ProTalk

Discussion Files



C1. Are we getting fitter or lazier?

Afaq Language Center

Language Center

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Goals

- Can read and understand an advanced text about fitness and technology.
- Can explain whether technology is having a positive or negative impact on our physical health and clearly present my own views on this.



Is technology making us fitter or is it turning us into a society of **couch potatoes**?

In this class you will consider both sides of this debate!

Are you a couch potato or are you full of beans?

Look at the English idioms on the cards below. Which have you heard already? Check your understanding of each and then see if you can think of someone you know who fits in each category. Do any of these phrases below describe you?



lazy bones

couch potato

busy bee

full of beans

I used to....



What kind of sports and outdoor activities did you enjoy when you were a child? Contrast your childhood experience with your experience as an adult. Has anything changed? How much physical activity do you do now?

Imagine you are...

Imagine you are a time traveller from the early 19th century visiting the present. Describe the changes you see in terms of people's physical activity compared with your time.

- Remember also to describe anything that might be new to someone from your time. For example: cars, school buses, gyms, people using smartphones.





- You might also notice the effects of industrialisation on people and industries such as farming, mining and construction.

Read the text and summarize it.

Are we getting fitter or lazier?

Are technological advances making us fitter, or are we getting lazier? Whilst in the past people might have walked to school or to the local shops, these days most people own a car, which is the **predominant** method of transport for our society. Also, thanks to the internet, we can now shop from home and so we don't even need to walk to the shops or pack our own groceries! Online shopping has **surged in growth** over the past decade and some experts even predict that we could see an end to traditional **brick and mortar shops** within the next 50 years.



Read the text and summarize it.

Are we getting fitter or lazier?



How we spend our leisure time has also been shaped by technology. A common complaint of tech critics is that these days we see far fewer children playing outdoors. Instead, thanks to mass marketing strategies by many companies, parents are **lured** into buying the latest hi-tech gadgets and computer games for their children. There seems to be an **ever-increasing** drive to **hook** children **up** to technology from a young age.

Look at the new vocabulary. See if you can define each of the below using 6 words or less!

surge in growth

to lure

ever-increasing

to hook up

predominant

bricks and mortar shops

How do you shop?

Think about your own shopping habits. How do you shop? Has this changed over the past decade? Have you noticed changes in terms of your own local area as a result of an increase in online shopping?



price

convenience

choice

community

Outside versus inside

Read the quote from the man below about the changes that have occurred in his neighbourhood. Do you think he has a point? What's your road like? Do you think children are spending too much time indoors?

> "Twenty years ago, our road was filled with children skipping, playing hopscotch and football. It was nice to hear children laughing and know they're getting good exercise and having fun, too! Now, the road is filled with cars so there isn't even space for them to play in the first place – if they all weren't inside playing video games, that is."

A matter of opinion

Read the opinions on social media and fitness below. Which do you agree with most? How do they compare and contrast to what was said in the listening text?



I don't think social media is making us fitter in the slightest! When I think of social media, I see people sitting around scrolling through their phones like zombies. If anything, we are less active since social media took off.



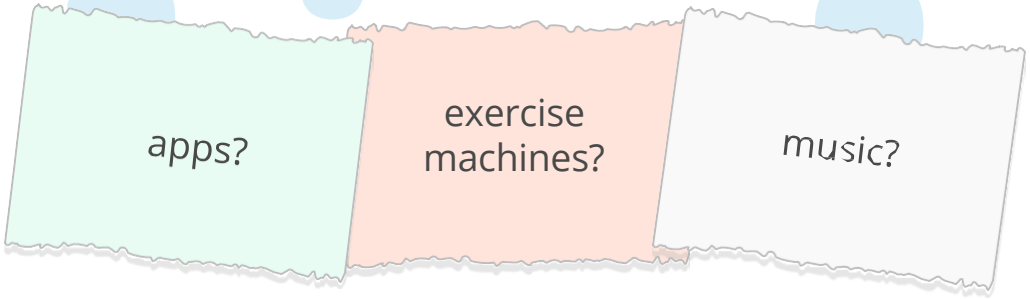
I think it depends on the person. One person might use social media for inspiration and another might use it to compare themselves to photos of really fit people and think 'I'll never get there!' It's all about your own mindset.



I find social media is really helpful in keeping me motivated and inspired! I am part of a group where everyone shares their progress towards their fitness goals. I also love finding new recipes to try on different social media websites!

What about you?

How do you exercise? Do you use technology to help you in any way? Is there any machine or app you would be lost without?



Imagine you are

Imagine you are a director of a major technology company that is pitching for a deal with the public health service of your home country. The government is willing to invest a lot of money in your company if you can convince them that your technology will appeal to people and make them more active. Make your pitch and win the contract!

Remember:

- What technology will you pitch? How will you encourage and attract users?
- You want to attract ordinary people and convince them to use this technology.
- Also, this technology must make people more active, not less!



Fitter or lazier?

Discuss the following questions keeping in mind what you've talked about in the lesson.



1. Do you think we're getting fitter or lazier, or have we changed at all? Debate this with your teacher.

2. Do you think technology has ultimately had an influence on whether we are fitter or lazier?

3. Do you think *you* are fitter or lazier because of technology?

Activity p. 12

Advances, encourage, programmes, critics, reliance

Presentation

Think about the issues you debated in this lesson regarding fitness and technology. What do you think? Is technology making us fitter or lazier?

Prepare a two-minute presentation about it. Include several reasons to support your point of view.

Give your presentation to the class. Answer questions and get feedback.