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Talk Your Head Off

(...and Write, Too!)

written by *Brana Rish West*

illustrated by *Harlan West*

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Talk Your Head Off is the kind of book teachers and students have been talking about for a long time. Students want an interesting book that doesn't rely on boring rote drilling. Teachers want a book that simplifies the learning process and makes it enjoyable. *Talk Your Head Off* accomplishes this and more.

This book is filled with targeted questions on many interesting topics, such as love, justice, stress, superstitions, job interviews, family, transportation, and lies. Students respond to the questions using appropriate tenses and grammatical forms. Thus, they learn to speak English by actually thinking and conversing in English. The process is simple, yet effective. Best of all, the classroom discussion is always original and relevant because students use their own life experiences to answer the questions. Whimsical illustrations add a light touch *and* help aid comprehension.

* This text can also be used to promote creative writing. After using a topic as a conversational tool, students are encouraged to express their views in written form.

* Lessons progress in complexity of topic, vocabulary (pertinent to each theme), and grammatical focus.

* Student surveys and small group participation enable all students to feel comfortable *conversing* with each other—and *talking each others' heads off!*

Also available:
Teacher's Manual: 0-13-613605-2

Pearson Education

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Longman

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Lesson Topic	Competency Objectives	Structures
1 **Introductions** *pages 1-4*	Introduce yourself • Ask questions to become acquainted with people • Fill out an ID card	Simple present • Present perfect
2 **Favorite Things** *pages 5-8*	Ask and answer questions about favorite things, likes and dislikes	Questions • Present • Past • Present perfect
3 **Diet and Exercise** *pages 9-12*	Discuss foods and food groups • Create an exercise routine • Ask and answer questions about eating habits and exercise • Plan a menu	Imperatives
4 **Transportation Systems** *pages 13-16*	Talk about types of transportation • Discuss different countries' transportation • Invent a mode of transportation	Modals *can, will,* and *might* and their negative forms
5 **Pets** *pages 17-20*	Discuss kinds of animals people have as pets • Ask and answer questions on pet ownership • Compare different cultures' ideas about pets	Present perfect with *ever*
6 **Job Interviews** *pages 21-24*	Ask and answer questions about jobs and interviews • Practice interviewing skills • Fill out a job application	Gerunds
7 **The Best of Everything** *pages 25-28*	Describe people • Express preferences • Write and share important life experiences	Adjective superlatives
8 **Family** *pages 29-32*	Identify family members • Describe and discuss your relationships with them	Adjective review • More present, past, present perfect

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Lesson Topic	Competency Objectives	Structures
9 **Gender Roles** *pages 33-36*	Read an essay • Discuss gender roles • Write an opinion essay	Phrasal verbs
10 **Holidays** *pages 37-40*	Ask and answer questions about holidays • Discuss cultural differences and celebrations • Discuss holidays celebrated in the United State	Superlative review • More present, past, present perfect
11 **Superstitions** *pages 41-44*	Discuss beliefs about superstitions • Talk about cultural influence • Write a story	Present real conditional • *Say* and *tell*
12 **Sleep** *pages 45-48*	Ask and answer questions about sleeping habits • Write about a dream or nightmare	Adverbs of frequency • Present review
13 **Stealing** *pages 49-52*	Ask and answer questions about thieves and stealing • Write and discuss personal victimization	Adjective comparatives: *less* versus *fewer*
14 **Gossip** *pages 53-56*	Listen to gossip about students • Discuss and write about gossip you have heard	Reported speech
15 **Ghosts and the Supernatural** *pages 57-60*	Discuss beliefs about supernatural phenomena • Write an opinion essay	Modal *should*
16 **Love** *pages 61-64*	Discuss feelings and situations about love • Talk about courting differences • Write a love letter	Present unreal conditional

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17 **Stress** *pages 65-68*	Express ideas on stress and ways of coping with it • Do a crossword puzzle • Listen to student's stressful situations	Adjective comparatives: *less than, more than*
18 **Moving Children Out** *pages 69-72*	Discuss situations about adult children living at home • Talk about cultural differences on adult children moving out • Write a personal essay	*Say* and *tell* review
19 **Growing Old** *pages 73-76*	Listen to a description • Discuss aging using personal and cultural ideas • Write an imaginative story	Pronunciation of past regular verbs
20 **Pollution and Recycling** *pages 77-80*	Talk about environmental issues • Propose some solutions to problems • Create an environmental group	Passive voice
21 **The Homeless and Welfare** *pages 81-84*	Discuss homelessness • Give opinions on welfare • Write an opinion letter	Use of *some* and *any*
22 **Disasters** *pages 85-88*	Talk about disasters and their preventions	Introduction to future perfect
23 **Smoking** *pages 89-92*	Express ideas on smoking • Talk about the right's of smokers and non-smokers • Write about hazards of smoking	*Could* as probability • *Should* review
24 **Gambling** *pages 93-96*	Discuss views on gambling • Talk about effects on society • Talk about personal gambles • Write a personal essay	Use of *ever* in the present perfect review

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Lesson Topic	Competency Objectives	Structures
25 **War and the Military** *pages 97-100*	Discuss military issues, conflicts, and war • Write about a historical war or conflict	Past continuous
26 **Money Management** *pages 101-104*	Read a phone bill • Discuss it • Talk about managing and investing money • Create a personal budget	Future *will* and *going to*
27 **Cheating** *pages 105-108*	Read a poem • Give opinions on cheating • Write an explanatory letter	Indefinite pronouns
28 **Government Spending** *pages 109-112*	Create a mock city budget • Discuss government spending on programs • Write an opinion essay	Present unreal conditional review
29 **Prejudice and Discrimination** *pages 113-116*	Talk about prejudice and discrimination • Discuss personal experiences	Past perfect
30 **Divorce** *pages 117-120*	Discuss views on divorce • Write a personal essay	Past unreal conditional and use of *wish*
31 **Calling In Sick** *pages 121-124*	Discuss reasons people are absent from work • Give an opinion on paid sick days • Write a view on sick pay	Passive voice review
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Lesson Topic	Competency Objectives	Structures
33 **Drugs and Medicine** *pages 129-132*	Discuss drugs and medicine • Write about a personal experience	Embedded questions used to show politeness
34 **What Would You Do If...** *pages 133-136*	Discuss views on hypothetical situations	Present and past unreal conditional review • More on *wish*
35 **Employment Issues** *pages 137-140*	Talk about what you might have done in various employment situations • Write about an employment situation	Perfect modals: *could have might have*
36 **Excuses and Lies** *pages 141-144*	Discuss differences between excuses and lies • Write a personal essay	Modal *must*
37 **Forms of Government** *pages 145-148*	Express ideas on different types of government and country leaders • Invent a new form of government	General review of structures used
38 **Professionalism** *pages 149-152*	Discuss ethics in professionalism • Talk about stereotypes in professions • Write a personal story	Perfect modal *must have*
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40 **Let's Talk... and Say Goodbye!** *pages 157-158*	Discuss experiences in the class • Plan a party • Say goodbye	General review of structures used
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Foreword

Talk Your Head Off is the kind of book students and teachers have been talking about for a long time. Students want to learn to speak English. Teachers want a book that simplifies the learning process while making it a unique and enjoyable experience. *Talk Your Head Off* accomplishes both of these goals and more!

After studying the beginning levels in English, students have acquired enough basic vocabulary and pronunciation skills to produce sentences with their own ideas and opinions. They have the ability to have conversations; they just need the confidence and practice. Practice they find interesting and fun.

My students constantly ask me, "Teacher, how can I learn to speak English?" I answer them with a few questions such as, "How did you learn to drive?" or "How did you learn to walk?" or, for that matter, "How did you learn to speak your first language?" The answer to all the questions, both theirs and mine, was "You just do it!" We learn to speak by speaking: not by repeating drills, but by forming original sentences through original ideas. Interesting and meaningful conversational topics, with lead questions, make this possible.

The students will neither have perfect grammar nor precise pronunciation at the onset of instruction, but that is why they have a teacher who is there to correct, interpret, instruct, and facilitate their learning process. As an intermediate or advanced ESL teacher you step back and guide students through their original thought processes. With this method of instruction students not only learn to speak quickly, but they are also very enthusiastic about the conversational topics. They can't wait to find out what they are going to talk about, so attendance soars. Not only that, you will find yourself enjoying the class as much as your students do, as you learn different facts, trivia, and students' opinions on a variety of subjects.

Research shows that small-group and pair work dramatically increase the learning process. Nevertheless, one cannot just write questions on the board and hope the students will talk. Putting any group of strangers into a circle and asking them to converse in any language is a difficult task. Some people might not talk because they feel they would be judged, others might be shy, but most would be embarrassed to talk to people they have never met before. Now, if you add lack of language proficiency to the above, you have quite a task getting your group of complete strangers with limited language proficiency to speak. The key here is complete strangers. Once people know each other, or at least feel like they know each other, they will be willing to converse on a variety of topics in groups. And, once people feel comfortable in their groups, they can and do help each other fill in the gaps in their language abilities.

To get to know someone one must begin with non-threatening questions, usually based solely on facts, and then build to more subjective questions formed through opinions. Examples of fact questions may be, "What is your name?" or "What is the person next to you wearing?" After learning some facts about each other, the students will be ready to answer more socially sensitive and thought provoking questions such as, "Why do some people get divorced?" or "What are some ways people define success?" Finally, and perhaps the most difficult of all, come the opinion questions such as, "Do you think a government has the right to enforce capital punishment?" Why or why not?"

Foreword

This book helps students learn how to express their opinions and ideas. It does so by forging the path from simplified to more complicated questions to teach students how to feel comfortable speaking in English. The book's order is pertinent, so it's best not to skip around.

There are five sections to each lesson in the book: *Vocabulary, Usage, Let's Start, Let's Talk*, and an *Exercise and Activities* page.

The vocabulary section is divided into *New Words* and *Let's Talk Words*. The *New Words* are the words on the first page of the lesson. They are used to help get the students acquainted with the topic. The *Let's Talk Words* are topic related as well and give students the vocabulary necessary to produce their own original sentences for the *Let's Talk* section. All the vocabulary is pertinent, and all words should be pronounced, defined, and briefly explained to the students. This can be done by using example sentences, pictures, pantomime, or role play. In some lessons space has been provided so students can add their own relevant vocabulary.

The *Usage* section helps students become acquainted with the vocabulary words through matching exercises, defining and drawing exercises, writing exercises, and games. This section gives students practice using the vocabulary words. The exercises are meant for group, pair, or class practice. The students help each other use and understand the meaning of the words through activities. The activities are eclectic to prevent boredom, and, at the same time, accommodate various learners' styles.

Let's Start provides activities that encourage students to get ready for conversing. Talking in groups or as a class, sharing ideas, using one's imagination, and speaking are the elements that comprise this section.

The *Let's Talk* section is the core of the text. To work in the *Let's Talk* section students should be in groups of four to six. This section is filled with adult topics, and questions geared specifically for adults. The topics increase in difficulty not only grammatically, but in social sensitivity as well. The questions in this section lead the students into forming original sentences that stem from their own opinions and beliefs. There are no correct answers to the majority of the questions: The questions are meant to promote conversation. The teacher listens to what students say and determines when grammatical corrections are necessary. If the student is understood, but forgets an article, the student is generally not corrected; however, if the student is not understood by a native speaker, or could be misunderstood, then a correction is necessary. You must remember that it isn't the correction that embarrasses the student, but how that correction is delivered. You could say, "Your opinion is very interesting. The way most English speakers say that is . . . (or) People would understand you better if you said . . . ." Students not only appreciate such corrections, but they expect the teacher to correct them when their grammar or pronunciation prevents communication.

Finally, to close each lesson, there is an *Exercises and Activities* page where students take surveys, write their thoughts, and expand on the topics. The survey section encourages students to meet and converse with other students, gives additional practice in creative speaking and listening, and allows the students writing practice.

Now that I've "talked your head off," please go to the first topic and begin. And when your students ask you how they can improve their English—just tell them to "Talk Your Head Off!"

To the Teacher

Developing a textbook that elicits authentic language instead of *textbook talk* (drills or exercises that have preordained answers) presents many difficulties. Should the book be written as one speaks? If so, what kind of speech (formal or informal)? Common everyday spoken English is filled with grammatical inconsistencies that traditional prescriptive grammarians would identify as errors. Linguists, on the other hand, view language as ever changing and therefore write their grammatical rules to fit the spoken language that is used.

This book implements a liberal and conversational grammatical structure. Prepositions occur at the end of sentences since they are rarely, if ever, at the beginning in spoken English. Contractions are used, since they are conversational, and they usually do not violate standard English rules.

When looking at the grammar focus in the lessons, the structure might not be as apparent as in some grammar books. The structural foci are carefully embedded into the lessons to have students answer using the correct forms. Teachers act as facilitators to help students produce the forms. Many of the lessons demonstrate new grammatical experiences for the students; however, in all lessons, previous grammatical structures are used. Therefore, each lesson contains a multiplicity of grammatical forms. Furthermore, from lesson to lesson, the book gradually increases in grammatical complexity. The idea is *not* to have students practice one grammatical form at a time, but rather to continue what they know while introducing new structures. "Real world English" involves a conglomeration of grammatical structures even within basic conversations. Students need to practice speaking the way native English speakers speak rather than practicing one structure at a time. Thus, this book gives conversation practice that is as close as possible to "real world speech."

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the people who helped develop and produce this textbook. We appreciate the teamwork dedicated by Prentice Hall Regents to help us through the publishing process. Thank you, Arley Gray, for granting us the opportunity to work with your team of experts. We appreciate all the feedback and guidance we received from Louisa Hellegers, Ken Liao, and Sheryl Olinsky. We are especially grateful for the help of Barbara Barysh, our editor, who oversaw the complete process of the book from development through production. Without her dedication, expertise, and experience—coupled with kindness, encouragement, and guidance—this book would never have been published.

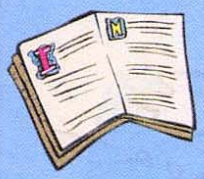
In addition we want to thank our family, friends, and colleagues for their unlimited enthusiasm, encouragement, and help in getting this book published. Thank you Paul Hamel, Mike Bennett, Jean Owensby, Marvin and Dorothy Rish, Alan West and Lois Fine, David Rish, Nathan Rish, Ethel Rish, Adam West, Stacie Steinberg, Wendy Rosenthal LeBlang, and Chagall and Cotton West.

Brana and Harlan West

This book is dedicated to the memory of Joyce West, a loving mother and teacher who inspired us to achieve.

Lesson 1 Introductions

Vocabulary New Words



am
are
been
country
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how long
introduce
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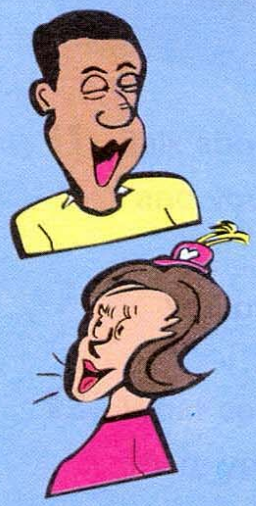
language
learn
meet
month
name
say
see
speak
what
where

Let's Talk Words

city
class
community
different from
else
job
like
live
mark (check)
married
same as
share
single
study
travel
visit

Usage



Read the dialog and circle the new words. Then practice the dialog with a partner using your own information.

Jose: Hi. What's your name?
Keiko: (My name's) Keiko.
Jose: I'm Jose. I haven't seen you in this school before.
Keiko: This is my first year here.
Jose: Where are you from?
Keiko: (I'm from) Tokyo, Japan.
Jose: How long have you been in this country?
Keiko: (I've been here for) ten months.
Jose: What languages do you speak?
Keiko: (I speak) Japanese and a little English.
Jose: It's nice to meet you.
Keiko: Nice to meet you too.

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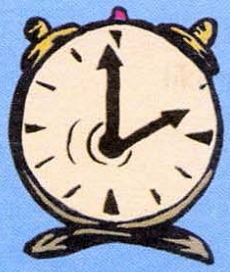
Let's Start



Learn each other's names by playing the Name Tag Game. The first student introduces himself to the class by saying, "My name is *Carlos*, and I'm from *Mexico*." The next student says, "The first student's name is *Carlos*, and he's from *Mexico*. My name is *Mariko*, and I'm from *Japan*." The third student will continue by saying, "The first student's name is *Carlos* and he's from *Mexico*. The second student's name is *Mariko* and she's from *Japan*, and my name is _____, and I'm from _____." (Continue until all students have spoken.)

Let's Talk...

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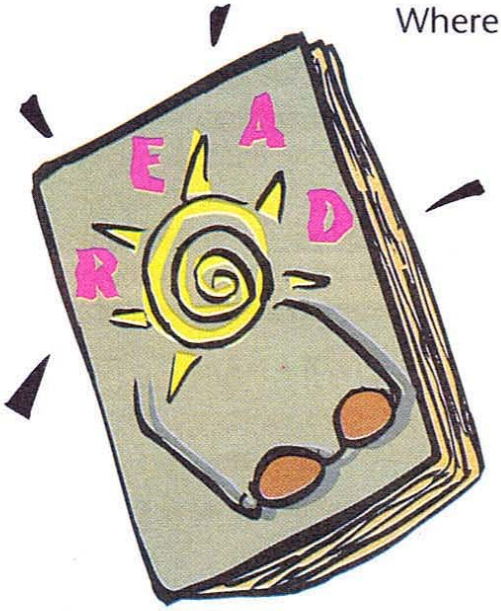
1. What's your name?
2. Where are you from?
3. Where do you live now? How long have you lived there?
4. What languages do you speak?
5. How long have you studied English? Where have you studied it?
6. What else have you studied?
7. How long have you been at this school?



and talk some more.

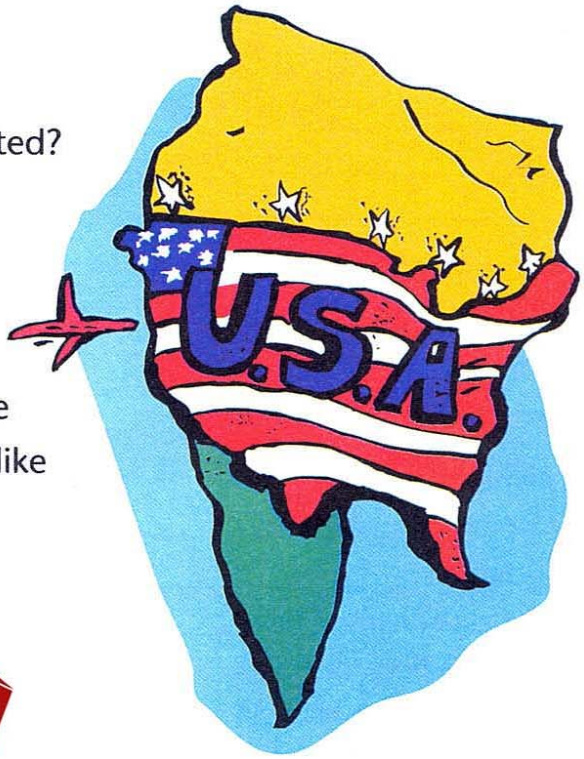
8. What do you like to do after class?

9. What else do you do?

10. Are you single or married?

11. Talk about where you live now. Describe your community and your city.

12. What countries have you visited? Share your experiences.



13. What do you know about the United States? What do you like about it? What don't you like about it?

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A. Survey

Interview students. Meet new people. Complete the chart.

Name	Native country	How long did you live there?	Where do you live now?	Where have you traveled?

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Who lives near you now? Who has traveled to the same places that you have visited?

B. Write

Write the names of as many different countries as you can. If necessary, ask your teacher to help spell the names. Circle the countries that you have lived in or visited. Mark the box with the **X** next to the countries where someone in your class has lived. Mark the box with the ✔ next to the countries where someone in your class has traveled.

	X	✔		X	✔		X	✔
_____	☐	☐	_____	☐	☐	_____	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	_____	☐	☐	_____	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	_____	☐	☐	_____	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	_____	☐	☐	_____	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	_____	☐	☐	_____	☐	☐

C. Fill in

Identification Card

Name _____

Address _____

Native country _____ How long at present address _____

Home telephone _____ Work telephone _____

Emergency telephone _____ Relationship _____

Lesson 2 Favorite Things

Vocabulary

New Words

breakfast	lunch
child	meal
dinner	play
eat	sport
favorite	sporting event
go	thing
kind of	

Let's Talk Words

actor	put
actress	singer
ethnic	which
hobby	_____
player	_____
popular	_____
	_____

Usage

Guess your vocabulary words from the clues.

1. meal after lunch: _____
2. like the most: _____
3. baby, young person: _____
4. take part in a sport: _____
5. leave; travel by bus, car, plane: _____
6. Super Bowl, World Series: _____
7. type of: _____
8. put food in your mouth: _____
9. meal before lunch: _____
10. baseball, soccer, football: _____

Write sentences using some of the *Let's Talk* words.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

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Let's Start

Listen. Raise your hand when you hear your favorite thing. Look around the room. How many students have raised their hands? Write the number. Which students have raised their hands? Introduce yourself to these students after class.

Sport:	baseball _____	soccer _____	football _____
Drink:	coffee _____	tea _____	water _____
Meal:	breakfast _____	lunch _____	dinner _____
Entertainment:	TV _____	dancing _____	movies _____

Let's Talk...

1. What kinds of sporting events do you like? Who are your favorite players? Why?

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2. What are your favorite TV programs?

3. What is the most popular TV program in your country? Who's your favorite TV actor? Who's your favorite TV actress?

4. What radio station do you listen to? Why?

5. What's your favorite kind of music? Who's your favorite singer? Do you think that person is going to be popular in ten years? Why or why not?

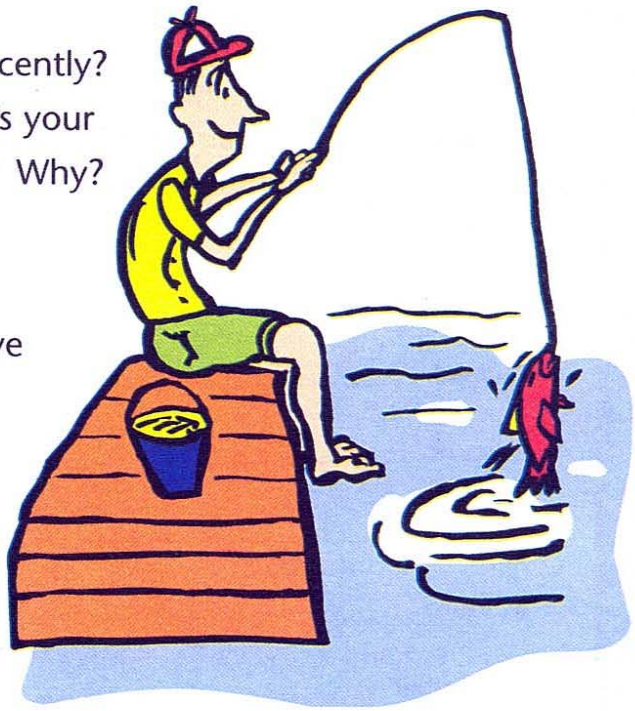
6. What types of sports did you play or watch when you were a child?

and talk some more.

7. What types of books did you like to read when you were younger? What were they about?

8. What are some of your favorite hobbies? Name at least five. Which ones are you planning to continue doing in the future? Why?

9. What movies have you seen recently? Talk about one of them. Who's your favorite movie actor? Actress? Why?



10. What kinds of ethnic foods have you eaten? Which have you liked? Which haven't you liked?

11. Have you gone to any restaurants this month? Which ones? What's your favorite food?

A. Survey

What are some of your favorite things? Talk to students in your class and ask them about their favorite colors, sports, music, foods, numbers, seasons, and animals. Write the student's name in the space if the answer is on the chart. If not, add new items to complete the chart.

Things	Favorite	Name	Favorite	Name
colors	*pink*			
sports	*baseball*			
music	*rock*			
foods	*Chinese*			
numbers	*7*			
seasons	*summer*			
animals	*dog*			

What are the most popular items? Discuss with the class.

B. Fill in

What about you? Fill in *your* favorites. Finish the list.

1. color _____
2. sport _____
3. music _____
4. food _____
5. number _____
6. season _____
7. animal _____
8. book _____
9. _____
10. _____

C. Discuss

Work with a partner. Compare your favorite things in Exercise **B**. What do you have in common with your partner?

Lesson 3 Diet and Exercise

Vocabulary New Words

balanced diet
dairy
draw
drink
elbow
exercise (routine)
fast food
food
fruit
jump
junk food
kick
leg
meat
snack
stand up
toe
touch
twist
vegetable
vitamin
waist

Let's Talk Words

ankle
arm
back
become
bread
certain
diet
discuss
eye
food group
foot
hand
head
if not
if so
knee
lose
low fat
make
neck
nutritious food
overweight
perfect balance
shoulder
stay
stomach
take
think
vegetarian
was
weight
were

Usage

Work with a group.

A. Draw a person and label the body parts.

In your notebooks draw a person and label the body parts listed above. Add any more parts that you know.

B. Are all of these foods part of a balanced diet?

Write an example for each.

1. fruit _____
2. vegetable _____
3. meat _____
4. junk food _____
5. bread _____
6. snack _____
7. fast food _____
8. dairy _____
9. vitamin _____
10. drink _____

Compare your choices with someone in class.

Let's Start

Read the exercise routine below. Then write your own exercise routine with a group. Read it to the class, and have the students do the routine.

Stand up. Touch your toes. Stand up. Jump. Kick with your right leg. Now your left leg. Twist your waist.

Our Exercise routine:

_____
_____
_____

Let's Talk...

1. What are the basic food groups? Name and list some foods in each group.

2. What is a balanced diet? Give an example.

3. What nutritious foods do you eat? Talk about a healthy meal that you have eaten recently.

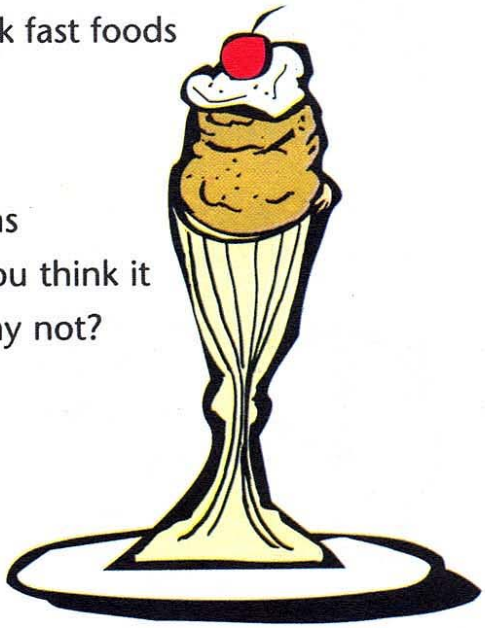
4. Do you eat any low-fat foods? If so, what are they? If not, why not?

5. What junk foods and snacks do you like to eat? When do you eat them?

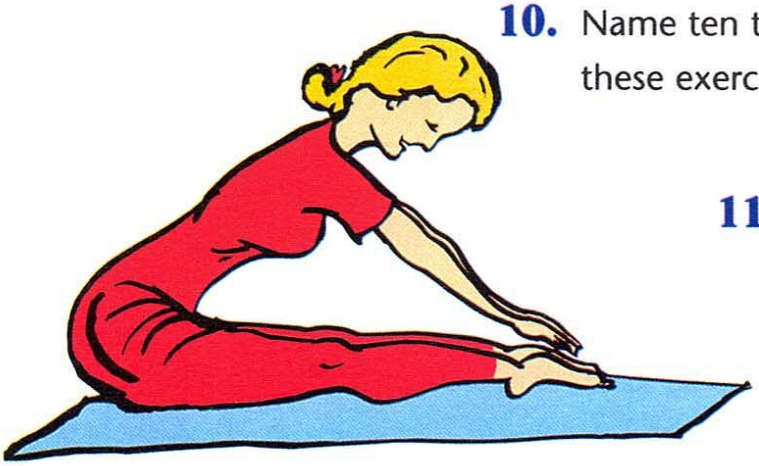
6. What fast foods do you eat? Do you think fast foods are junk foods? Why or why not?

7. What is a vegetarian? Name three reasons people are or become vegetarians. Do you think it is healthy to be a vegetarian? Why or why not?

8. What did your parents tell you to do to stay healthy? Did they tell you to "Eat your vegetables!"?



9. Your overweight friend is on a diet. Tell your friend ten foods not to eat. For example, "Don't eat fried foods!"



10. Name ten types of exercises. Which of these exercises do you do?

11. In the 1980s, the Grapefruit Diet was popular in the United States. People ate grapefruit to lose weight. What diet foods are popular in your country?

12. Have you ever taken vitamins? Do you think that they are important for a healthy diet? Why or why not?

13. How has your diet changed over the past ten years? What new foods have you eaten recently? What foods don't you eat anymore? Why?

14. How can people lose weight and stay healthy? Discuss your ideas about the perfect balancing of diet and exercise.

A. Survey

Talk to students in your class about diet and exercise.

Name	Favorite exercise	Favorite nutritious food	Favorite fruit	Favorite vegetable

What's the most popular exercise? Nutritious food? Fruit? Vegetable?

B. Write

Ask other students about their eating habits. Write the names of students who fit the descriptions.

_____ is a vegetarian. _____ eats a lot of junk food. _____ doesn't like fish.

_____ takes vitamins. _____ has eaten fast food for lunch. _____ is on a diet.

C. List

What do you eat during the week? Write your shopping list. Share it with a partner. Work together and circle all the healthy foods. Look at the foods you didn't circle. Explain to your partner why you buy certain foods.

_____ _____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____ _____

D. Fill in

Do you have a friend who wants to lose weight? Do you know someone who's on a special diet? Make a seven-day meal plan for that person. Share your ideas with a few students in your class.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Breakfast							
Lunch							
Dinner							

Lesson 4 Transportation Systems

Vocabulary

bus
can
carpool
drive
fly

New Words

might
passenger
plane
ride
situation
train
transportation system
use
will

Let's Talk Words

encourage _____
environment _____
government _____
improve _____
native _____
subway _____
teleportation _____
world _____
_____ _____

Usage

Match the vocabulary words to the pictures on the following two pages. Then write the words next to the pictures. List words below that do not match a picture. Do you know what they mean? Have people in your group help you understand the words you don't know.

_____ _____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____ _____

Let's Start

Work in small groups. Ask other students what they *can or can't, might or might not, will or won't* use to travel. Complete each sentence with the name of someone in your group.

Example: *Who can drive a car? Maria can drive a car.*

Ask questions. Write a student's name.

1. _____ might take the bus to school tomorrow.
2. _____ won't buy a new car.
3. _____ might not carpool to work.
4. _____ will travel to another country this year.

Now ask other students about travel situations or activities they *can or can't, might or might not, will or won't* do. Use the following ideas. Add others.

Travel: *How* will *you get to school tomorrow?* I'll *drive.*
Languages: *What languages* can *you speak? I* can *speak Italian and French.*