

A world inside

Introduction

This opening unit focuses on issues of self-image and the achievement of self-fulfilment through honesty with ourselves and careful self-analysis. Most people beneath a brave exterior are sensitive and fairly easily hurt – the material recognizes this and tries to prepare the young people in the class for future disappointments and rejections, which should not in most cases be taken personally. The concept of a successful career is also examined and questioned.

To balance these more subjective and forward-looking topics, the unit ends by drawing the students' attention to the overall pattern of a human life and the rites of passage which mark our progress through it, and asks them to create a timeline of important events in their lives so far.

Activities to start the unit

- Ask what the opening picture shows and means (*the girl looking through binoculars* <望远镜> representing someone looking into the future or their inner self).
- Ask the class to read the various titles and predict the content of the unit.
- Ask Ss to contribute to a list of psychological problems teenagers may face (eg *lack of confidence, dissatisfaction with personal appearance, shyness* etc).
- Ask the class to suggest aspects of ourselves we should fear (eg *violence, anger, greed* etc).
- Ask Ss to share with the class a time they felt proud of themselves or a time they felt disappointed and let down.
- Ask Ss to create a list of types of people (eg *the communicator, the facilitator, the extrovert, the loser, the joker, the worker* etc).

Starting point

①

TEACHING STEPS

教学步骤

To ensure Ss understand the words, do some exercises with them first so the class can pool its knowledge.

- Ask volunteers to act out words on the list while the class guess which word they intend (*a girl looking at her feet and being nervous = shy; a dialogue about a new watch = envious; someone just smiling and saying he's brought cakes for everyone = like to give to others*).
- Ask which words have opposites starting with *un-* (*fair, ambitious, social, argumentative*) and *dis-* (*respectful*).
- Ask Ss to match these words with their opposites in the list (*mean – like to give to others; peaceable – argumentative; social – like to be alone; bold – shy; careless – thoughtful; easily-led – strong-willed; insulting – respectful; lazy – hard-working; content – ambitious; unjust – fair*).
- Ask Ss to say what sorts of people are shown in the photos on Page 2.

Example answers

- Why do you think I am hard-working? I am afraid I am quite lazy.
- Thank you for agreeing I am a fair person.
- I suppose if I argue because you think I am argumentative, you will say it proves you are right!
- Really, I think you are a very thoughtful person. You sometimes surprise me at how much concern you have for your friends and how carefully you like to think before you do things.

②

- 1 I think being hard-working, fair, thoughtful and social are all positive. Then there are some qualities which are positive in small amounts: respect, ambition, strong will and liking to give to others. Having too much of these, however, can be harmful.
- 2 Shyness is negative – not in the sense of being bad, but it makes life harder. Envy is ugly. Argumentative people are no pleasure to be with. I am not sure about liking to be alone. If it means avoiding people, it's negative, but if it means you are happy to spend time alone reading and thinking, that's rather good.
- 3 Well, that depends on the job! But being hard-working is always right, and thinking carefully must always be good.
- 4 I suppose we can go beyond the list here – kindness and liking to give to others will bring you friends, a sense of beauty is important and being faithful to those you work with means you never have to feel guilty.

Active reading

Two kinds of judgment

1

TEACHING TIPS

教学建议

Of course, Ss cannot make accurate predictions (actually, all four types occur), but by thinking about the differences among the types of judgment they will be more prepared for the reading passage. Ask Ss to comment on the four types and give examples of them.

- To be guilty of a robbery or a legal judgment after a trial.
- A judgment as to whether people have been treated equally – it is unfair if two people paying the same in a restaurant receive different amounts of food.
- The method by which a judgment is made – setting maths test as against tasting some food and saying whether it's good or not.
- Measuring someone's ability in a non-competitive test such as a piano grade exam or an IQ score, or choosing one from a group of applicants to be employed by a company.

Classroom language for teachers

Asking questions about the passage

- Can you summarize that paragraph for me?
- Why does the writer use the phrase “of course” there?
- Can you give me an example of “an appeals process”?
- What word in that sentence means “employment”?
- What verb does the word “decision” come from?
- What does “it” in that sentence refer to?
- What do you think that word means? Look at the context carefully.
- What part of speech does “distribution” appear to be?
- With what words could I replace that phrase?
- Why has the writer used that tense?
- Does that paragraph have a topic sentence?
- How does this paragraph relate to the last one?
- Does the writer give any example of this?
- What words suggest the writer is not 100 per cent sure?
- How would you describe the style of the passage? Is it formal or conversational or ...?
- What's the writer's main point?

Background information

The writer of the passage, Paul Graham, is a well-known British computer programmer whose success has enabled him to move into venture capitalism – financing clever new ideas in information technology. He also posts essays on his website, some of which have been published in book form.

In this essay, he argues that there is a considerable difference between being objectively assessed in an examination, where it makes sense to think of failing, and being selected or rejected in an application process. In the latter case, there are many candidates of basically the same worth and it is more a matter of chance who the selector chooses. This means we should not take the process personally or feel worthless if we are not chosen, but should be motivated to think of ways of selling ourselves and catching the attention of those in charge of the selection process.

Language points

1 Sometimes judging you correctly is the end goal. (Line 2, Para 1)

This sentence means the purpose of the exercise is to judge your ability at a skill, or your guilt or innocence; the focus is on you.

end goal: final purpose

2 ... there's usually some kind of appeals process. (Line 5, Para 2)

There is normally an established procedure for complaining against a mistaken judgment.

3 But in fact there is a second much larger class of judgments where judging you is only a means to something else. (Line 1, Para 4)

In this second type of judgment the focus is achieving a specific goal, such as creating a good team, getting the right sort of employees or selecting a year's intake for a college. People must be qualified, but not all those qualified can be chosen.

4 Suppose for the sake of simplicity that this is a game with no positions ... (Line 2, Para 5)

To keep this thought experiment simple let's forget about positions, such as defender, attacker, centre, goal keeper etc. Let's think of all players as equal.

a game with no positions: It means there are no fixed positions where players stand on the field.

5 The only place your judgment makes a difference is in the borderline cases. (Line 7, Para 5)

borderline cases: belonging to the area which is part of both circles – not excellent, nor poor – but good and a potential choice

6 Probably the difference between them will be less than the measurement error. (Line 15, Para 5)

The difference between those being selected is so small that the selector does not need to worry about a perfectly accurate measurement of their relative abilities.

the measurement error: a term from statistics, the difference between a measured

value of quantity and its true value

7 It's a false analogy even to use the word unfair to describe this kind of misjudgment. (Line 1, Para 7)

It's an incorrect comparison with the other sort of judgment to think there is anything unfair in not being chosen for the team. The aim was not to assess any individual, but to get a good team.

8 One thing that leads us astray here is that the selector seems to be in a position of power. (Line 1, Para 8)

One factor which causes us to make this mistake and confuses these different types of making judgments is that the selector seems to have power over the people being chosen from. But actually he is more like a shopper choosing what suits him.

9 The author of a good novel wouldn't complain that readers were *unfair* for preferring a potboiler with a racy cover. (Line 6, Para 8)

a potboiler with a racy cover: a story without great quality but an easy read such as an average detective / romantic / action story, published with an exciting, rather sexy cover

10 Stupid, perhaps, but not unfair. (Line 8, Para 8)

The book buyer is not judging the potboiler better than the beautifully written serious novel, but choosing what they want to read. Someone might judge that reading such a book is a stupid thing to do and a waste of time, but that is up to the readers who are selecting what they want to read, and not making a literary award.

11 Our early training and our self-centeredness combine to make us believe that every judgment of us is about us. In fact most aren't. (Line 1, Para 9)

Here "early training" refers to the information in Paragraph 3. When we were children, judging us was the end goal and we get into the habit of thinking all the judgments are. For example, we may have spent a long time producing an application and imagine someone studying it carefully and deciding whether we are good enough, whereas the truth may be it was hardly glanced at as there were so many others. We were not rejected, but simply ignored.

self-centeredness: seeing the world from our own perspective because we are important to ourselves, and we tend to think we are important to others

12 ... because of the normal distribution of most applicant pools, it matters least to judge accurately in precisely the cases where judgment has the most effect ... (Line 8, Para 9)

The selectors need little judgment to decide how to deal with the best and the worst. It is very difficult for them to decide among the majority at that peak, but as they are very similar, it does not matter much to the selectors. Their choice can be rather arbitrary.

normal distribution of most applicant pools: the bell curve, the majority of people are at or around the peak of the curve

13 But the more you realize that most judgments are greatly ... to influence the outcome. (Line 6, Para 10)

Once you have understood that decisions taken about you are not all objective

assessments of your qualities, but often rather accidental, with the people taking them more like shoppers than court judges, you will see that there are ways in which you can make yourself more attractive to the people taking the decisions. (If we see them as shoppers, we can try to influence them in the same ways shops do customers.)

random, extraneous factors: chance, minor, not very relevant matters, for example, buying a book because you like the name of the writer

14 Most high school students applying ... they're good or not. (Line3, Para 11)

When students apply to college they wrongly think the decision-makers are wise, all-knowing people who will read all the letters and essays and make very careful choices, but actually they are busy people faced with a lot of applicants of the same standard. They will choose successful candidates in a quick and simple way.

dig down deep: study carefully; read and discuss at length

Reading and understanding

2

- 1 Correct.
- 2 The first half agrees with the passage, but the overall emphasis is on selectors whereas the passage is addressed to young people applying for colleges and jobs. Selecting someone for a prize is actually more like the first type of judgment – there might be only a second's difference between two great athletes but that second decides who wins the gold medal. In some respects the two athletes are equal, but not when it comes to the prize. On the topic of not making a mistake, of course no business wants a poor employee, but the passage argues this is unlikely as there are always a number of suitable candidates.
- 3 The passage is not concerned with good or bad judgments, and the stress is not on the reader making judgments, but their reaction to being judged.

3

- 1 Their aim is to judge individuals accurately.
- 2 The judgments we receive as children are of this type so we expect later judgments to be the same.
- 3 When we hire or date someone, we are thinking less of them than of what we want, and there are a number of possibilities for us to choose from.
- 4 That choices are often not made on the basis of perfectly accurate judgments of relative ability. There can be more than one good choice and often not being chosen does not mean someone is inadequate.
- 5 The people on the borderline are basically of the same level of ability.
- 6 It makes us see the situation in a less self-centred way. The selector is looking for what appeals to them rather than judging our ability. It may also motivate us to sell ourselves actively.
- 7 Unless we are unusual, there will always be plenty of candidates of the same ability as us. The selector has to make a choice but that choice does not prove anyone's inferiority.

- 8 Feeling hurt shows a misunderstanding of the selection process. We may be perfectly good product, but our packaging was not quite right. We do not need to feel we have been measured and judged not good enough as this will cause us unnecessary pain and loss of confidence.

Dealing with unfamiliar words

4

TEACHING TIPS

教学建议

Assign some of the words to different Ss in advance and tell them to give a short talk to the class on them before doing the exercises. For example:

Applicant

When you want to get into a college or get a job, you apply for it. You are an applicant and you fill in the correct or applicable application form. There is now a very modern use of application – it can mean software that is designed to do a particular job. This is often shortened to app. If you have an iphone, you will have downloaded lots of useful apps onto it. The suffix *-ant* has a number of uses and meanings. Applicant is one of a small family of words naming people who do something, for example: *accountant, assistant, claimant, contestant, defendant, emigrant, immigrant, merchant, occupant, servant*.

Measurement

This word comes from the meaning of measure as finding the size of something. The word can be uncountable and mean the act of measuring. There is also a countable usage; if you want to have some clothes made for you, they will need to know your measurements. The stress comes on the first syllable. The word is easily recognized as a noun from the suffix *-ment*. Here are ten further examples: *agreement, assessment, development, disappointment, employment, enjoyment, entertainment, government, management, treatment*.

- 1 unfair
- 2 screw up
- 3 measurement
- 4 applicants
- 5 committee

Note the common error of trying to use “committee” as a concrete noun. “Committee” is a collective noun.

She is a committee of the club. (×)

She is on the club's committee. (√)

She is a member of the committee / a committee member. (√)

5

- 1 application
- 2 judgment
- 3 simplicity

- 4 for the sake of
5 outcome
6 selection

6

TEACHING STEPS

教学步骤

- Tell Ss to find the sentences in the passage and make use of the context to choose the correct options.
- Then ask Ss to create example sentences using the words. A harder task is to create a short dialogue using them all.

- 1 (b) 2 (a) 3 (b) 4 (b) 5 (b)
6 (a) 7 (a) 8 (a) 9 (b)

Reading and interpreting

7

- 1 (b) 2 (b) 3 (b)

Sometimes judging you correctly is the end goal. (Line 2, Para 1)

We tend to regard all judgments of us as the first type. We'd probably be happier if we realized which are and which aren't. (Line 4, Para 1)

... the type where judging you is the end goal, ... (Line 1, Para 2)

... because the goal is to judge you correctly ... (Line 5, Para 2)

If you feel you've been misjudged, you can protest that you've been treated unfairly. (Line 6, Para 2)

... where judging you is only a means to something else. (Line 2, Para 4)

This kind of judgment is not really about you. (Line 6, Para 4)

Developing critical thinking

8

- 1 I see the writer's point and agree failure to get into a college or be chosen for a job does not mean you are worthless and should give up, but I think selectors are trying to get the best person and so by not choosing you they did judge you not as good as someone else. It isn't quite like choosing a book to read. A responsible selector is not just looking for something that pleases them, but for the ablest person to fill the place.
- 2 I was quite surprised at that idea. I think most people find it hard to say what attracts them to someone else and makes them start dating. An employer when choosing a worker looks at qualifications and experience, but not many people do anything like that when dating. I can imagine a boss thinking three candidates are all very good and it does not really matter which one gets the job, but I don't think anyone approaches dating like that.

- 3 Yes, it probably takes many years for a person to understand properly how the world works. Teenagers in particular lack confidence in themselves and worry everyone is looking at them although in truth most people have little interest in anyone but their own close circle.
- 4 Their appearance – their choice of clothes and how well they look after themselves. The way they speak is also important. Then you learn about their school, their interests and so on and you begin to feel you know enough to make a judgment.

Language for teachers and students

Giving opinions

- *Yes, I do. I think* the writer makes a very good distinction between the different types of judgment.
- *As he says*, people choosing students and even workers do not have enough time to get to know the applicants so their judgments cannot be particularly personal.
- *I wonder if* the writer is not a bit idealistic. *For example*, the person choosing the team might have their own non-sporting reason for preferring one player over another. Unfairness does exist.
- *Remember*, plenty of people do advertise for possible marriage partners, so that is a bit like the process of hiring an employee.
- *Isn't love* a lot more subjective than that?
- *It's both* like and unlike it.
- *Not really* – it all depends on the child. People aren't all the same. He generalizes too much.
- *I suppose* I go a lot by personal appearance.
- *I guess* tidiness influences me a lot.
- How exactly would you *define* that?
- *I can see* both sides of the argument on this matter.

Talking point

TEACHING TIPS

教学建议

Encourage Ss to develop their answers beyond mere statements. Tell them to ask each other questions and offer more detail about their first responses. They should also take it in turns to sum what has been said. Some pairs can present their summaries to the class.

1

- When I was about ten, I was crazy about *wu shu*. I went to classes, watched films, read books and rehearsed my moves all day long. It's funny thinking about it now – it is years since I practised.
- My mum works in a big hotel. I think she would have tried to get me a job with her.

She thinks there are a lot of opportunities if you work hard.

- I'd be in Beijing as one of the top young stars of the National Ballet of China (中央芭蕾舞团) and everyone would be writing about my wonderful performance in *Swan Lake*. And there'd be so many flowers arriving every night at my dressing room.
- I'd probably be rehearsing – ballerinas (芭蕾舞女演员) have to put in hours of practice a day to stay at the top.

2

The first one was just a childish dream because he liked his grandfather and enjoyed going to the station. I don't think it tells us much about his personality. He himself thinks it was silly. But the girl would clearly still like to be an actor. I think she must have an outgoing character. A shy person would not think with pleasure of being out on stage in front of hundreds of people. I bet she's very lively and self-confident.

Language in use

1

- 1 misunderstand
- 2 misbehave
- 3 misplace
- 4 mismatch
- 5 misuse
- 6 misspell
- 7 misinform
- 8 misinterpretation

Additional activity

Ask Ss to prepare short humorous dialogues with as many words starting with the prefix *mis-* as possible. Choose a few promising dialogues to be performed for the class.

Extra words in the same family: *miscalculate, miscatalogue, misclassify, miscommunication, miscompute, misconduct, misconnection, misdeed, misdial, misdirect, misestimate, mishandle, misidentify, mislabel, mislead, mismanage, misname, misprogrammed, misremember, mistranslate, mistrust.*

2

- 1 Noun.
- 2 Judgment.
- 3 Fairness.

investment, measurement, self-centeredness

3

advertisement agreement employment greatness
happiness management quietness rudeness

- 1 happiness
- 2 quietness
- 3 agreement
- 4 advertisements
- 5 employment
- 6 rudeness
- 7 management
- 8 greatness

4

- 1 (a) 2 (b)

5

- 1 I decided my sister was the best person for the job in that she is several years younger than I am.
- 2 We should ask for a second opinion in that a lot depends on the decision we have to make.
- 3 Most universities ask you to take the test in that all courses are in English.
- 4 I'm afraid I can't accept the post in that my contract here lasts for another five years.

6

correct estimate
end goal
false analogy
random factor
rare case

7

- 1 end goal
- 2 false analogy
- 3 random factors
- 4 correct estimate
- 5 rare cases

8

- 1 第一种判断，即把正确地判断一个人作为最终目的的判断，包括法院判决、考试成绩及大部分比赛。
- 2 在此目的不是为了对某个特定的个体作出正确的评估，而是选择合理的最佳组合。

- 3 我们早年所受的训练，加上我们总是以自我为中心，使我们认为对我们所作的每个判断都是关于我们本身的判断。
- 4 令人惊奇的是，把被拒绝看得不那么针对个人，能帮助你更少地遭到拒绝。
- 5 如果大学申请人意识到大部分选择过程是多么迅速、多么不考虑个体需求，他们就会更努力地推销自己，并能更加坦然地对待录取结果。

9

- 1 We do not need to care too much about what people say about us in that what they say is not necessarily objective.
- 2 He changed quite some jobs for the sake of his self-development before he finally found a position suitable for him. But his experience does not apply to everyone.
- 3 We should first figure out what we really need before we set goals for ourselves. The more we know about what we need, the easier it is to set practical goals.
- 4 What most employers care about is not your self-improvement, but what you contribute to the company.
- 5 Whatever the outcome will be, do not give up easily. We should not underestimate our ability / ourselves just because of one failure in seeking employment.

Further reading

Why I left my job

1

Well, if you have trouble with the boss, you should leave because you are never going to do well there. I think I might be able to put up with boring work if the pay was good, but if you are not earning much and have few prospects, it is time to look for another job. If I had a good job, I think I would try to move closer to it rather than leave because of the journey.

TEACHING TIPS

教学建议

If you assign the passage for Ss to study on their own, you can set them a task that involves close analysis of some aspect of style, vocabulary or grammar. This could help them in their own writing.

For an easy start, ask Ss to study and make notes on the infinitives in the passage. It does not matter if they miss one or two. Select an individual or pair to present their findings and ask the class to add any extra ideas and comments.

words which are followed by <i>to</i> -infinitive	my <u>decision</u> to leave the <u>necessity</u> to look <u>allowed</u> me to use my <u>turn</u> to realize I <u>began</u> to identify however senior I was <u>likely</u> to become I <u>wanted</u> to work ... sell ... do <u>afford</u> to have
<i>wh</i> - words followed by <i>to</i> - infinitive expressing possibility or duty	telling me <u>what</u> to learn understand <u>how</u> to use colour being told <u>what</u> to do
verbs which are followed by object + bare infinitive	<u>make</u> a new generation suffer <u>make</u> people buy
<i>to</i> - infinitive expressing purpose	use colour <u>to reflect</u> I've come back <u>to follow</u>
<i>too</i> / <i>enough</i> + <i>to</i> - infinitive	<u>too much to</u> ask
<i>have to</i> expressing obligation	I <u>had to</u> move on
<i>to</i> - infinitive expressing intention	what I <u>was going to</u> do

Background information

The passage is autobiographical. A man tells how he gave up a good job in advertising because it was not giving him any sense of satisfaction or fulfilment. Looking back on his life, he feels he was mostly doing what was expected of him rather than doing what he wanted: to be an artist. He is happier now despite being materially much worse off.

The passage is written in a simple first-person style and reflects the feeling many people have in modern economies that what they are doing is not really important for them and that their work is in some ways detracting from the quality of their life.

Language points

1 'Twas always thus, and always thus will be. (Line 1, Para 1)

In the film *Dead Poets Society*, the English teacher says this to one student, who immediately asks which poet it comes from. The teacher smiles and admits he is the writer. The use of the old-fashioned form 'Twas instead of modern *it was* is part of the joking attempt to make it sound like a line from, for example, Shakespeare. Giving such advice and making wise statements sounds pompous to people from British / American culture and is often softened in ways such as this. To be too serious is not admired. To say someone takes themselves too seriously is a strong criticism.

2 In fact, much of my life had followed a pattern of repetition. (Line 1, Para 4)

a pattern of repetition: The same sort of events kept on happening to me.

- 3 **But I hadn't enjoyed college, much as I hadn't really enjoyed school. (Line 5, Para 4)**

much as: in the same way as

- 4 **My whole time in formal education ... had been marked with an abundant distrust of people telling me what to learn. (Line 6, Para 4)**

I had been affected by a strong lack of trust in authority figures like teachers who told me what to study. The sentence means that the writer felt rebellious towards his elders, as to state of affairs regarded as healthy and normal in the young. Western cultures value dissent as a sign of character.

had been marked with: affected by; characterized by; involved

- 5 **... having fulfilled my side of the plan, which had been to do what I was told, was I condemned to a life of service to others? (Line 1, Para 7)**

Instead of being rewarded for being a diligent student, I feel the life I am offered is more like a punishment.

- 6 **Was it too much to ask that I should find a job which allowed me to use my talents? (Line 4, Para 7)**

Was it unreasonable to ask to seek a chance to do what I wanted and was good at?

- 7 **Of course, there were few jobs of that kind, and no doubt there were better candidates – or at least better connected – than me, who got the work. (Line 3, Para 8)**

Someone who is “better connected” refers to people who know people in the firms or are recommended by more impressive people.

- 8 **... in a state of mind which moved between a sense of wonder at my new home and of longing for my roots. (Line 6, Para 9)**

longing for my roots: homesickness

- 9 **... I began to identify the images in the adverts which I had worked on. (Line 11, Para 9)**

I could pass giant posters on billboards and point out with pride and a feeling of success ideas in them that came from me.

- 10 **... so far, so fast! (Line 5, Para 10)**

I had risen very quickly. It is a humorous play on the common phrase “so far, so good”.

- 11 **There are, after all, only so many ways you can make people buy a product which they'd probably buy anyway. (Line 8, Para 10)**

The writer feels there are only a limited number of advertising strategies. He had tried all of them and now no longer, he was being creative or discovering anything new. He ironically (again part of the need the writer feels to be unassuming and mock himself in case he sounds too serious) notes that most shoppers would buy what they buy even if there were no advertising at all.

12 I knew then that I had to move on. (Para 11)

I knew I must stop doing the same things and find a new life.

13 ... I wanted to ... do some real painting. (Line 4, Para 12)

I feel commercial work is less genuine than art created for itself. I hope I will now have time to create some art.

14 But my success, my spiritual prosperity, is once again how I perceive it, and not how someone else defines it for me. (Line 4, Para 13)

I am in control of my own life and can decide what is best for me. I am no longer following the directions of others.

15 "Again!" my father replied with a sympathetic smile. "Twas always thus ..." (Para 15)

The phrase his father uses is ambiguous. It may be saying that by following his dreams the son will achieve freedom, but it may also mean that being free is always doomed to be a dream and not a reality. The father probably intends both meanings. He encourages his son to do as he wants and offers him encouragement, but also warns him that final success may not be possible – after all, the son thought he was gaining freedom by going to the States, and now he is returning in search of freedom. The message seems to be that we should never give up trying to achieve our dreams, but also understand that dreams are unreal.

Reading and understanding**2**

- 1 No. He was devoted to art as a child and he worked for an advertising company in the US (which did work for a soft drinks corporation).
- 2 No. He only slowly realized he was not content with his work. Although there is a reference to designing clothes, it is only one of his interests and is not stressed as much as painting.
- 3 Yes. "Relatively little failure" means undistinguished. An early interest in art, a first job in the US, seeing his work in public, dissatisfied spiritually, returning to the UK and taking fairly humble work (an unknown teacher of art) are all mentioned in both. The final sudden fame of course is imagined as coming after the time of the passage.

3

- 1 (d) 2 (c) 3 (d) 4 (c) 5 (c) 6 (d) 7 (c)

Dealing with unfamiliar words**4**

- 1 abundant
- 2 define
- 3 When I left university, I felt I was condemned to get a steady job.
- 4 senior
- 5 perceive

- 6 approval
- 7 procession
- 8 This artist suffered a spectacular fall from popularity after changing his style in mid-career.

5

- 1 prominent
- 2 prosperity
- 3 competent
- 4 tedious
- 5 confronted
- 6 succession
- 7 anticipating

Additional activity

Ask some Ss to prepare a dialogue on the passage. The dialogue should cover the main areas covered in the passage:

- Is education tedious for most people?
- Is it true we are under pressure to follow a certain life pattern?
- How important is job satisfaction?
- Is advertising below the level of “real art”?
- Do most people have dreams? Should they try to follow them?
- Is material or spiritual prosperity / wealth more important?
- Any other points which seem important.

Reading across cultures

Rites of passage

Culture points

A **rite of passage** is a ceremony or ritual, a culturally prescribed action, to signify an event in a person’s life which shows a transition from one stage to another or a major change in social state, age, place or part of the life cycle, eg marking birth, adolescence, marriage or death. A “rite” is a traditional ceremony; a “passage” here means movement past, over or through a place.

Elbert Hubbard (1856–1915), an American writer, was a soap salesman until the age of 36, and then a prolific writer and publisher. He also said, “Don’t take life too seriously. You’ll never get out of it alive.”

As You Like It is a romantic and comic play of Shakespeare, written in 1599 or 1600. In the play, a young gentleman, Orlando is persecuted by his brother Oliver, and forced to flee the country after he has annoyed the new Duke who has usurped the place of his older brother, the rightful Duke. Celia (daughter of the new Duke) and Rosalind

(daughter of the rightful Duke) also leave to look for Rosalind's father who is hiding in a forest. Rosalind is disguised as a man, which leads to comic mistakes. Orlando loves Rosalind but does not recognize her. Oliver, cast out by the new Duke, loves Celia and is reconciled with Orlando. In the end, the usurper changes, the rightful Duke returns to his dukedom. Oliver gets his inheritance and Orlando and Rosalind marry. Jacques, a thoughtful and sad clown, says one of Shakespeare's most famous monologue, "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players (actors); they have their exits and their entrances, and one man in his time plays many parts, his acts being seven ages ... the infant ... the schoolboy ... the lover ... a soldier ... the justice (full of wisdom) ... the sixth age ... with spectacles on nose ... last scene of all ... is second childishness ... sans (without) teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything."

Bar Mitzvah (*Bat Mitzvah* for girls) is the ceremony in which a Jewish boy, aged 13 (or in many communities, a girl aged 12 or 13), takes on the responsibilities of an adult under Jewish religious law. From that age they have moral and religious responsibilities for their own actions. A ceremony is common (but not actually necessary for the religious rights and obligations) during which the participant is treated for the first time as an adult, reading or reciting from the Jewish scriptures and making a speech in a synagogue, a Jewish meeting place for worship and instruction. Bar Mitzvah in Hebrew means "son of the commandments". The ceremony may be followed by a reception or celebratory meal and gifts may be given, eg money, often in multiples of 18, which is a number symbol for "life".

The **prom** is an end-of-year dinner dance for senior (final-year) high school students in the US beginning in the 1920s, following the 19th-century European idea of "a promenade ball" at which young people and debutantes could display their fashions and dancing. American parents thought the prom would be a good formal social occasion to teach the school leavers about culture and etiquette. For this special night most students go with a dance partner, a "date", who may or may not be a romantic partner. Many arrive in groups in a limousine wearing black tuxedos and formal gowns or long dresses. There is the crowning of the Prom Queen and King, who are chosen by fellow students. And many group photos are taken. Proms have spread to other countries with similar events: the "leaver's party" in the UK, "fiesta de graduación" ("party for graduation") in Latin America, "gala" in France, "Abifeier" in Germany (the school leaving exam is the "Abitur"; "feier" is a festival), and similar events in Finland, Malaysia, South Africa, Canada etc.

The **walkabout** is a ritual journey into "the outback" in Australia, large areas of land not used for growing crops which are far away from cities and towns, made by adolescent aborigines. On walkabout, they appreciate the spiritual interconnectedness of the land, the natural world, all creatures, and their ancestors – this understanding is very important for aboriginal communities. They see the land as a living being which sustains them. People live in reciprocal relationships with nature through songlines. The 1971 film, *Walkabout*, tells of two children who get lost in the outback, but survive thanks to the skills of an aboriginal boy, who discovers them while he is on walkabout.

Songlines are an ancient spiritual concept among aboriginal communities in a 40,000-

year-old culture. Songlines, or dreaming tracks, footprints of the ancestors, are invisible paths which criss-cross Australia, connecting sources of water, food and landmarks. For aborigines, the world was created and named when the ancestors sang out the names of everything, giving life in singing. The world continues because it is maintained by people who sing these ancient songs in the right way when they are on walkabout. The songlines are spiritual and cultural maps. By singing them, aborigines can keep the land alive and find their way across long distances, deserts or mountains, or locate water and food. Songs feature in the 2008 film, *Australia*; the aboriginal actor, David Gulpilil, leads his grandson into the outback to learn the ancestors' ways. He was also the aboriginal star of the 1971 film, *Walkabout*.

Language points

1 Is life just “one damned thing after another”, ...? (Line 1, Para 1)

The use of the word “damned” can range from a curse, to an angry swear word, to show that you are annoyed, to a simple emphasis in what you are talking about. Hubbard's saying essentially means that life is one problem after another.

2 Or is it an obstacle race, in which the contestants ...? (Line 4, Para 1)

An “obstacle” is a thing which obstructs progress. An “obstacle race” is a type of race in which you have to get over, under, or through a series of objects or structures. In the metaphor, “life is an obstacle race”, the crucial stages in life are obstacles that must be surmounted or overcome.

1

- 1 He said it was “one damned thing after another”.
- 2 Seven ages.
- 3 It is a formal recognition of a move from one stage of life to another.
- 4 It means they are considered responsible for their actions, like adults.
- 5 They wear formal clothes.
- 6 To learn about their culture and themselves.
- 7 They travel alone through the wilderness.

2

TEACHING TIPS

教学建议

If Ss find it difficult to think of detailed examples in pairs, give a demonstration to help them think about the topic and then ask them to discuss the questions in groups. Later, representatives from different groups can give a brief summary to the class.

- 1 One of them takes place a full month after a baby has been born. There is a banquet when people give gifts and celebrate the birth.
- 2 The origins are generally a mixture of traditional folk customs and religion. Some traditional rites of passage may be regarded as superstitions now but others are still

common practice.

- 3 For example:
 - In traditional marriages in the past in some areas of China, after a decision to get married, the groom's family was expected to give gifts of food and money to the bride's family.
 - On the wedding day, the bride performed ceremonies for her ancestors and was supposed to cry to show her appreciation of her parents' care and to show that she did not want to leave her parents' home. She wore red and was carried in a sedan chair with a procession of musicians to go to the groom's house, bringing her dowry, bedding, and clothes. The groom would welcome her and lift the red veil covering her head with a steelyard. He might give money to the bridesmaids to release the bride. The groom's family started the ceremony by showing respect to the bride's family and their ancestors. Later, there was a banquet held by the groom's family.
 - Some days after the wedding, the bride would visit her parents, dressed in red to show her new status; the groom would send gifts to his parents-in-law.
- 4 For leaving school and university in China, there are normally parties to celebrate the conclusion of successful studies and to say goodbye to classmates. Graduation ceremonies, when students wear special caps and gowns, are also common.
- 5 The parties are usually informal and organized by students themselves, whereas graduation ceremonies are very formal and serious.
- 6 Some traditional customs for marriages and funerals continue and are an important part of Chinese culture. Some others are discontinued or greatly modified, eg the traditional rites in the examination halls of ancient times have disappeared.

Guided writing

1

- 1 (a)
- 2 (b)

2

- 1 I wrote an article about science which was designed to be read by teenagers to encourage them to study more science.
- 2 It was only about a page long, but it was in English!
- 3 Well, I worked with a partner and we met a couple of times for about 15 minutes each time. Then we worked separately for about two hours finding the information that we needed.
- 4 We consulted a couple of books and also used the Internet.
- 5 I was happy with the result because it was in English and our teacher praised it.

If we had had more time, we could have looked for more information, especially

science information that would interest teenagers. Also we could have illustrated the article with photos, perhaps, and certainly with charts. We could have looked for good publications written for teenagers to get a clearer idea of what a good style for this audience might be. These would have helped make our planning for the writing more effective, I think.

3

✓ 1 my own textbooks and reference books

We use these because they are on hand, but the disadvantage is that they are limited and don't have all the information we need.

✓ 2 the Internet

We use the Internet when we can get access to it. The Internet is very rich in material. The disadvantage is that you need a networked computer and you can't always find useful information. Sometimes there is actually too much and not all of it is reliable. One can waste a lot of time visiting poor websites.

✓ 3 the library

We can go to the library easily and it has good resources for us to use. But sometimes it is closed and it takes time to find what we need. And if a lot of people are studying the same topic it may be difficult to access the books we want.

✓ 4 the media

Newspapers and some magazines can be helpful, but TV programmes or films do not usually help. The disadvantage is that we have to get hold of the right newspapers and magazines.

✓ 5 friends and family

This depends on the topic. For some topics friends and family can give us ideas and information.

✓ 6 other resources

We sometimes buy books from a bookshop. Because of the cost, we only do this if we are very interested in and can't find the books in the library.

4

Bar Mitzvah is a Jewish religious ceremony and a family party which is held when boys become responsible for their actions at the age of 13.

- American prom: end of high school / dance / formal clothes / expensive car / behave like adults
- Australian aboriginal walkabout: six months in wilderness / follow ancestral songlines / heart of culture / discover themselves

5

1 The writer uses a quotation and asks two questions about life to introduce the topic of rites of passage. The idea of life stages is introduced in the second paragraph by quoting famous lines from a Shakespeare's play.

2 It takes two out of five paragraphs.

- 3 It's defined in the third paragraph, after the reference to Shakespeare's idea of seven stages.
- 4 There are three examples: Bar Mitzvahs, American proms, and walkabouts of Australian aborigines.
- 5 Three out of five paragraphs. This might seem a lot, but without the examples the definition doesn't mean very much to most people.
- 6 It concludes with a final thought from the third example. This thought about "discovering yourself through a rite of passage" applies to all of the examples and makes a good conclusion.

6**A rite of passage: The "thorny gates" of exams**

From the Sui and Tang dynasties until the end of the Qing period, examinations in China were rites of passage to the gates of success for civil service employment, status, wealth and power, often known as "thorny gates". With variations at different times, exams marked the transition from study to work or stage-by-stage progression from local to provincial to metropolitan and national levels.

There were rituals for candidates to prepare for these important selection exams. With their teachers, students had read, recited, and memorized the classics and learnt to write particular kinds of poems and essays by strictly using a particular script, writing special texts and counting the exact number of lines and characters. Depending on the level, this could take many years.

At the examination halls there were special rituals to take the exams. Guarded by soldiers, candidates waited in line at dawn for their names to be called. They bowed to the examiners and were searched to make sure they had only brushes and ink with them. They were given a place to sit in a small hut where they read the questions and wrote their answers for perhaps three days, talking to no one. None of them was allowed to leave until the exam was over. The examiners had to go through similar hardships to mark the papers.

There were further rituals to announce the results. Candidates would gather outside the exam halls, perhaps wearing special robes, bow to the examiners, and with the sounds of bells hear the announcements and receive their results, written on large sheets of paper. Later, successful scholars would have a feast to celebrate with officials and past degree holders. They put banners outside their homes and could use special titles according to their local, provincial, metropolitan or imperial exam success and would be accepted forever in society, with rank, status and employment.

In modern China such exams have disappeared since 1905. But we still have our "thorny gates" of university entrance exams and exams to graduate. Even English tests can be thorny for some of us. Though the content is quite different and exams are on printed paper and marked electronically, we still have our rituals to prepare for, to take, and to celebrate our exams. And the results can still be gates or rites of passage to success in our lives.

Unit task

Writing a timeline about your life

1

A formative moment is one which changes you and is a turning point in your life, or perhaps also an important moment which remains in the memory for a long time.

- The day there was a large fire nearby.
- You saw a violent crime.
- You graduated from school.
- You had offers from three different colleges.
- Your friend was in serious trouble and you had to decide what to do.

2

- I think the day my dog was run over by a passing car was an important one in my life. I think I had seen life as safe and nice until then. But suddenly I saw my lovely dog killed and horribly damaged. The people in the car did not even stop. I had not realized life could be so cruel until that moment.
- The day I won a story-writing prize – I did not expect to win as I did not think my stories were any good. My parents used to laugh and say “Oh another of your silly stories”. I was so proud and happy and decided writing was going to be my life.
- The opening of the Olympic Games was a big moment for me. It was such a great and wonderful show. I suddenly understood pride in my country much more clearly.

3

1992–1998	Early days and kindergarten school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn to swim • First pet dog • Break leg
1998–2004	Primary school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trip to Beijing • Big fire in town centre • Millennium celebrations • Visit space and astronomy exhibition • Move from Ningbo to Quzhou
2004–2007	Middle school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet best friend • Become captain of basketball team • In a car accident
2007–2010	High school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trip to Hong Kong
2011	College <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First tour of laboratories • Taking part in variety show

I have chosen four formative moments on which to give more information.

First, there were the celebrations at the end of 1999 and the start of 2000. Everyone was talking about the new century and millennium and finally there were firework displays, parades, and all sorts of special events. I find it hard to say why this was so important for me, but it was somehow the moment I was aware of myself as a person with a future. I was going to grow up and get a job and see all these new things everyone was imagining. Life became a little more serious for me.

Second, I want to mention my visit with Dad to a big exhibition in 2002 about space and astronomy. I was totally fascinated by all I saw and have never lost my interest since. I learnt everything I could about the planets and stars. I read books, made models, begged and begged for a telescope and became a real expert. That exhibition visit gave me one of the great interests of my life.

Third was the day I met Bing. It was 2004. We had moved to a new home in Quzhou. I did not know anyone. It was also time to start middle school. The teacher told me where to sit and Bing was sitting next to me. It was a formative moment when we first spoke to each other – but we did not now. We have been best friends for the past ten years, going to the same high school and now college, and I cannot imagine what my life would have been like without knowing him.

While at middle school I became captain of the school basketball team. Of course, I was very proud of that, but more important it made me a lot more responsible. I had been a bit of a fool at times but now I wanted to be a good leader. Being captain really improved my character. It was a formative experience.

These four moments have been important in making me the person I am today. They gave me a sense of purpose in life and helped me overcome problems with the help of a great friend.

Thought for the day

Some people drift through their entire life. They do it one day at a time, one week at a time, one month at a time. It happens so gradually they are unaware of how their lives are slipping away until it's too late.

Mary Kay Ash (1918–2001), American female entrepreneur

Questions for students

- 1 How important is a sense of purpose?
- 2 Is it realistic for most people to follow a plan in life?
- 3 Can a life of drift still be a happy and useful life?

Translation of the passages

Active reading

两种判断

判断一个人有两种不同的方式，有时判断的最终目的是正确地判断一个人，不过另外一种则不是如此，并且这种判断要常见得多。我们往往认为所有的判断都属于第一种。如果能意识到哪些是第一种而哪些不是的话，我们也许会幸福。

第一种判断，即把正确地判断一个人作为最终目的的判断，包括法院判决、考试成绩及大部分比赛。这些判断当然可能会有误判，但因为其最终目的是正确地判断一个人，通常会有某种类似于上诉的程序。如果你觉得别人没有正确评价你，你可以表示反对，说你受到了不公平的待遇。

几乎所有对孩子的判断都属于第一类，所以在小时候我们就养成了这种习惯，认为所有的判断都是这样。

但实际上还有更广泛地存在着的第二类判断，在这种判断中，对你作出判断只是做另一件事的手段。这包括大学招生、聘用及作投资决定，当然也包括在约会时作出的判断。这种判断并不是真正意义上对你作出的评价。

假设你要为国家队挑选运动员。简单起见，假设这是一个没有位置要求的运动，并且你需要挑选二十个运动员。有一些明星运动员肯定要在队里，还有许多肯定不能入选。只有那些难作取舍的情况会让你的判断产生差别。即使你搞砸了，低估了排在第二十名的运动员，使他落选了，他的位置被排在第二十一名的运动员所代替，你还是组建了一支好的队伍。如果运动员之间的能力分配正常，第二十一名运动员只会比第二十名略微逊色，或者他们之间的差距比测量误差还要小。

那位排在第二十名的运动员可能会觉得自己被错误地判断了。但是在此你的目的不是为人们提供能力评估服务，而是组建一支队伍，如果排名第二十位的与排名第二十一位的运动员之间的差距比测量误差还小，你还是作了最佳选择。

用“不公平”来形容这种“不正确的判断”是一种错误的类比。因为在此目的不是为了对某个特定的个体作出正确的评估，而是选择合理的最佳组合。

在此，会误导我们的一点是选择者看起来有点权力。这点权力会让人们认为他像个法官。如果你把对你作出判断的人看成是一个顾客而不是一个法官，那么你就没有了对于公平性的期望。一部好小说的作者不会抱怨读者更喜欢金玉其外败絮其中的作品，说他们这样做不公平。也许会觉得他们愚蠢，但并没有不公平。

我们早年所受的训练，加上我们总是以自我为中心，使我们认为对我们所作的每个判断都是关于我们本身的判断。但事实上大部分并非如此。这是一个少见的例子，说明不那么以自我为中心会使人更自信。一旦你意识到人们在判断你的时候多么不在意对你的判断是否精确——由于大部分申请人的正态分布，在判断会产生最主要的影响的情况下，最无关紧要的往往是判断是否精确，一旦你意识到这一点你就不会把拒绝看成是针对你个人了。

令人惊奇的是，把被拒绝看得不那么针对个人，能帮助你更少地遭到拒绝。如果你认为别人在对你作出判断时会努力做到判断正确，你能做的就是被动地接受。你越了解大部分的判断受随意性及不相关的因素影响很大，大部分人在对你作出判断时更像一个善变的

小说购买者而不是一个理智而洞察一切的法官，你就越能认识到你能做一些事去影响最终结果。

这个理论最适用于大学申请。大部分高中生申请大学时带着不成熟的自卑和以自我为中心：自卑体现在他们认为招生委员会肯定是明察秋毫的；以自我为中心是他们认为招生委员会对他们非常重视，所以会认真研究他们的申请并权衡他们是否优秀。这些因素相结合就导致申请人在申请时很被动，并且在被拒绝时感到受伤。如果大学申请人意识到大部分选择过程是多么迅速、多么不考虑个体需求，他们就会更努力地推销自己，并能更加坦然地对待录取结果。

Further reading

我为什么辞职？

当我告诉父亲我要辞职的决定时，他引用了电影《死亡诗社》中的话：“只有在梦里，人类才能真正自由，从古迄今如此，从今往后也会一直如此。”

我想你肯定想不到，我辞职的原因恰恰是我当初申请这份工作的原因。无论是辞职还是申请工作时，我的要求都包括对工作的满意度和对未来的希望。当我最后一次离开这家广告代理公司时，我记得我当时所想的正是我第一次踏进公司时所想的：我深信我能把自己的人生过得更好。

事实上，我的大部分人生都是按一个重复模式度过的。大学毕业时我获得了一个美术类学位，成绩还过得去，考得好的时候不多，但不及格也不多，就像我读中学时一样。但就像在中学时一样，我也并不享受大学的生活。无论是儿童时期还是少年时期，我接受正式教育的日子，坦白地说，都是很枯燥的，并且有个特点：我对告诉我该学什么的人满腹怀疑。

但多年以来，我按照为我们所有人都规划好的一系列人生重要事件计划前行：进学校、上大学、找工作、结婚、生子……而且可能下一代也要受这个计划的折磨。在我从大学毕业时，我面临着找工作的需要。

我天生是个艺术家，也做着艺术家的工作。我擅长绘画，所以我画画，我设计服装，我知道怎样在纸上、在画布或其他材料上用色彩来展现我所塑造的人物性格。小时候，我很少看书，但会在厚沓纸上从容地画了又画。

所以现在，在从大学毕业、完成别人告诉我需要完成的人生计划时，我就注定得过着为别人服务的生活吗？难道要找一份能够发挥自我才能的工作就是要求太多吗？

所以我向设计公司、广告公司等任何我能发挥我的艺术才能的地方接连投了好些简历，应聘那里的职位。当然，这类公司的职位很少，而且毫无疑问，比我更优秀的人——或者至少是比我更有关系的人得到了这样的工作。当我第二次来到这家广告公司时（他们之前拒绝了我一次），我明白我是幸运儿之一，现在轮到我自己实现自己的梦想了。

童年时代在伦敦南部度过的我，被邀请到了这家公司位于广告之都——纽约麦迪逊大街的总部。无论从哪方面讲，这儿都与我的祖国不一样。在最初的几个月，我就像一个游客，思绪徘徊于对新家的新奇感与对故乡的思念之间。我与客户相处得很好，并做过几个广告策划，渐渐地，在很多美国知名广告中也能看到我的创意。

不到一年我升职成了客户经理，负责这个国家最受欢迎的软饮料供应商。最初，我的父母和我都为我奇迹般的升职感到惊讶——目前为止太快了！但我的新工作与我的特长毫不

相干，而且在那几年，我的创作激情也消失了。毕竟，说服人们买他们本来就想买的东西的方法也就那些。但无论我在公司里会有多么高的职位，我都讨厌听别人告诉我我应该做什么。并且，我很怀念我的颜料盒及满是墨渍的双手。

从那时候我就知道我必须迈出新的一步。

我回到了伦敦。我不知道我要做什么，但我想我愿意重新开始。我知道自己会有疑惑的时候，但也知道我想在视觉艺术领域发展，出售一些设计或者创作一些真正的画作。

那是一年前的事了。现在我挣的钱只有我在纽约挣的十分之一，虽然我有个固定的女朋友，但我们的经济状况意味着我们不能要小孩。但我自己成功与否及精神上的满足依然是我自己如何去理解的问题，而不是别人怎么认为的问题。并且，我的成功感真是难以形容。

在我回来之初，我觉得自己有必要解释一下我为什么辞去工作。尽管我自己觉得我做得对，我还是需要我父亲的认可。我跟他说：“我追随我梦想的脚步回来了。”

我父亲带着理解的笑容说道：“又一次！一直是这样啊。”

Reading across cultures

通过仪式

生活是否如同对生活持宿命论看法的美国作家艾伯特·哈伯德在一百年前所描述的那样，是“该死的事情一桩接着一桩”？抑或是一场障碍赛跑，其间每个参赛者，即世界各地的人们，不得不在生命的各个重要阶段展现自己的价值？

莎士比亚在戏剧《皆大欢喜》中提出人的一生要经历“七个年龄段”，几乎每个社会都有的通过仪式也证明，我们往往是把生命分为这几个阶段来看待的，比如童年、中年和老年。

通过仪式是社会对个人从一个阶段走向另一阶段的正式的认可，其中被广泛认同的是由少年步入成年时举行的成年礼。成年礼有多种形式。例如，在犹太传统中，人生最重要的时刻之一就是“犹太男孩成人仪式”和“犹太女孩成人仪式”，人们为年满13岁的男孩和年满12岁的女孩举办宗教仪式和家庭聚会，这标志着从此以后这个孩子要对自己的行为负责了。这个年龄也恰恰是许多国家规定开始承担法律责任的年龄。

美国中学生活结束前的毕业舞会则是另一种通过仪式。这次舞会非同寻常，学生们不仅穿着正式（许多学生平生第一次这么穿），他们通常还乘坐着一辆租来的豪华轿车到达舞会现场。就在那一天晚上，他们似乎要表现得和年龄是他们两倍的成年人一样，至少是看上去要比自己的实际年龄大。

世界上最有趣的通过仪式之一或许就是澳大利亚土著人的“徒步旅行”了。还处于青春期的少年必须在野外独自行走六个月，沿着古老的划定版图的“歌之界”追寻祖先的足迹。通过这样的仪式，他们深入到土著文化这一世界上最源远流长的文化的精髓之中，并在这一过程中发现自我。