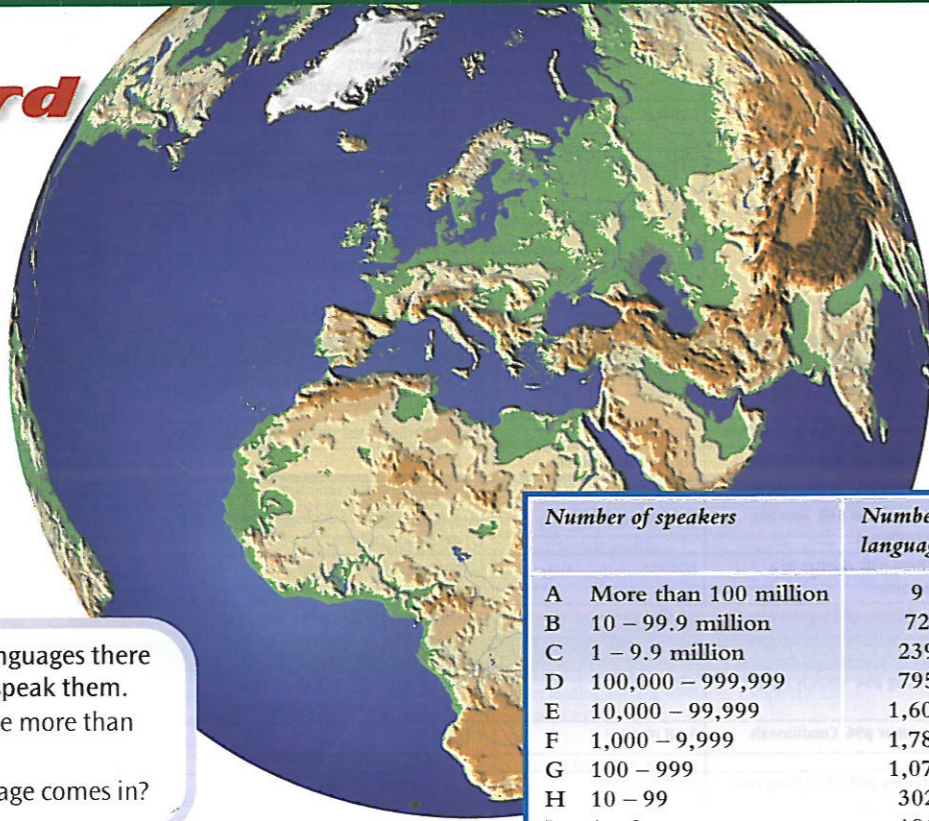


The last word

Do you know what languages the people in these countries speak?
 • Portugal • Argentina • Australia

Bom dia Bonjour
 Selamat pagi
 Aloha 今日好
 God dag



Look at the table. It shows how many languages there are in the world and how many people speak them.

- List four languages that you think have more than 100 million speakers.
- Which group do you think your language comes in?

Skills

1 Predicting what the text is about

- Look at the picture opposite. What do you think the article is about?
- Read the article and see if you were right.

2 Matching topics to paragraphs

Quick Tip!

When you match topics to paragraphs, don't just look for the same words in the topic and the paragraphs. Instead, think about the meaning of the whole paragraph.

Read the article again and match the topics a–f with paragraphs 1–6. The first one has been done for you.

- What communities can do 5
- The number of languages in danger _____
- The last speaker of his language _____
- The most important reason why languages are dying _____
- Languages and natural disasters _____
- What happens when languages die _____

3 Understanding the text

Read the article again and answer these questions. Use your own words as much as possible.

- What does Maluerindi think we can do about his loneliness?
- What is going to happen in the next 100 years?
- Why do languages die?
- What can people do to save a language?
- Why should we care when languages die?

Vocabulary

4 Verbs

A Find these verbs in the article and match them to their meanings in this context. You can find one word in each paragraph.

- | | |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| 1 change | damage something badly |
| 2 disappear | become different |
| 3 destroy | live after a difficult event |
| 4 survive | stop something dying |
| 5 save | stop existing |
| 6 care | be interested in something |

B Choose three of the verbs and write three sentences of your own about the reading text.



1 Maluerindi (a name which means 'Running Water') is lonely because he has nobody to talk to, but his loneliness won't change – he is the last person in the world who can speak his Aboriginal language. 'It's sad,' he says, 'but there's nothing we can do about it now.'

2 Experts who study languages say that there are 51 other languages with just one speaker left – 28 of them in Australia. These languages are so close to dying that nobody can save them. The experts tell us that out of the world's 6,000 languages, 3,000 will disappear in the next 100 years.

3 There are many reasons why languages die. Sometimes natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods or hurricanes suddenly destroy small groups of people who live in far away places. Sometimes the weather changes and there isn't enough food, and sometimes strangers bring new diseases.

4 But disasters like these are not the biggest danger, and do not tell us why languages are disappearing faster than ever before. The real problem comes from the big world languages such as English, Spanish, Portuguese and French. Today, mainly because of America, English is the first world language, and it is very hard for smaller languages to survive.

5 There are things that small communities can do to save a language, but they need time and money. First, people need to record the language and write it down. Then they need to train teachers, and write grammar books, dictionaries and books for schools.

6 We should care about languages that are in danger just as we should care about rare plants and animals. When a language dies it is not like when a civilisation such as the ancient Greeks or Egyptians die. They leave behind buildings like the pyramids in Egypt and Parthenon in Greece – there is always something to show that they were there. But a spoken language leaves nothing behind – when it dies, there is only silence.

5 say, talk, speak or tell?

A Complete these sentences with the correct form of say, talk, speak or tell.

- He is lonely because he has nobody to _____ to.
- He is the last and only person in Australia who can _____ his Aboriginal language.
- 'It's sad,' he _____, 'but there's nothing we can do about it now.'
- The experts _____ us that out of the world's 6,000 languages, 3,000 will disappear in the next 100 years.

Which word means to know a language?

Which word means to have a conversation with?

Which word means to give information to someone?

Which word is used to describe someone's actual words?

B Now find the sentences in the text and see if you were right.

6 Words connected with studying

A These verbs and nouns are all connected with studying. Fill in the missing words.

Verbs	Nouns
study	<i>Student</i> _____
revise	_____
practise	_____
_____	repetition
_____	memory
_____	translation

B Use two verbs and two nouns in sentences to talk about your language study.

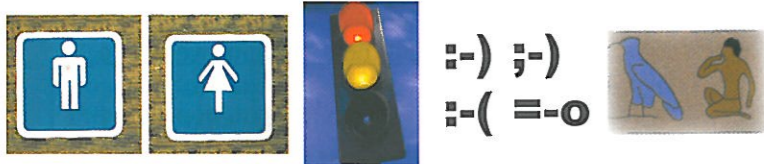
Time to talk!

- These pictures show different ways of learning a language. Talk about what they show.
- Say which of these activities you do, or would like to do.
- Put the activities in order, saying which are the most helpful for learning a language.



The present simple and the present continuous

A Look at these symbols. Can you say where they are used?



B Can you think of any symbols which are recognised around the world?

1 A presentation

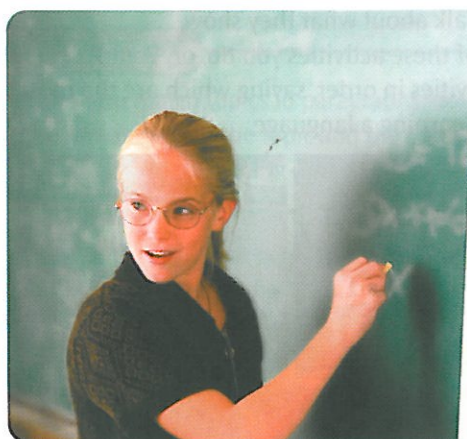
A Tanya is giving a presentation to a class at her school. Listen to the beginning of her presentation and fill in the gaps.

As part of our English course, we ¹ _____ a project every term. We spend one lesson a week learning about something a bit different. This term we ² _____ old systems of writing, such as Egyptian hieroglyphics, which used small pictures and symbols.



What tense is used in the first gap? _____
 What tense is used in the second gap? _____

B Now look at the picture, read the rest of Tanya's presentation, and answer the questions.

- 1 What's Tanya doing in the picture?
- 2 Why are symbols useful?
- 3 What's the difference between a symbol and an icon?
- 4 What change does Tanya mention?



Even nowadays there are times when we prefer to use symbols and icons to communicate our ideas to each other.

This week ³ I'm doing a project on modern symbols, and the chart that ⁴ you're looking at has all sorts of examples of them. Symbols ⁵ are things like national flags, or the colours in a set of traffic lights. They're useful because everybody understands what they mean, even if they come from a different country or speak a different language. Icons are a bit like symbols, except that they look like the things they represent - for example, the signs for man  and woman .

Symbols and icons are important in business. Teenagers and young adults are the main customers for companies like Cola and McDonald's, and these companies ⁶ spend a lot of money making sure that young people recognise their symbols. This use of symbols and icons is fairly recent - a few years ago you didn't see many of them but now ⁷ they're becoming more and more common.

2 The present simple and the present continuous

Grammar check

Uses

Look again at verbs 1-7 in the presentation. Read the five uses below. Write present simple or present continuous and the number of an example from the presentation next to each one.

- 1 something that happens regularly **Present simple (1)**
- 2 something that is permanent or always true _____
- 3 something that is happening at the moment of speaking _____
- 4 something that is only temporary _____
- 5 a change that takes place over a period of time _____

Form

Complete 1 and 2 with the forms of the present simple and present continuous.

- 1 Present simple
 Positive _____
 Negative **They don't do a project every term.**
 Question _____?
- 2 Present continuous
 Positive **She's doing a project this term.**
 Negative _____
 Question _____?

3 What do they mean?

Match 1-6 to a-f.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 Petra comes from Hungary. | a She's the manager there. |
| 2 Petra is coming from Hungary. | b He's doing his homework. |
| 3 Joanna works at McDonald's. | c He prefers reading books. |
| 4 Joanna is working at McDonald's. | d She was born there. |
| 5 My brother doesn't watch TV. | e She has a job there for a month. |
| 6 My brother isn't watching TV. | f She's on the train right now. |

4 The present simple or the present continuous?

Circle the correct form of the verb.

- 1 Let's go to Phoneland, they *sell / are selling* mobiles really cheaply at the moment.
- 2 My computer's broken so I *use / am using* my brother's until I get it fixed.
- 3 Ela is Polish. She *comes / is coming* from Warsaw.
- 4 I *get / am getting* more and more worried about giving my presentation tomorrow.
- 5 Every summer McDonald's *spend / are spending* extra money on advertising ice cream.
- 6 My friends *design / are designing* their own website. It looks great.

5 Questions and negatives

Put the words into the correct order to make questions and negative sentences.

- 1 Symbols / more / are / common / becoming?
Are symbols becoming more common?
- 2 don't / symbols / like / people / some.

- 3 am not / a project / I / this term / doing.

- 4 companies / spend / do / a lot of money / on advertising?

- 5 looking / you / are / at / the chart?



Remember!

- 1 We use the present simple, not the present continuous, with adverbs of frequency (*always, often, usually, sometimes, rarely, never*).
I always use symbols in my text messages.
John never uses them.
- 2 There are a number of verbs that we do not normally use in the continuous form. Here are some of the most common ones:
believe, belong to, dislike, hate, have, know, like, love, own, need, think, understand.
I don't understand what you mean.

6 Which tense?

Write the present simple or continuous form of the verbs in brackets.

- 1 My sister often _____ (send) text messages to her friends.
- 2 At the moment, I _____ (learn) to use a new computer program.
- 3 Symbols _____ (become) more and more common in advertising.
- 4 I _____ (not / own) a mobile phone at the moment.
- 5 I usually _____ (understand) the symbols I see in other countries.
- 6 How many symbols _____ (you have) on your mobile?
- 7 John never _____ (send) me emails or text messages.
- 8 Red sometimes _____ (mean) 'danger' or 'stop'.
- 9 _____ (You know) what this symbol L means?

Activate

7 Interviewing your partner

A You are going to interview your partner. Use the topics below to help you and write some questions about things that are always true for your partner, and some questions about things that are true at the moment.

Example languages

- Do you speak any languages?
- Are you studying any languages at the moment?
- family • friends • books • music • sport

B Interview your partner.

Listening

Getting the message

Match these verbs to the nouns:

- make • leave • dial • phone
- a number • a message • a phone call • someone



Here are some different ways of sending and receiving messages. Can you describe what they are?



1 Matching 2

Quick Tip!

When you do a matching task, read the information carefully before you listen. Think about the kind of words you might hear.

You will hear people giving or taking three different messages. As you listen for the first time, match the messages (1-3) to what each one is about a-d. There is one answer you do not need.

- a a party _____
- b an evening out _____
- c homework _____
- d an apology _____

2 Note-taking 3

Quick Tip!

The information in notes usually follows the order on the tape. Practise writing quickly and listening at the same time.

Now listen again and complete the missing information about the messages. You may need to listen twice.

Message 1

Message for: 1 _____ Nicky

Arranged time: 2 _____

Message from: 3 _____

Message 2

Message from: 4 _____

Message for: 5 _____

Number to call: 6 _____

Message 3

Message for: 7 _____

How to give information: 8 _____

Information wanted: 9 _____

3 Recognising short forms 4

A Write these words in their short form (contraction).

- I am not • were not • have not • she will • might not
- will not • you are not

B Listen to some sentences on the recording and write down the short forms the speakers use.

- | | |
|----------------|---------|
| 1 <u>isn't</u> | 5 _____ |
| 2 _____ | 6 _____ |
| 3 _____ | 7 _____ |
| 4 _____ | 8 _____ |

4 Sending messages

You are going to send a message around the whole class:

- The teacher whispers a message to the first student.
- The first student whispers the same message to the next student, and so on.
- The last student tells the class what (s)he thinks the message is.

Speaking

What are you saying?

1 The meaning of words

A American English has some words which are different from the British English words with the same meaning. Do you know which of these words are American and which are British?

- | | |
|----------|---------------|
| elevator | lift |
| bathrobe | dressing gown |



B Listen to or read the dialogue. Are Jim and Jane British or American?

1 Talking about meaning 5

- Jim What does 'elevator' mean?
- Jane I'm not sure, but I think it means 'lift'. Do you know what 'bathrobe' means?
- Jim Yes. In the dictionary it says 'dressing gown'.

C Work in pairs. Each partner should choose three of these American English words and use the word list on page 141 to find out what they mean. Do not tell your partner.

- faucet • flashlight • billfold • vest • pantyhose • drugstore

D Ask your partner what their words mean. Use the dialogue box to help you.

2 Asking for information

A Listen to or read the dialogue. What problems is Maria having?

2 Asking questions and understanding the answer 6

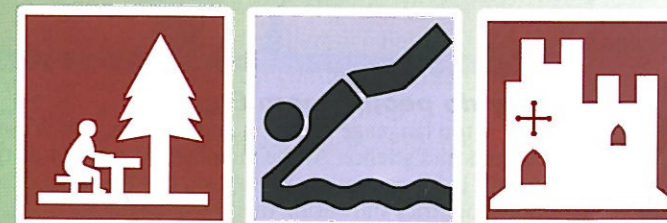
- Maria Excuse me, do you know where the library is?
- Jane It's in Burundi Street.
- Maria Could you spell that please?
- Jane B-U-R-U-N-D-I.
- Maria Could you tell me where that is?
- Jane Go past the school, take the first right and it's opposite the bus station.
- Maria Sorry that was a bit fast, I didn't understand. Could you repeat it more slowly?

B Work in pairs. One person is Student A and one is Student B. Use the dialogue box to help you.

- 1
- STUDENT A • You want to know where the bus station is.
- Ask Student B to spell the street name.
- STUDENT B • Tell Student A that the bus station is next to the cinema in Warwick Street.
- Spell the street name.
- 2
- STUDENT B • You want to know what the time is.
- Ask Student A to repeat it if you don't understand.
- STUDENT A • Tell Student B what time it is but talk very quietly.
- Repeat what you have said.

C Work in different pairs. Imagine that one of you is a stranger in your town, and only speaks English. Practise similar dialogues to the one in A about:

- the nearest cinema / disco
- the name of a good doctor / dentist / hairdresser
- interesting sights to see in your town



1 Look at the frequently asked questions on this web page, and see if you can guess any of the answers.

B Read and see if you were right.

http://zzz.englishclub.com

FAQ

Welcome to the English Club's frequently asked questions.

HOME

Where does English come from?

We can't answer that question exactly, but here's a recipe we came across the other day:

- 50 grammes Greek
 - 75 grammes Latin
 - 400 grammes Anglo Saxon
 - 150 grammes Norse
 - 300 grammes French (flavoured with Latin and Greek)
 - 25 grammes other mixed languages
- Mix all the ingredients together.
Cook slowly for 1,000 years.

How many people speak English?

English is the main language in 30 countries, and there are about 375 million people who speak it as their first language.

It is also used as an official language in over 70 other countries such as Cameroon, Tanzania, India, Pakistan, Malaysia and Fiji, and is a second language for about 350 million people.

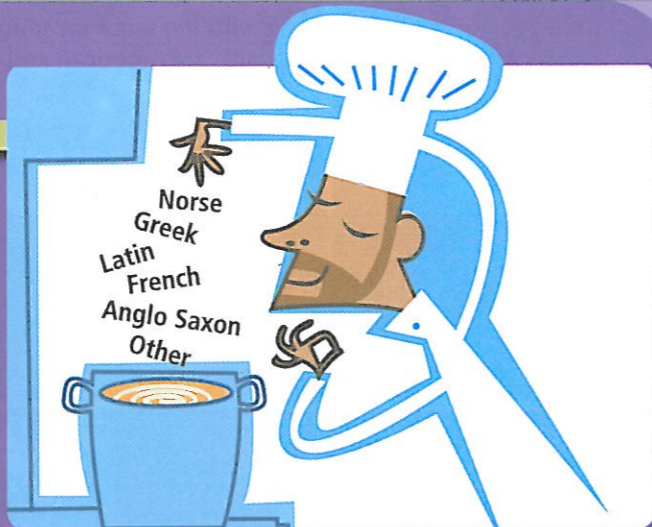
One in two Europeans can speak English quite well and can have a proper conversation, and in the future even more Europeans will be able to speak it.

All in all, there are about 1,000 million (a billion) people who can't speak English, but they're learning it!



Why do people learn English?

It's the top language for travel and tourism, and is used in business and science. At the moment, 80 per cent of the world's Internet sites are in English, but this will fall when more countries start using their own language.



How many words are there in English?

There are about 300,000 entries in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. However, there are many scientific and technical words that are not in the dictionary (for example, there are over a million types of insect). An educated English speaker only uses about 30,000 words.

What's the longest word in English?

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, it is the name for a lung disease caused by breathing in dangerous dust and is *pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis*

What's the most common letter in English?

The letter 'e' is used more than any other. Ernest Wright was very interested in this fact, and wanted to see if it was possible to communicate without using this letter at all.

He wasn't able to write very much! In the end, he wrote a 200-page novel, *Gadsby*, without using any words containing the letter 'e'. Sadly, it was not a great success, but here is a bit of it:

*A glorious full moon sails across a sky without a cloud.
A crisp night air has folks turning up coat collars and
kids hopping up and down for warmth.*

2 Talking about your country

In pairs or small groups, discuss the following questions.

- 1 Do you know where your language comes from?
- 2 Are there any foreign languages that are very similar to yours?
- 3 What foreign languages do / did most people learn at school a) now and b) in the past?
- 4 What language do most tourists use when they come to your country?
- 5 Is it important to speak the language of a country you are visiting? Why? Why not?

can, can't or (not) be able to P134

3 can and can't

Look at these extracts from the web page:

*One in two Europeans can speak English quite well.
There are about a billion people who can't speak English.*

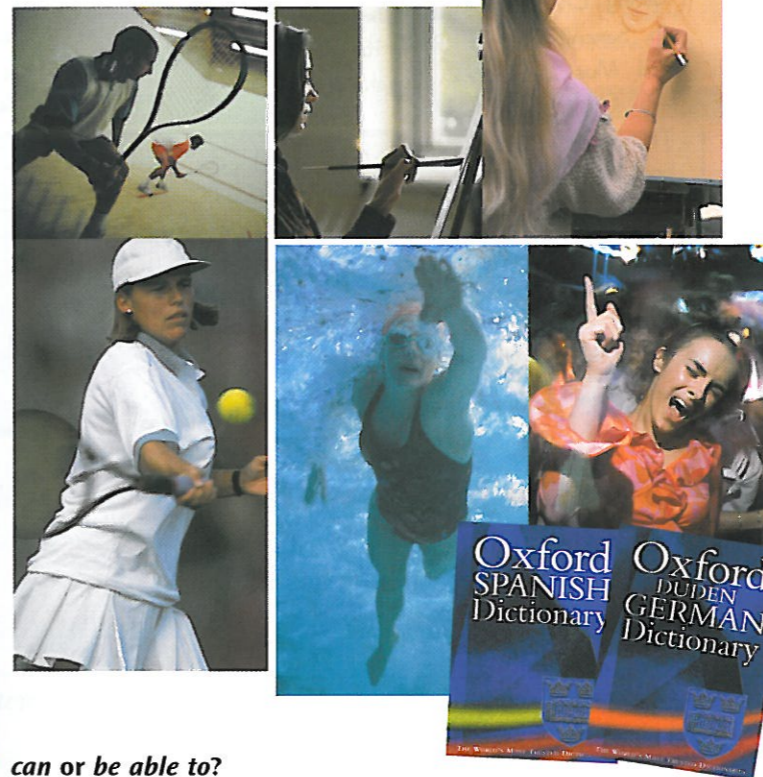
We use *can* and *can't* to refer to things we are (not) able to do.

In pairs, ask and answer questions about your abilities in these activities.

Example

A Can you play squash or tennis?

B I can play tennis but I can't play squash.



4 can or be able to?

Remember!

Sometimes it is not possible to use *can* because it has no infinitive form and no future form. We have to use *be able to* instead. We usually use *can* if possible.

A Look back at the text and find the example of *be able to* that completes this sentence:

... in the future, even more Europeans _____ it.

B Look at the two columns below. In which column is it possible to use *can* after all the words? In which column do we need to use *be able to* after all the words? Finish the sentences using your own ideas.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 |
| My brother _____ | I want to _____ |
| I _____ | One day I will _____ |
| A lot of people _____ | He might _____ |
| Not many English people _____ | I'd like to _____ |

5 can, can't or (not) be able to

A Complete these sentences using *can*, *can't* where possible or *(not) be able to*.

- 1 I always learn a few words of the language when I go abroad. It's nice to _____ speak to local people.
- 2 I'm sorry, can you please repeat that? It's very noisy and I _____ hear you.
- 3 I'm going to take extra French lessons because I want to _____ speak to people when I'm on holiday.
- 4 It's great using the Internet. You _____ learn a lot of new expressions.
- 5 If you go to Australia for two years, you will _____ speak English really well by the time you come back.
- 6 Why don't you ask your teacher to recommend a book? She may _____ help you.
- 7 I'm very sorry, but I'm afraid that I _____ come to the lesson next week.
- 8 People who work in the tourist industry usually need to _____ speak more than just one language.

B Work with a partner. Take turns to ask and answer questions using *can* / *can't* or *(not) be able to*. Use the prompts to help you.

- 1 you / speak more than two languages?
- 2 you / pronounce *pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis*?
- 3 will you / come to my party next week?
- 4 you / lend me a dictionary?
- 5 you / go on holiday next year?

Activate

Write a list of five things that you can't do at the moment but you will / might be able to do in the future. Use the ideas to help you, swap lists with a partner and find out what they think they will be able to do in the future.

Example

I can't drive a car but I might be able to when I'm older.

- read a novel in English / finish this coursebook
- explain the difference between the past simple and the past continuous / read unit 2
- go to university / I am 19
- visit the moon / technology becomes cheaper

A questionnaire and description

ORDER FORM

Name	Address	Description	Quantity	Price

Look at these different forms. When do people usually fill them in?

Landing Card

Forename: _____
 Family name: _____
 Passport number: _____
 Reason for visit: _____
 Address during stay: _____

Job Application

Post applied for: _____
 Reference: _____
 Surname: _____
 First name: _____

Looking at the sample

1 Understanding a questionnaire

Read the information in the questionnaire and complete the description of Jenny Chan.



Jenny Chan
 Jenny Chan is 16 and she comes from _____. She lives in Seremban. Her favourite subjects are English, History and Music. She can speak three _____ - English, Malay and Chinese.
 There are five people in her family. She's got one brother, aged 19, who is studying _____ at university. In her free time, she loves _____ or watching TV. Her favourite programme is 'Friends'. She plays football _____.
 In the future she would like to go to drama school and wants to be an _____.

Friends around the world

General information

Name: Jenny Chan Age: 16
 Nationality: Malaysian
 Address: 18 Jalan Nyamuk, Seremban, Malaysia

Study

What are your favourite subjects at school?
 History, Music, English
 What languages do you speak? English, Malay, Chinese
 Why are you learning English?
 I want to travel, and English is very useful

Family

How many people are there in your family? five
 How many brothers or sisters do you have? one brother
 What does he / she do? (what do they do?)
 He's studying drama at university
 How old is he / she? (how old are they?) 19

Lifestyle

What do you like to do in your free time?
 I go out with my friends and watch TV
 What is your favourite programme on TV? Friends
 Do you like travelling? Yes
 How often do you travel?
 I go on holiday with my family twice a year
 Do you like sport? Yes
 What sports do you play? I play football
 How often do you play sport? About twice a week
 Do you have any ambitions? Yes, I'd like to go to drama school and become an actress

Steps to better writing

2 Asking and answering questions

Match the questions with the answers.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 How often do you play football? <u>K</u> | a Alison Smith. |
| 2 How many of you are there in your family? _____ | b No, I'm the youngest. |
| 3 When do you start school in the morning? _____ | c Eight o'clock. |
| 4 Where do you go to school? _____ | d He's an engineer. |
| 5 What does your father do? _____ | e Yes, quite well. |
| 6 Why are you learning English? _____ | f St Martin's College. |
| 7 Have you got any brothers or sisters? _____ | g Because it's a really useful language. |
| 8 Can you speak Polish? _____ | h Four. |
| 9 Are you the oldest in the family? _____ | i Yes, one of each. |
| 10 Do you like travelling? _____ | j Yes, I love it. |
| 11 Who is your best friend? _____ | k Once a week. |

3 Question words

- A Look at the questions in 2 again. How many of them:
- are formed using a question word?
 - are direct questions using *do / does, am / is / are, have / has* or a modal?
- Which questions can be answered with 'yes' or 'no'?
 Which questions need a longer answer?

- B Read the answers to the following questionnaire. Write in the questions.

How old are you?	I am 16.
_____	I am 1 metre 70 centimetres.
_____	I weigh 65 kg.
_____	No, I don't drink alcohol.
_____	Yes, I exercise regularly.
_____	I play tennis and football.
_____	No I don't have any illnesses.
_____	In an emergency you should contact my mother, Mrs A Milne on 02172 443 222.

- C What do you think the reason for the questionnaire was?

Writing questionnaires and descriptions

4 Planning

- A You are going to write a questionnaire to find out about the lifestyle or personality of one of the other students in your class. Decide what information you would like to find out about them. You can use the ideas in the questionnaires to help you.
- B Write five or six questions for your questionnaire. Use the ideas in the model to help you.

Name: _____

What do you do in your free time?

How often do you play sport?

5 Answering questionnaires

Give your questionnaire to another student in the class and take theirs. Complete their questionnaire with your answers.

6 Writing a description

Give the questionnaire back to the person who wrote it. Use the information they put in your questionnaire to write a description of the person, like the one for Jenny Chan in 1. Use complete sentences.

Example

_____ has one brother and two sisters. She plays football twice a week. She likes chocolate and ice cream ...

7 Reading

Work in groups. Take it in turns to read out your descriptions.

Communication

1 Verbs

Circle the correct verb in these newspaper headlines.

- 1 We must **save** / survive small languages now!
- 2 Earthquakes and volcanos **destroy** / disappear seven languages a year
- 3 Do you **care** / change what is happening to small languages?
- 4 Can languages with only ten speakers **save** / survive?

2 say, talk, speak and tell

Choose the correct verb in each of these sentences.

- 1 He *said* / *told* 'I want to dance!'
- 2 I *said* / *told* him that it was too late.
- 3 What did she *say* / *tell* to him?
- 4 He *speaks* / *talks* three languages, French, English and Czech.
- 5 She likes to *speak* / *talk* about herself a lot.

3 Learning a language

A Complete these tips about language learning with the correct verb. The first letter or letters are given to help you.

How to ^{1st} _____ a language

- ^{2P} _____ your English as much as possible – write to a penfriend, watch TV and films in English, listen to pop music and read magazines in English.
- Try to ^{3I} _____ about ten new words each week.
- If you don't hear what your teacher says, ask her to ^{4r} _____ it.
- Sometimes it can help to ^{5t} _____ new words into your own language.
- Always ^{6r} _____ before a test.

B Can you think of ways these things might help you learn a language?

Extension

4 Languages and nationalities

A Work in pairs to answer these questions as quickly as possible.

- 1 What countries are the closest neighbours to your country?
- 2 What nationalities are the people who live in these countries?
- 3 What languages do they speak?

B Now answer these questions.

- 1 What nationality are the people who live in the countries below?
- 2 What languages are spoken in these countries?
 - The Netherlands • Brazil • The United Kingdom
 - Belgium • The United States of America • Switzerland
 - Austria • Canada • New Zealand • Ireland

5 Messages and notes

Complete the gaps in this story with these words. For two gaps more than one answer is possible.

- dialled • phone call • make • left • answerphone
- phone • ring

Someone ¹ _____ a message on my ² _____ yesterday while I was out. It said, 'Hello. I've got some good news for you. You've won the lottery. ³ _____ 0800 454545 to get your prize. Congratulations!'

I couldn't remember buying a ticket, but I decided to ⁴ _____ the phone call anyway. I ⁵ _____ the number carefully. No one answered, but there was a message. 'Welcome to the Lottery-line,' it said. 'Follow these instructions to claim your prize.' The voice went on and on, with long instructions about different numbers to ⁶ _____ for different names. I suddenly realised. It was a hoax – there weren't any prizes, just a long ⁷ _____ that I had to pay for. And when I got my phone bill, I was right – it cost £1 per minute!

Lost for words



Aysha had never met a woman doctor. And in England, she had never met anyone who spoke Bengali and had such a good job. She talked to Doctor Choudhury every time they visited and one day she asked, 'Is it hard to be a doctor?' 'It's impossible to be a doctor unless you work hard, really hard, every day. But you're a clever girl. If you want to be a doctor you can do it. You just have to work. You're not afraid of hard work, are you?' 'But I can't speak English,' said Aysha. 'Not very much, anyway. They all laugh at me.'

'How old are you?' 'Thirteen.'

Doctor Choudhury smiled. 'Listen. I was fourteen when I came here. I couldn't speak a word of English. But I'd started my science back home. Science was always my favourite subject. I couldn't bear to be

left out of things. They put me with the children who couldn't read, just because I couldn't speak English, and they didn't let me do science. So I had to learn to read quickly. I couldn't bear to be left out.'

Aysha was happy. 'It's the same with me. They treat me as if I'm stupid. Everyone speaks slowly to me and acts as if I can't hear properly.' She was scared that Doctor Choudhury might think she was too big-headed. 'So, do you really think I could be a doctor, then?'

'You'll have to work hard - much harder than you can imagine. Just look what a wreck* I am!' Doctor Choudhury had to dash away, past the rows of beds, to the end of the ward and Aysha went slowly over to join her mother and father at her grandfather's bed.

'She's a lovely woman,' Grandfather said, nodding over to where Doctor Choudhury was talking to a patient at the far end of the ward. 'The kindest, nicest doctor I've ever had.'

'You know what I think?' Grandfather patted Aysha's hand and winked at her. 'I think Aysha should become a doctor.' He spoke faster as he grew to like the idea more and more. 'Her grandmother was always saying she had to get a good education so she could be a secretary in Dhaka. Why does she have to be a secretary? Why can't she be a doctor?'

Father shook his head. 'We've got to be realistic,' he said. 'Don't go putting stupid ideas into her head. She can't even speak English yet.'

'I can' Aysha stood up. 'At school I speak English to everyone.'

Her father looked weary. 'Listen, I can speak English, too. But there's English and English. It's just not possible when it's not your own language. She might be able to get a machine job, sewing or something, where she doesn't have to speak that much.'

'But I don't want a machine job.' Aysha moved round to the other side of the bed, so she was close to Grandfather. 'Doctor Choudhury couldn't speak English when she came to England. I'm going to be a doctor like her.'

'Right,' said her grandfather. 'But you've got to start by going to school every day.' He raised himself up on his elbow and smiled and shook his finger at her. 'I don't want to see you here tomorrow or any other day unless you've been to school first.'

* a person or thing that is in a very bad condition
Written by Elizabeth Lutzeier



1 Understanding the story

Read the story and then answer these questions.

- 1 What problem did Aysha have?
- 2 Why did Doctor Choudhury have to learn to read quickly?
- 3 Why was Aysha at the hospital?
- 4 What did Aysha's grandfather want her to do?
- 5 What did her father think she could do?
- 6 What do you think happened to her in the end?

2 Vocabulary

Find these adjectives in the story. Who do they refer to, Aysha's father, Doctor Choudhury or Aysha?

- kindest • clever • happy • stupid • weary • scared
- big-headed • lovely

3 Your reactions

Do you think if people try hard enough they get what they want? Why? Why not?