thousand Yuan.

Mom was a charming woman, yet she never dressed up. Mom has a good taste of wearing, and I was always praised by the beautiful clothes she made or bought for me. However, she seldom had new clothes for herself. She said there's no need for her to dress up as she had to work. Decades of hard-working makes her appear much older than she is. Eighteen years ago when I was five. Dad left to work in the city far away from home, leaving Mom and me at home. From then on. Mom took up all the farm work, because of which her hands are really calloused. Once on holding her rough hands, my tears could not help falling down. I then determined to work hard and made a better living for her and Dad

Months ago. one of my friends mentioned that she'd buy golden ornaments as the price of gold was falling. Then the idea of buying a ring for Mom came to my mind with the friend. I searched several shops and decided on one I liked best. A good ring cost thousands, a little too expensive for me. However, once decided. I would try my best to do it. Then I saved aside five hundred Yuan each month from my salary and finally I had the one I chose.

I haven't told her about it because I want it to be a surprise. I just couldn't wait to see her face when she sees the ring. Maybe she will cry because she is very emotional. I think we should give the best things to our loved ones. Although we might need to save money for a while, it's worth doing it.

2. A beautiful garden or park you went to

Describe a beautiful park you went to you should say
Where is the park?
When did you go there?
What did it look like?
Why did you think it's beautiful?

Sample:

Last April my friend and I visited the Taiziwan Park, which is well-known for the fantastic tulip planted there. Early April is the wonderful time to appreciate tulip when it reaches a peak of its blooming period. Generally, it welcomes thousands of tourists from all over the world at a single day. The fantastic scenery makes it the most beautiful attraction in Hangzhou.

Taiziwan Park is an open park, where you can find clean water with wooden bridges, old-structured windmill situated by the cherry blossom, and particularly miles of grass with various of tulip blossoming. In a word, words fail to express the beauty of the scene.

The tulip is always a hot concern for people in Hangzhou. Early in February, series of reports about tulip appeared on the mass media. I read one of the reports, accidentally, which was about some guarding dogs of the park. It's said that more than 500,000 grains of tulip bulbs had been planted, and by the time, they started to sprout. Interestingly, they were the favor of wild animals, like mouse and boars. Therefore, several guarding dogs had been trained to cruise around the park to protect the fragile bulbs.

So, on a Sunday morning, a fun day, we rode to the Taiziwan Park. After we got there, we soon lost ourselves by the pretty flowers designed by gardeners. Every visitor, surely, was surprised at the special designs, which made the flowers much more charming. We followed the flow of people walking along the path and, now and then, we could see photographers busily taking pictures of couples. There is no better place than there. I have to say, for couples to take photos for their wedding.

I'm looking forward to the coming spring when I can visit the park again.

3. A friend you haven't seen for a long time

Describe an occasion when you met a friend you haven't seen for a long time

You should say:

Who this friend is

Why you did not see him or her for a long time

where did you meet him or her

and explain how you felt at the time when you see him or her.

Sample:

Last month, I went to my secondary school to meet my best friend, Lily, who's been abroad for two years. Actually we went to the same schools from primary to secondary. Then we attended colleges in different cities, during the time we kept in touch by phone. We always stayed together on holidays when we returned from colleges. Two years ago, when we graduated, she was recruited by an international trading company and was sent to work abroad. We were busy with our work though we sometimes sent emails to each other. In the mails, she always shared with me the interesting experiences she had. Yet I know it's not easy for her. She's a very optimistic person and she has given me a lot of encouragement since our childhood and I've learned a lot from her.

Lily only stayed for a week after her return, and there were so many things she had to do. We decided to meet at the secondary school as she missed it

very much I arrived a bit earlier, and I was somehow nervous as I worried that what if we had nothing to talk about, as we hadn't seen for so long time. I hardly recognize her when she waved and rushed to me. Enthusiastic as she always is. she gave me a big hug and made fun of me as she always did. which made me laugh Then we walked around the campus and chatted happily as we used to.

Time and distance can't change our friendship which I will cherish all my life.

4. Old things at your home

Describe an (interesting) old object that your family has kept for a long time.
You should say what it is
where did your family get it
how long your family has kept it
and explain why you think it is interesting.

Sample:

I want to talk about an antique teapot in my home. It's actually from my grandmother as part of her dowry. So it's over sixty years old. We don't exactly know if it can worth a lot of money or just an ordinary teapot, but it carries the family history, which makes it very special. My grandpa liked drinking tea and he always showed me how to make tea with the teapot, telling me the essentials of making tasty tea. I used to make tea for him after I was eight years ago. That's why I have a great interest in tea. I think it's interesting for it's part of happy memory I had with my grandpa.

It's a white teapot with blue flower painting. It looks very delicate and beautiful. The spout of it is a little tainted yellow from the tea leaves. So it's easy to tell it really had served as a teapot for the family for a long time. The teapot is almost intact except for a gap on its spout which was made by me when I accidentally dropped it as the water was too hot. I still remember the day. I cried for being afraid of being punished, as I knew it's a treasure to grandpa. Grandpa, yet asked me if I got a bum. He told me that I was more important to him than anything else.

Now, we don't use it for tea but put it on the shelf to display at home after grandpa passed away. I hope that it can still be there for our next generation. I think it's nice to have something passed on from our ancestors.

5. A historical building that impressed you

Describe a historic place that you visited.
You should say
where it was
when you went there
what it was like
and explain how you felt about the building.

Sample:

I'd like to talk about the main building of the temple of heaven in Beijing, a magnificent and colorful construction called the hall of prayer for good harvest, where the emperors would make offerings to heaven and pray for good harvests.

It has a long history because it was originally built in Ming dynasty. I went to this place two years ago and was amazed at the neat traditional architecture.

You could find many photos on the internet featuring this building. The cleverly constructed building relies only on carpentry, with no nails employed. The whole building was built on three levels of marble stone base, which stands for the ladder to heaven. The top is round, three-tiered and with blue tiled roofs. Actually it's not common to see blue roofed traditional buildings in China because blue is representing the Heaven. The bottom walls are all in red, which is the traditional Chinese color, symbolizing good luck.

The tour guide told us many interesting elements of the hall. The Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests has four inner, twelve middle and twelve outer pillars, representing the four seasons, twelve months and twelve traditional Chinese hours respectively. Combined together, the twelve middle and twelve outer pillars represent the traditional solar term. Inside the hall the ceiling and walls are covered with lucky pictures in a variety of bright colors, which indicate the abundant harvest the place will bring to the people.

I think it's a very meaningful historic building for both history and culture. We should definitely protect it and help our children to arouse interest in history learning.

6. Something (a book) you enjoy reading

Describe something you like reading

what it is

what content it has

when you started reading it

and explain why you like it

Sample: China daily

I want to talk about an English newspaper in China called China Daily, the state-run publication. Established in 1981, it's the first newspaper written in English besides the Chinese version in China. The newspaper covers news at home and abroad, ranging from business, sports, life, culture, etc. In another word, it covers every aspect of people's daily life.

While I was in middle school, my English teacher subscribed this paper and put it on the book shelf for us students to read. I liked the column about Travel & Food best, from which I knew lots of interesting places around the world, as well as delicious food. At that time, it was too difficult for me because of my limited vocabulary. However, because of the vivid photos, I could guess what the articles were talking about. I keep the habit of reading this paper till now. That I passed the English exams successfully in college was largely due to the reading.

It's a very good newspaper for both foreigners who want to know China and for Chinese who want to learn English. A year ago, I stopped subscribing to this paper because I found the online version. It has editions in three languages: Chinese, English, and French, but I usually read the English version. I'm so thankful that there's such a good English newspaper in China.