

DO YOU LIKE YOUR BODY?

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Introduction

Are gyms popular in your country?

Why do some people obsess about their body?

Is this healthy or unhealthy?

Reading

James trains his body every single day. He makes sure he is in peak condition.

“I go to the gym every single day,” he says. “I just think if I miss a day then I will lose all the hard work I have put into it.”

And indeed, James does look good. As we make our way to his gym, he gets many admiring glances from young women.

“I like the attention I get so that motivates me to work out more,” he says.

James doesn't only lift weights as part of his routine.

“I make sure I eat properly too. I measure all the calories I eat every day. I weigh the food I prepare every day to make sure I am not eating too much.”

What does his diet consist of?

“Lots of protein in the form of fish and beef, and I am very careful about what vegetables I eat. I only eat five portions of fruit a day and I make sure I weigh every single piece. Fruit has a lot of sugar in it.”

So no snacking on potato chips in front of the TV then? No chocolate cake after dinner?

James looks horrified.

“Oh no!” he says. “I never eat any of that stuff. That is just really bad for me.”

James leans a little closer.

“In fact, sometimes I don't eat at all.”

No food at all? What does he mean?

“I do this special diet where I don't eat for one whole day. I do this about twice a week.”

But surely that is very unhealthy?

“I don't think so,” says James. “And when I go a whole day without eating, I get really ripped.”

James smiles proudly.

What other things does he do to look good?

He looks a little embarrassed.

“I've actually had some cosmetic surgery done,” he says. “I've had lip fillers, and I had my nose done. It had a really weird bump in the middle of it before. But now it looks great.”

Isn't this a bit extreme?

“Not at all,” says James. “Many people have surgery these days. It's important to look good.”

But it must be very difficult to have a social life if you are so worried about what you eat every day.

“I never go to bars or nightclubs,” he says. “And I don’t go to restaurants. I can’t be sure what the ingredients are in the food they cook. Plus, I can’t weigh the portions.”

So does he have any friends?

“Oh yeah,” he says. “I have lots of friends. But they all go to the gym. That’s where we hang out.”

As he says this, we arrive at the gym entrance. Another young man accompanied by a striking-looking young woman wave at James.

“These are my friends now,” says James. And off he goes into the gym.

The young man looks eerily just like James. And the woman looks like she could be related to both of them.

In fact, they all look identical.

Reading Comprehension Questions

How often does James go to the gym?

Is James good-looking?

What is the thing that drives James to go to the gym?

What else does he do to take care of his body?

Describe James' eating habits.

What kind of food does James avoid?

What is something a little strange about James' diet?

Why does James' do this?

What extra things does James do to look good? Describe what he has had done.

Does James have a social life? What places does he avoid?

Where does James meet most of his friends?

Who joins James at the gym at the end of the article?

Essential Vocabulary

trains	in peak condition
admiring glances	attention
motivates	work out
lift weights	routine
measure	calories
diet	consist of
protein	portions
snacking	potato chips
horrified	stuff
ripped	embarrassed
cosmetic surgery	lip fillers
bump	extreme
social life	bars
nightclubs	ingredients
hang out	accompanied
striking-looking	wave
eerily	identical

Exercise

Write down all the words and phrases in your vocabulary notebook. Look in your dictionary and find the meaning of each word. Write the definition next to each word.

Then make up your own sentences using each word or phrase.

For example:

Notebook—*a small book with pages of blank paper that students use to make notes when studying.*

“I left my notebook at home so I was unable to make any notes in my English class.”

The Worst Gym in the World!!

You are the marketing department for the worst gym in the world!

And you have been asked to write a press release to introduce your new gym classes and trainers.

The emphasis is on being funny so go crazy!

Here are some examples to get you started:

Meet our new gym trainers! First, there is George. He weighs 110kg and his favourite food is fried chicken and ice-cream. He is willing to take on all the new students.

Then there is Carol. She only smokes two packs of cigarettes a day and usually gets up around midday, so she can only have afternoon classes.

Finally, we have Bob whose favourite hobby is lying on the sofa and watching TV.

We have some fantastic new running machines. These are a new design that only goes as fast as 2 kph plus we have fitted a chair on top so you can sit down and have a good rest.

Don't forget to use our new weights. None of them is heavier than 5kg. So you cannot strain yourself.

Our drinks bar has coca-cola, ice-cream and free chocolate bars to all our members!

Now you try. Remember, try to make it as funny as you can!

Discussion Questions

What do you think of James' lifestyle?

Is his diet healthy or too extreme?

Describe the cosmetic surgery he has had done. What do you think about this?

Why do James' and his two friends look identical, do you think?

Do you go to the gym? Do you go just for general fitness or to change the way your body looks?

Do you eat healthily? Or do you obsess over every single calorie?

What is a healthy amount of exercise every week? What is an unhealthy amount of exercise?

Do you ever have days where you just eat what you want? Is this acceptable or unacceptable?

Does advertising make us think negatively about our bodies? How?

Do you feel intimidated when you go to the gym? Why/why not?

How did your parents look after their bodies and health when they were younger? How about your grandparents? Are they healthy?

Many people buy a gym membership in the New Year then quit after one month. Why do they do this?

Writing

You are James' best friend.

You have known each other since school. James was always a fitness fan and always enjoyed sport and being active.

But you now believe that James is going too far with his gym obsession. You also think his diet is too extreme and the cosmetic surgery is totally unnecessary.

Write a letter to James, telling him your feelings and remind of how you both used to be at school. There were times when you both enjoyed sport but you also enjoyed food and didn't care that much about how you looked.

Tell James that you want him to think about changing his lifestyle and enjoying life more.

Teacher's Notes

Introduction

Get students to read out all the questions, one-by-one, then discuss in the class together.

Reading

This could be done as a reading assignment before class or in the class with several students taking it in turns to read.

Check for pronunciation.

Reading Comprehension

This could be done as homework or in class.

Go through all the questions, getting a different student to read out a question each time. Then elicit answers from the class.

Vocabulary

This could be done as homework or in class.

If you do this in class, it is a good opportunity to help the students learn how to use a dictionary effectively.

It would be better if the students each had their own vocabulary notebook to write down new words learned from the reading exercise.

Get the students to write down the word and the meaning in English. Try to make them avoid using a translation app as this will just slow them down.

For making their own sentences, you could give them some time and go around the class assisting where necessary.

Once all the students are ready, you can get them to read out their sentences in class.

Check for the correct use of the vocabulary and sentence structure.

The Worst Gym in the World!!

Put the students into groups and let them go wild with this exercise. There should be a strong emphasis on fun and humour in this exercise.

At the end, you can get each group to introduce all their ideas in front of the class.

Discussion

Get students to read out each question in class. Then discuss with all the class.

Encourage and push for responses where necessary.

Writing

Do this as a homework assignment.

You could mark all the writing assignments privately or ask the students to read out loud in class, depending on the students' levels of confidence and their culture.

Credits

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