



General Intermediate

Unit 7: The best time of your life

Objectives

- Grammar: Verb patterns
- Vocabulary: Body language
- Everyday English: You poor thing!
- Reading: Gordonstoun – the school Prince Charles loathed
- Listening: Ann: Arguing for or against





1. Look at the photo. How does it fit the unit title?
2. Read the quote. Do you agree with it? Why? Why not?

**‘Youth is wasted on
the young.’**

George Bernard Shaw

1. Answer the following questions.

- What are/were your best and worst subject at school?
- Have you taken a lot of exams in your life? How did you do?
- How do you feel about exams? Are you good at revising? Do you get nervous?

1. Read and listen to three people describing their worst ever exam. Answer these questions.



7.1

1. Why does Biddy hate making fish pie?
2. Why is Ted pleased to have had a terrible exam result?
3. What was Winston's dream? What stopped him from fulfilling it?

2. Look at the highlighted verb patterns. Which take the infinitive

3. Read these sentences about the people. Which *two* verbs or phrases can fill the gaps?

1. **Biddy** usually had no problem with _____ exams.

- a. taking ~~b. to pass~~ c. passing

2. She _____ to forget the disastrous cookery exam.

- a. wants b. tries c. can't

3. Nowadays, she _____ cooking fish pie.

- a. can't stand b. refuses c. doesn't enjoy

4. **Ted** _____ getting 9% in his exam.

- a. remembers b. was shocked c. doesn't regret

5. His tutors _____ him continue with his studies.

- a. let b. made c. persuaded

6. He _____ his students not to behave like him.

- a. tells b. warns c. makes

7. Winston _____ taking math exams.

- a. needed b. didn't mind c. used to like

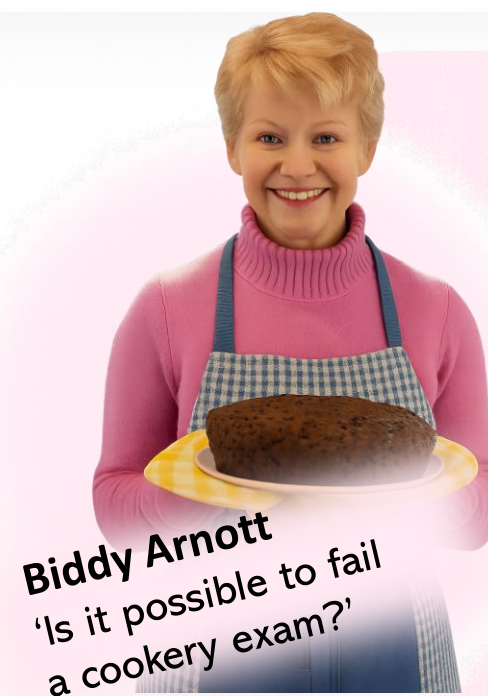
8. He _____ to study maths.

- a. stooped b. was encouraged c. was expected

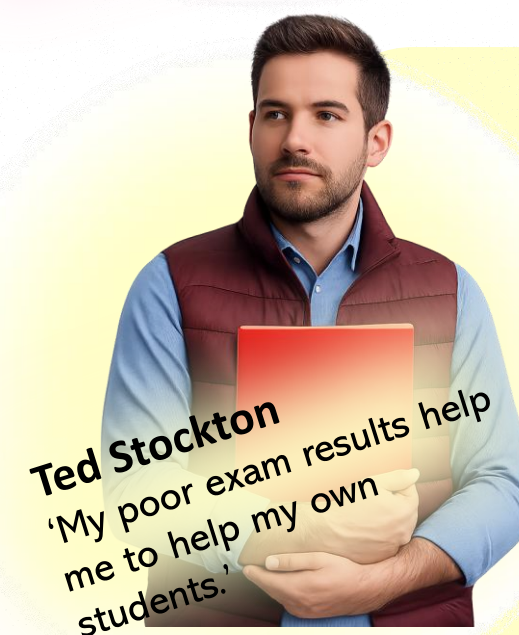
9. He _____ to become a TV reporter.

- a. made b. decided c. was advised

My worst exam result!



'It's years since I took any exams, but I can still remember feeling sick with fear before each one. I was a bit of a "nerdy" student, I always did my homework and revised hard, so, usually, I didn't find it too difficult to pass exams – that's why the memory of the one exam I failed makes me shudder to this day. It was my domestic science exam – at least that's what they used to call it in those days – it was, in fact, a cookery exam. And who could possibly fail that? I know we all ever learned to make in class were ginger biscuits and Spaghetti Bolognese, but I'm still not sure how I managed to fail. All I can remember is that, one minute the fish pie was in my hands, the next, it was face down on the floor. I tried to pick up the bits and arrange them in another dish. But it was hopeless, and I knew it. I failed miserably – my worst ever result. Ironically, today, I am quite a good cook – I just hate making fish pie!'



'I'm a teacher and I think it's good to be able to say to my shocked students: "I once got 9% in an exam." That was what I scored in the chemistry exam at the end of my first year at university. My other results weren't much better, I only just managed to get enough marks overall to allow me to continue to the second year. Actually, the dismal mark was no surprise – I'd had a ball in my first year and neglected my studies. But 9%! My tutors expected me to do better than that. The good thing was that I realized that my choice of degree was a big mistake and I decided to change course and study English literature. A great decision because it resulted in me becoming a teacher, and when I want to warn my students about the dangers of not working hard I tell them about my 9%!'



'I wasn't a star pupil, but I was good at taking exams. I was particularly good at maths and physics and I dreamed of becoming an astronaut. I hoped to be the first black guy on Mars – failing that, a stockbroker in the City and make millions. Our maths teacher let us work at our own speed, and by the time I was 14 I was years ahead of the rest of my class. My teacher encouraged me to take the Advanced-level maths exam at 14, but I was worried about being called a "swot" so I refused to. I stopped working so hard. Then, when I finally took the exam at 18, I failed miserably. I could no longer look forward to being an astronaut or a stockbroker. I studied politics and sociology instead, and finally became a TV news reporter. I love it, but I'd have preferred to walk on Mars.'

4. Listen and complete the lines about Biddy, Ted, and Winston. Who do you think is speaking?  7.2

- 1. 'You're such a swot! You never _____ ! Come and play football with us!'
- 2. 'Sir! We _____ why you got such a low mark.'
- 3. 'Oh my goodness! What a mess! You have _____ now.'
- 4. 'Good evening! Talks have broken down with the train drivers and they are _____ on strike next week.'
- 5. 'I _____ it. It was an accident.'
- 6. 'OK, I hope you all _____ the essay on the romantic poets.'

LANGUAGE FOCUS

1. Match a pattern in A with a sentence in B from the texts.
- a. DiCaprio **lives** in an eco-friendly apartment in New York.
 - b. He **lived** in Germany for a short time as a child.
 - c. He's **lived** in his New York apartment since 2008.
 - d. He's **lived** in LA, New York, and Malibu.

A	B
verb + -ing	I don't know how I managed to fail .
verb + to	My tutors expected me to do better.
verb + sb + to	I hate making fish pie.
verb + sb + infinitive (without to)	The memory makes me shudder .
adjective + to	I was good at taking exams.
preposition + -ing	I didn't find it difficult to pass exams.

2. Find more examples in the texts about Biddy, Ted, and Winston.

My worst exam result!



Biddy Arnott
'Is it possible to fail a cookery exam?'

'It's years since I took any exams, but I can still remember feeling sick with fear before each one. I was a bit of a "nerdy" student, I always did my homework and revised hard, so, usually, I didn't find it too difficult to pass exams – that's why the memory of the one exam I failed makes me shudder to this day. It was my domestic science exam – at least that's what they used to call it in those days – it was, in fact, a cookery exam. And who could possibly fail that? I know we all ever learned to make in class were ginger biscuits and Spaghetti Bolognese, but I'm still not sure how I managed to fail. All I can remember is that, one minute the fish pie was in my hands, the next, it was face down on the floor. I tried to pick up the bits and arrange them in another dish. But it was hopeless, and I knew it. I failed miserably – my worst ever result. Ironically, today, I am quite a good cook – I just hate making fish pie!'



Ted Stockton
'My poor exam results help me to help my own students.'

'I'm a teacher and I think it's good to be able to say to my shocked students: "I once got 9% in an exam." That was what I scored in the chemistry exam at the end of my first year at university. My other results weren't much better, I only just managed to get enough marks overall to allow me to continue to the second year. Actually, the dismal mark was no surprise – I'd had a ball in my first year and neglected my studies. But 9%! My tutors expected me to do better than that. The good thing was that I realized that my choice of degree was a big mistake and I decided to change course and study English literature. A great decision because it resulted in me becoming a teacher, and when I want to warn my students about the dangers of not working hard I tell them about my 9%!'



Winston Laurent
'I didn't want to be called a "swot"'

'I wasn't a star pupil, but I was good at taking exams. I was particularly good at maths and physics and I dreamed of becoming an astronaut. I hoped to be the first black guy on Mars – failing that, a stockbroker in the City and make millions. Our maths teacher let us work at our own speed, and by the time I was 14 I was years ahead of the rest of my class. My teacher encouraged me to take the Advanced-level maths exam at 14, but I was worried about being called a "swot" so I refused to. I stopped working so hard. Then, when I finally took the exam at 18, I failed miserably. I could no longer look forward to being an astronaut or a stockbroker. I studied politics and sociology instead, and finally became a TV news reporter. I love it, but I'd have preferred to walk on Mars.'

5. What is the difference in meaning between the pairs of sentences?
Match with the illustrations.

1. He **remembered to email** the report.
2. He **remembered emailing** the report.
3. They **stopped talking** to each other.
4. They **stopped to talk** to each other.



1. Is being a teenager one of the best or worst times of life? Think of three advantages, and three disadvantages.
2. Read the conversation between three friends, Nina (N), Lee (L) and Tanya (T), talking about their teenage years. Complete it with the verb in the correct form.

‘I was a horrible teenager!’

N: I feel bad about it now – I was a horrible teenager. I made my poor mum and dad 1. _____ (suffer) so much. I didn’t mean to – but my friends were all-important and mum and dad were just embarrassing.

L: Tell me about it! I’ll never forget 2. _____ (go) on this awful picnic with mine – I was about 14, I think.

T: Didn’t you want to go?

L: No, they forced me to. We drove to the countryside and stopped 3. _____ (have) our picnic by the river ... my dad put a rug down on the grass and wanted me 4. _____ (join) them, but I refused to. I wouldn’t get out of the car.

T: Why not?

L: Oh you know, I felt embarrassed. I didn’t like the idea of 5. _____ (sit) with my mum and dad on a rug, eating egg and tomato sandwiches. It just wasn’t cool.

T: Your poor mum and dad.

N: Well, I remember 6. _____ (stand) in our kitchen yelling, ‘I hate you! I hate you!’ at my parents.

T: Why? What had they done? Or, more to the point, what had you done?

N: Oh, I’d persuaded them 7. _____ (let) me 8. _____ (go) to this big party – and it was near my exams and I promised 9. _____ (be) home by midnight and ...

T: And of course you weren’t!

N: No, it was two o’clock and they kept 10. _____ (call) me and I didn’t answer my phone. I was grounded for a month.

L: Well, I remember when I’d just passed my driving test and I begged my mum 11. _____ (let) me 12. _____ (borrow) her car and I crashed it – turned it over in a ditch.

T: Whoa! You two were horrible! Me, I was such a boring teenager. I didn’t behave badly at all – my mum and dad were kind of cool – so maybe I didn’t need to.



3. Listen and check. Who was the well-behaved teenager? Why? What occasions of bad behaviour do the others remember?



4. Share stories from your teenage years.

5. Complete the sentences so that they are true for you BUT make two of them false. Guess the false ones!

I'm thinking of
doing a Master.

I thought you wanted to
study a new course of
studies.

- I'm thinking of ...
- I really enjoy ...
- I'm no good at ...
- I'll never forget ...
- I must remember ...
- I sometimes find it difficult ...
- My parents made me ... when I was young.
- I'm looking forward to ...

SPOKEN ENGLISH - 'I refused to!' – the reduced infinitive

1. In conversation, it is not necessary to use the full infinitive it is understood from the context.

A: 'Did you go on the picnic?'

B: 'No, I refused to!'

A: 'Can you come to lunch next Saturday?'

B: 'Oh yes, I'd love to.'

2. Find four examples in the conversation in 2.

3. Reply to A, using the verb in brackets and a reduced infinitive.

1. A: Are you taking Nick to the airport?

B: Well, I _____ (offer), but he said I _____ (not need).

2. A: Did you post my letter?

B: Oh sorry, I _____ (forget).

3. A: Were they a difficult team to beat?

B: Yes, but we _____ (manage).

4. A: I can't go out with you this evening. Sorry

B: Oh, but you _____ (promised).

5. A: Do you think you'll apply for that job?

B: No, I've _____ (decide / not).

6. A: Why did you give Lily my number?

B: Because she _____ (ask me).

Listen and check. Think of a possible next line in the conversations.



7.4

Listening and Speaking | Best of friends?

1. Answer the following questions.

- 1. How often do you get together with friends?
What do you do with them?
- 2. Have you got a 'best friend'?
If you, what makes this friend special?

2. Listen to four people talking about their best friends. Who do you think has the best, best friend?

3. Listen again and complete the chart.

4. Read these quotes from the people and answer the questions below.

- 1. 'We do stuff together.'
Who are 'we'? What 'stuff' do they do?
- 2. 'We wrote about all sorts.'
Who are 'we'? What were the 'all sorts'?
- 3. 'She'd just drop me.'
Who is 'she'? What did she do?
- 4. 'Three small boys kicking off in the corridor.'
Who were the boys? Where were they? What were they doing?



	Kate & Carly	Dave & Danni	Molly & Carol	Sam & Olly
How and when did they become friends?				
Are they long-lasting best friends? Why/Why not?				
What did/do they do as friends?				

What do you think?

- Which of the friendships do you think will be lifelong? Why?
- What do you think makes a best friend? Is it important to have one?
- Who was your first best friend? Where and when did you meet them?
- Do you have many friends on social media? Can these be best friends?

Reading and listening

1. What is a ‘boarding school’? Are they usually private or state? (strangely, top British ‘private schools’ are called ‘public schools.’) what is your impression of the school in the photos?
2. Read the introduction to Gordonstoun. What is special about this school? Why do you think King Charles hates it?
3. Answer these questions about the school’s history and the school today.

1. Which of these dates or numbers are from your text? What do they refer to?

1934 | 1972 | 1933 | 2 | 100 | 1940s | 600 | 4 | 250

2. What were/are living conditions for pupils like?
3. Who were/are the pupils? Where did/do they come from?
4. Was/Is the school sensitive to problems students face when boarding?
5. What sports and outdoor activities were/are part of the school’s curriculum?
6. Why were/are sports and outdoor activities important to the school?
7. Which other subjects or activities were/are important to the school? How?

4. Compare the school today with the school as it used to be.

5. From the postscript. Why do many rich and famous people send their kids to Gordonstoun?

Gordonstoun the school King Charles loathed!

Gordonstoun is a famous and very expensive boarding school in a remote part of Scotland. It has its own fire station, theatre, yacht, and Mountain Rescue Unit. Wealthy parents from all over the world are eager to pay up to £35,000 a year for its special brand of ‘character education’. It has many famous ‘old boys’, including four princes from the British royal family.

THE SCHOOL’S HISTORY



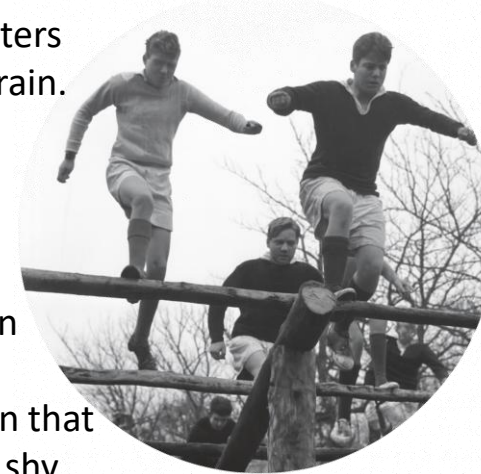
The school was founded in 1934 by the German educator, Kurt Hahn. He was born in Berlin in 1886, and studied at Oxford University. As a young man he read Plato’s *The Republic* and came up with the idea of a modern school.

In 1933, Hahn was arrested for daring to speak out against the Nazis. He was exiled to Britain and it was there that he decided to start a new school in Scotland. Its beginnings were very small, with only two students. The numbers gradually increased, and included the young Prince Philip of Greece, who went on to become the husband of Queen Elizabeth II. By the end of the 1940s, there were 250 boys.

Outdoor activities and risk-taking were central to Hahn’s beliefs, so skills such as mountaineering and sailing were taught. Boys were expected to endure hard conditions, followed by icy cold showers.

They wore shorts in all weathers, slept on hard bunk beds with the windows open, even in the freezing Scottish winters, and were made to go on long walks in pouring rain. Hahn also believed that it was very important to understand different cultures, and encouraged the boys to work overseas. Over the years, they have helped build schools in Africa, wells in Thailand, and cared for orphans in Romania.

Prince Philip so enjoyed his years at Gordonstoun that in 1962 he and the Queen decided to send their shy, sensitive 12-year-old son, Prince Charles, there. Charles loathed it. He called it ‘a prison sentence’, ‘Colditz in kilts’, ‘Absolute hell!’ He was bullied, cold-shouldered, and mocked for having big ears. Kinder boys were afraid to befriend him. His father wrote him letters urging him to be strong. He wrote back, ‘I wish I could come home.’



THE SCHOOL TODAY

Girls finally joined the school in 1972.

There are now about 600 pupils, from the age of eight to 18, and 100 teachers, so there is a very low student-teacher ratio. There are nine boarding houses on the campus, three for the girls and six for the boys. They all have TVs, a common room, and a kitchen.

It’s a truly multicultural school, with about 35% of the students coming from 40 different countries. There is also an international summer school, attended every year by 250 children from all over the world. Nowadays, pupils are allowed to use email, text, Skype, and Facebook if they feel homesick.

Sport still plays a central role in the school’s crowded timetable. Outdoors, there are tennis courts, and playing fields for rugby, football and cricket, and a 400 metre running track. Students can also do horse riding, rifle shooting, and golf. Indoors, there’s a large sports centre with a rock climbing wall, a swimming pool, a weights room, squash courts and a hall for basketball, badminton, netball, and karate.

On the arts side there’s a first-class music department with its own recording studio, drum studio, and concert room. Over 40% of the students learn to play an instrument. Also, there’s an excellent drama department, which has its own 200-seat theatre. Like the school’s talented musicians, its drama groups often tour overseas, most recently to the US.

Community service is an important part of Gordonstoun life. Every Wednesday, pupils help in the local area, visiting retirement homes, nursery schools, and hospitals. They also help

with local fire and emergency services. The school has two fire engines and a Mountain Rescue Service. Schools nowadays are often accused of being ‘exam factories’ – this cannot be said of Gordonstoun. It aims to produce much more ‘rounded’, risk-taking adults.



Postscript: Old Gordonstounians

There are many other famous ‘old boys’ – King Charles’ brothers, Princes Andrew and Edward followed in his and their father’s footsteps. Princess Anne, the Queen’s second child, was not educated at Gordonstoun, which at that time was for boys only, but she sent her two children, Zara and Peter, there. Other famous sons and daughters include Oona Chaplin, granddaughter of Charlie Chaplin; Jason Connery and Duncan Jones, sons of Sean Connery and David Bowie respectively.

- Would you like to have been educated at this school? Why/Why not?
- Would you want to send your children there?
- Do you think an emphasis on outdoor activities and the arts is as important as academic success in education?
- A few children are sent to boarding school as young as seven. What could be the disadvantages of this for both parents and children? Could there be any advantages?

1. Which part of King Charles’ body did his school friends make fun of? Why? Brainstorm parts of the body.
2. Say which parts of the body you use to do the following things.

bite blow clap climb hit hug ~~kick~~ kneel point scratch stare whistle lick march

3. Which verbs in 2 go with these nouns and phrases?

Kick a football

a tune	your nails	a gun	down to pray	your hands	a nail with a hammer	a football
someone tight	up a balloon	out of the window		a ladder	an ice cream	like a soldier

Listen and check. What does ‘kick the habit’ mean? Look at the list again Can you remember the situations?



4. There are many idioms to do with the body. Work out their meanings from the context.

1. My son keeps a stack of chocolate in his desk for while he’s working. He’s **got such a sweet tooth**.

2. Did you hear about Sean’s party? People drank too much and the whole thing got **out of hand**.

3. I saw a programme on Netflix about quantum physics, but I’m afraid **it went straight over my head**.

4. I feel silly. I got so excited when he said I’d won the lottery, but he was only **pulling my leg**.

5. **Don’t waste your breath** trying to explain it to me. I’ll not get it.

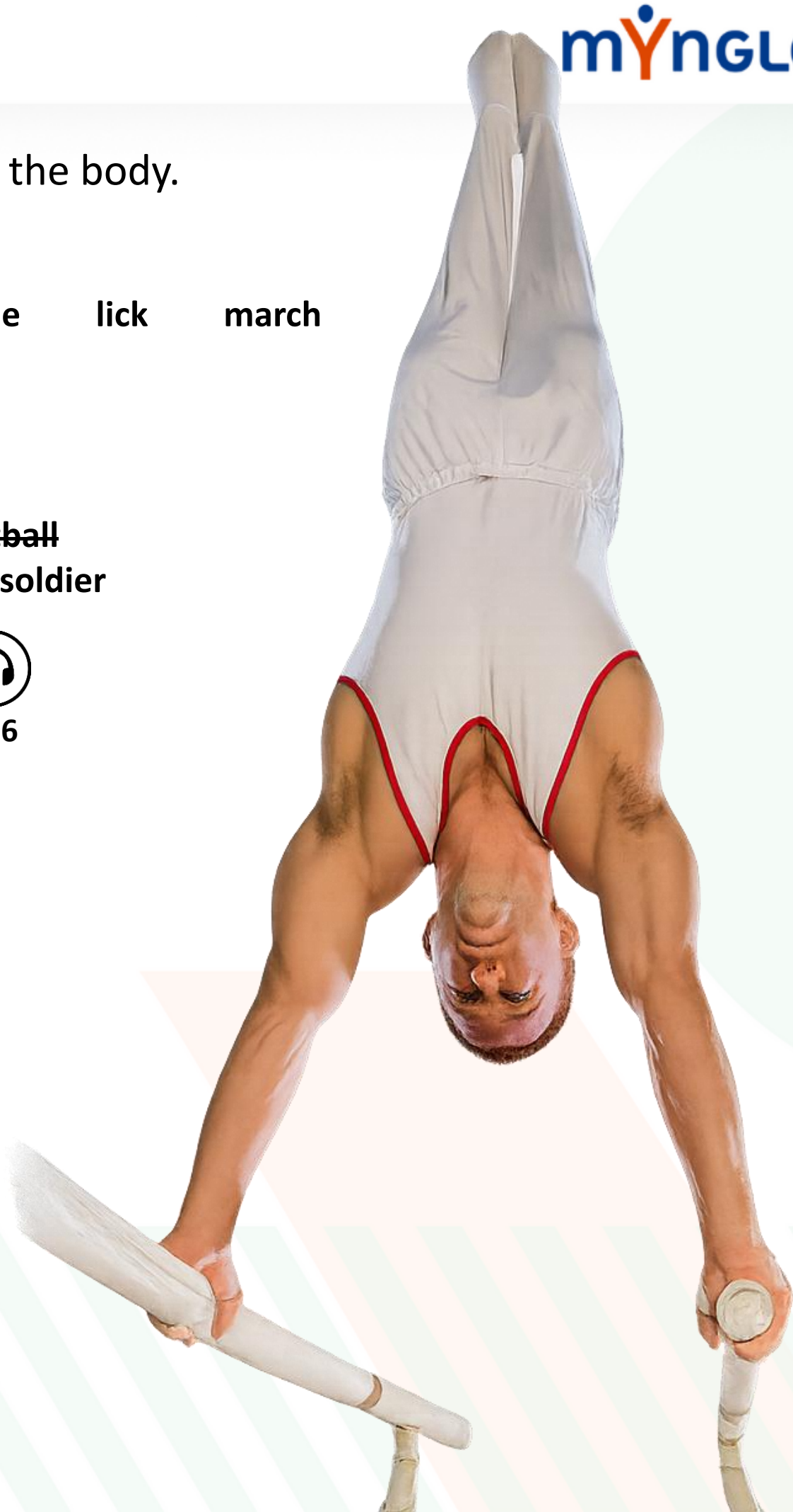
6. The room was such a mess and when her parents came back they **kicked up such a fuss**. I don’t blame them.

7. No one at my work is speaking to me. Why are they **giving me the cold shoulder**?

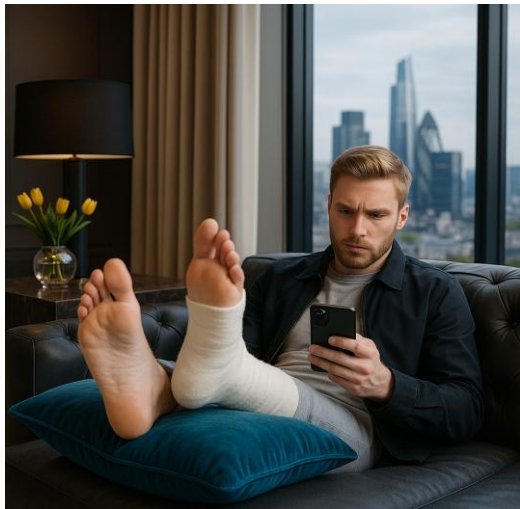
8. I don’t get on with my brother. We don’t **see eye to eye** about anything.

5. Replace the idioms in 4 with their literal meanings from the box.

loves sweet things	were absolutely furious	ignoring me completely
It’s not worth	I didn’t understand a word	agree
out of control	joking	



1. Read the three conversations. What's the problem in each?



Conversation 1

A: Oh dear! What happened to you?
B: Oh, I fell and twisted my ankle.
A: 1. ____ How did you do that?
B: Well, I was walking and texting and I didn't see this bump in the pavement and ...
A: ... so you fell while texting. Mmm ... then 2. ____



Conversation 2

A: How was the restaurant?
B: 3. ____ We're not going back there again!
A: Why not?
B: Well, I found a caterpillar in my salad – I nearly swallowed it!
A: Ugh! 4. ____



Conversation 3

A: My phone's broken. It fell down the loo.
B: Oh no! 5. ____ Is it completely ruined?
A: No, I've put it in a bag of rice.
B: You've done what?! Why?
A: Well, someone told me the best way to dry it out, is to leave it in rice for 48 hours.
B: Rice!? 6. ____ I bet it won't work.

2. Read the conversations again. Complete 1-6 with the phrases a-f.

- a. That's such nonsense!
- b. It was so bad!
- c. You poor thing!
- d. How disgusting!
- e. What a disaster!
- f. You've only got yourself to blame.

3. Listen and check. Practise the conversations. 7.7

Exclamations can be formed with *How, What, so, or such*.

- **How + adjective:** *How sad!* / *How absolutely fantastic!*
- **What + noun:** *What bad luck!* / *What a surprise!*
- **so + adjective:** *It was so packed!* / *There were so many people.*
- **such + noun:** *He's such an imbecile!* / *It was such fun!*

4. Complete the lines in **A** with *How, What, so* or *such*. Match them with lines **B**. What could the situations be?

A	B
1. His classes are ____ boring!	a. That's so kind of you.
2. Is it for me? ____ lovely!	b. It rained every day.
3. ____ a coincidence!	c. I've never won anything.
4. You won £2,000! ____ luck!	d. I can't help falling asleep.
5. That's ____ a stupid plan!	e. It'll never work.
6. We had ____ terrible weather!	f. I didn't know Tom was your cousin.

5. Complete these exclamations. Then use them to complete conversations 4-6.

- a. ____ a pity!
- b. ____ dreadful!
- c. It'll be ____ fun!
- d. It's ____ annoying!
- e. He's ____ a coward!
- f. ____ frustrating!

Conversation 4

A: I hear you aren't coming to Max's 18th. **1.** ____

B: Yes it is, but it's my grandpa's birthday, too.

A: But everyone's going to Max's. **2.** ____

B: I know, but it's Grandpa's 80th.

A: Ah well, – don't worry! Max'll understand. An 80th birthday is more important than an 18th!

Conversation 5

A: Carl texted Anna to say that he'd dumped her.

B: **3.** ____ He couldn't tell her face to face?

A: Yeah. **4.** ____

B: Well, I think she's well rid of him, don't you?

Conversation 6

A: My Wi-Fi keeps disconnecting.

B: **5.** ____ But you know what they say ...

A: What?

B: Just try turning everything off and on again.

A: Yeah, I know, but I have to do that two or three times a day. **6.** ____

B: Time to call an engineer!

- 1. Do you think childhood is the best time of your life?
- 2. Read about the pros and cons of childhood. Which words and phrases in the box can replace the underlined words in the text?

pros and cons
Finally,
One disadvantage is that
For instance
In fact,
Another point is that

All things considered
In conclusion,
One advantage is that
Moreover,
in my opinion
on the other hand

- 3. There are four paragraphs. What is the purpose of each one?
- 4. Match a pro with a con. Join them with:
on the one hand / on the other hand.

PROS	CONS
1. don't have to go to work	a. need parents' permission to go out
2. have free time	b. don't have enough pocket money
3. don't have to do housework	c. have to go to school every day
4. pay less for things	d. have to do homework and take exams

- 5. Make a list of the pros and cons of the following situations:
 - Boarding school.
 - Getting older.
 - Having children when young.
- 6. Write four paragraphs on your topic using phrases from 2. Read it aloud to the class.

Pros and Cons

Childhood – Is it the best time of life?

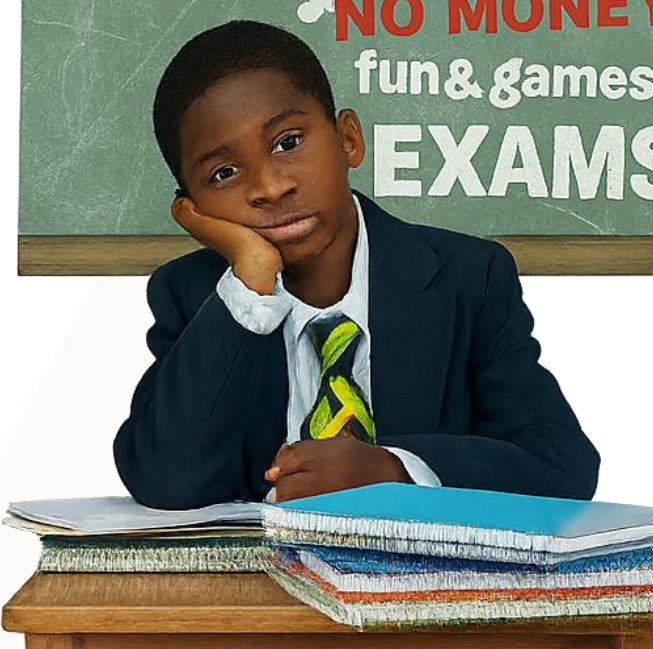
1
Some people say that childhood is the best time of your life. However, being a child has both advantages and disadvantages.

2
On the plus side, you have few responsibilities. For example, you don't have to go to work, pay bills, or do the shopping or housework. This means you have plenty of time to do whatever you want – watch TV, play video games, go out with friends, play sports, or pursue other hobbies. In addition to this, public transport, cinema, and sports centres cost much less for children. All in all, being a child can be a fun time of life.

3
However, for every plus there is a minus. For one thing, you have to spend all day, every day, Monday to Friday, at school and this inevitably means that you have to do homework and take exams. What is more, although you have free time, you are rarely allowed to do whatever you want. You need your parents' permission before going out with friends, staying out late, or going to parties. It can sometimes seem that they want to stop you having any fun. Last of all, things may be cheaper for children, but that doesn't mean they are cheap. Children depend on getting pocket money and not all parents choose to, or are able to give generously. In reality some children can't afford to do much at all.

4
To sum up, despite its lack of responsibility, I believe that childhood is not necessarily the best time of life. On the one hand, children may have free time, but conversely they do not have the freedom to choose what to do with it. They can feel pressurised both by parents and to do well in assessments. However, the increased responsibility that comes with age creates its own pressures, too.

HOMework
free time
SCHOOL
holidays
no pressure
NO MONEY
fun & games
EXAMS



The infinitive

1. *The infinitive is used after some verbs.*

We've **decided to move** abroad. I'm **trying to phone** Lian.
I **want to go** home. She'd **love to meet** them.

2. *Some verbs are followed by a person + the infinitive.*

They **asked me to help** her. He **told me to apply** for the job.

3. *Make and let are followed by a person + the infinitive without to.*

She'll make you **feel** welcome. I'll let you **know** when I'm coming.

4. *The infinitive is used after some adjectives.*

It's **impossible to save** money. **Pleased to meet** you.
It's **great to see** you. It was **good to hear** your news.

The -ing form

1. *The -ing form is used after some verbs.*

I **enjoy reading** economics to save money. I **don't mind helping** you.
He's **finished washing** the scooter. We **like walking**.

2. *Some verbs are followed by an object + -ing.*

I **hate people telling** me what to do.
You **can't stop me doing** what I want.

3. *The -ing form is used after prepositions.*

I'm good **at finding** answers.
We're thinking **of going** to Norway.
He's afraid **of being** robbed.
I'm looking forward **to meeting** you.

