























To conclude, I do not think it is necessary to forbid all crime programs because television should tell people the truth about the world they live in. I strongly believe we should concentrate on what people experience in their daily life before we worry about what is on TV.

## **26. Наука или поэзия. Что важнее?**

People often argue about the role of science and poetry in the development of our civilization. This question seems rather controversial as both of them contributed to our society and without them mankind seems impossible to exist.

As for me, I consider science to be of higher priority as it helps to make our lives more comfortable. Most of the things we use nowadays are the results of scientific research. What is more, due to the improvements in medical science many of incurable diseases can now be cured and people live longer. However, the importance of science does not only derive from its use in technology or medicine. It is a vital tool in expanding our knowledge about the world and, consequently, about ourselves. Without science we are unable to reveal our past and to predict our future.

On the contrary, some people argue that poetry is more important as it helps to tell good from evil and teaches us to be sympathetic and honest. They doubt the necessity of science blaming it for the appearance of chemical weapons and nuclear bombs. In my opinion, without mistakes, no development is possible, and the humanity has learned quite a lot from this sad experience. I am sure that science can be as rich a teacher as poetry although it differs in technique.

To sum up, I believe that science has been more beneficial to mankind. Nevertheless, we should not underestimate the importance of poetry as it advances our understanding of beauty.

## **27. Некоторые представители молодежи мечтают быть богатыми, в то время как остальные считают это очень опасным. Ваше мнение**

No doubt that everybody wants to earn as much as possible so as to be able to do whatever they want. However, a lot of young people are afraid of being rich. Why?

As for me, I do not see any drawbacks in being rich. On the contrary, with lots of money you can get a prestigious education, travel around the world and support your family. Besides, if you have a large income, people think you are very successful and respect you more. Finally, being rich means you can help poor people. For instance, if I had a lot of money, I would give some to cancer research or donate to charities.

Many teenagers are afraid of becoming rich because they think someone will rob or even kill them. Moreover, they consider rich people to be criminals who have made a fortune by committing crimes. However, this is not true at all. There are many millionaires who are absolutely honest, for example, Bill Gates. He has taken a tiny software company and turned it into, a multi-billion dollar powerhouse. Now Bill Gates is one of the -wealthiest people on the planet and yet he is a noted philanthropist who has donated a lot of money to non-profit educational organizations.

In conclusion, I want to say that money is power, and having money means having the power to make positive changes. Personally, I would like to be a millionaire so as to be able to help people who are in need.

## **28. Обучение на расстоянии (on-line education, distant learning) За и против**

Due to recent technological advances a growing number of people give up the classroom environment and choose to study online. Moreover, some people claim that distant learning will completely substitute traditional ways of education in the not too remote future. But is online education really so effective?

At first glance, online learning provides an easier and more comfortable way of obtaining education because there is no need to attend classes and to spend a lot of time getting to and from school. In addition, students have greater flexibility in their schedule and can work at their own pace, taking time when they need it and speeding through courses that are easy. What is more, when students study online, they can specialize in courses they are most interested in. Students take responsibility for their education and become self-motivated and self-reliant.

However, online education lacks interactive classroom setting, which promotes the open exchange of ideas and makes it easier to master the subject. Besides, certain subjects like Maths or Physics may be hard to learn without a direct help of a teacher not to mention difficulties connected with the use of computer equipment. Moreover, most online programs don't have the fun of traditional school and isolate students from each other, which has a bad influence on their character.

In conclusion, I can say that the real effectiveness of online education has not been evaluated yet. I believe that the best teaching method will be a combination of online and classroom learning.

### **29. Обучение обязательно, школа нет. За и против домашнего обучения**

In most countries children can be educated at home by their parents and home schooling is becoming more and more popular. However, this way of education has both advantages and disadvantages.

On the one hand, home education is ideal for children who suffer from 'school phobia' or do not fit in with the school environment. They are unhappy and often play truant. On the contrary, when children are educated at home, they study in an atmosphere of love and understanding. Moreover, this way of education will perfectly suit gifted pupils, who are bored by the traditional school lessons. In this case, parents can make studying more fascinating by choosing an individual curriculum. Finally, home educated children have more flexible schedule and can study at their own pace.

On the other hand, parents are usually not qualified enough to teach their children therefore they may not receive an appropriate level of education. What is more, home education is very challenging for students as they have to work harder without a direct help of a qualified teacher. In addition, children lack the opportunity to exchange ideas with their peers, which restricts their intellectual development. They may also miss their friends as they meet only in the evenings.

To conclude, I think although the idea of home education is becoming more popular, it might not suit every child and every parent. As for me, I would rather choose school education because it makes me more organised and provides profound knowledge in all subjects.

### **30. Ответственность за свое здоровье. Должны ли люди застраховывать себя. Ваше мнение**

In the USSR almost all medical care was guaranteed by the state and was free of charge. Nowadays only a small part of it is covered by state insurance. In other cases people have to pay for their medical expenses or to buy private health insurance. Is it right?

In my opinion, the government should have overall responsibility for people's health. Firstly, those people who work pay enough taxes for the government to ensure sufficient health care for everybody and the authorities should provide money to keep medical service at a proper level. In addition, disabled people who do not work and have no money to pay for their treatment should not be underprivileged. Finally, medications are getting more and more expensive that is why not all people can afford to pay for the required medical care.

However, there are people who think private health insurance will provide better health care than state insurance. I think the quality of health care does not depend on who pays for your expenses but depends on the development of medicine in the country. What is more, private insurance companies may go bankrupt and people will not get any medical help at all.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that in a democratic society everybody should have the right to health insurance. Of course, people ought to be responsible for their health and avoid bad habits or do sports; But if they need medical help, the government must provide them with proper treatment and medications

### **31. Праздники. За и против**

Holidays are an essential part of our culture but not all people understand the importance of their celebrations. They consider any celebration as a waste of time. Are they right?

To my mind, we should celebrate holidays because they help to keep up our traditions and to preserve our culture. I also think it is a good chance to bring the family together and to meet all your friends and relatives. What is more, there is a special atmosphere behind each holiday and it is a good opportunity to make people happy.

Yet not all people enjoy celebrations. They are not interested in ancient traditions and think that holidays are just an excuse for spending money or making it. I do not think they are right because it is very important that traditions do survive in the country as they help to define who people are. Of course people spend lots of money on presents. However, it is not only the present that counts, but also the fact that people greet each other and share the joy of the day.

Personally, I enjoy celebrations. For me, a holiday is not just a day off but a special occasion and I usually prepare for it beforehand. I like the spirit of a holiday and always try and keep the traditions connected with it. To conclude, I want to say that holidays are a very important part of our lives because they help to bring generations together.

### **32. Путешествия расширяют кругозор. Согласны ли вы**

Modern life is impossible without travelling. People travel the globe to see modern cities and ancient towns, to enjoy picturesque places, or just for a change of scene. But does travelling really broaden our minds?

On the one hand, it does because when you travel you are exposed to things which you would probably never experience if you stayed at home. To begin with, travelling gives us an opportunity to explore the country and learn about its customs and traditions. In addition, it is a good chance to try national food and take part in national festivals. Moreover, travelling is the best way to practise foreign languages and to make new friends.

However, there are people who travel to 'all inclusive clubs. It does not really matter to them which country they are in as long as they have an opportunity to relax. They do not bother to practise a foreign language and even if they go on excursions, they only take pictures and do not get any useful information. In this case travelling does not broaden their mind. Besides, when people travel on business, they are usually too concerned about their problems and have little time to explore the place they travel to.

To sum up, travel can expand people's outlook if they travel in order to gain new experiences. On the contrary, if tourists are too lazy, they will not benefit from their journeys. So we may say that travel broadens the minds which want to be broadened.

### **33. Работа. Для многих представителей молодежи главное чтобы их будущая работа была высокооплачиваемая, а некоторым главное самодовлетворение от работы. Ваше мнение**

Nowadays young people have various job opportunities. No wonder that it is difficult for them to choose their future occupation. They often have to make a choice between money and job satisfaction.

I believe that the major concern when choosing a job should be our interests and talents. To begin with, a future career should fit our personality; otherwise it is not going to be very fulfilling. Besides, it is unlikely that a job will be done properly unless we are interested in it. Our attitude will surely have a negative impact. So I think it is better to choose a profession that suits our interests.

It is natural that many teenagers want to have high salaries to be able to buy everything they want. In their opinion, the more money they get, the more they will be respected. However, countless surveys show that money does not necessarily lead to job satisfaction. What is more, if you only work to earn money, your life will soon become extremely boring. On the contrary, if you really enjoy your job, you will achieve success and get the reward and respect that you truly deserve.

In conclusion, I want to stress that while salary is important, teenagers should not consider earnings as the primary factor when choosing their future occupation. Personally, I enjoy travelling therefore I want my career to be connected with tourism. I cannot say that I am indifferent to money but the most important thing for me is job satisfaction.

### **34. Работа. Должна ли молодежь работать на временной работе. Ваше мнение**

Most teenagers today are given some pocket money by their parents. However, they often feel this is not enough for their needs. As a result, the question of whether they should have a part-time job often comes up.

In my opinion, young people should be allowed to work part-time if they want to. First of all, it will give them a useful introduction to the world of work. By earning money, teens can learn how a

business works from the inside out as well as get some working experience. Besides, a part-time job will teach teenagers the value of things and make them more responsible and careful about money. They will understand that money does not grow on trees, it has to be earned. Finally, having extra money will make young people more independent of their parents.

Many parents say that teenagers are too young to work and that they should concentrate on their school work. Although this is true, I think that there are jobs for teenagers that will not take up too much time or can be done at weekends, for example, delivering newspapers or babysitting. In addition, young people can ' find a holiday job during the summer and earn money for something special.

In conclusion, I want to stress that teenagers will really benefit from having a part-time job. Nevertheless, they should not forget that their main task is to get education therefore their part-time jobs must not distract them from studying.

### **35. Работа на дому. За и против**

With recent advances in technology, lots of people have a chance to work at home instead of going into the main office every day. This work style is a mixed blessing, though.

On the one hand, if you work from home, you can structure your day to suit your personal needs. You can work as much, or as little, as you like and no one will look over your shoulder. Besides, you do not have to commute long distances to and from work and pay for your travel expenses. What is more, if you are married, you can spend more time with your kids, playing with them or training them.

On the other hand, working from home takes a phenomenal amount of self-discipline to start work when you know you do not have to be at the office by 9 a.m. In addition, there is no outside pressure to be busy so you must be entirely self-motivated. Moreover, there is a danger of putting in too many hours or overworking because there is no one to tell you that your working day is over. Finally, you will not be able to communicate with your colleagues so you may feel cut off from the rest of the world.

To sum up, working from home can be a great solution for certain people. However, like everything else in life, this work style has both pros and cons. That is why everyone should make a choice according to their preferences.

### **36. Реалити шоу. За и против**

Reality shows have become an inalienable part of TV programs. However, while lots of people admire them glued to their TV screens, there are more skeptical viewers who doubt the quality of these shows.

On the one hand, reality TV is great fun and it is one of the best ways of entertainment, which helps people to unwind after a long day at school or at work. Another reason for its success is interactivity. Most people enjoy reality shows because they have an opportunity to participate so they feel in control of the participants' destiny. Finally, we can watch how contestants react under pressure thus imagining how we would behave under the same circumstances. It can be really instructive.

On the other hand, not all of these programs are made in good taste. It seems like TV producers are running out of ideas because all of them are exactly the same. What is more, many of them are actually a fake because participants are made to rehearse their performance so we cannot trust them. Finally, people who win shows like *X Factor* or *Pop Idol* are not real celebrities because they become famous for a little while and then disappear.

In conclusion, I can say that no matter whether we like reality TV or hate it, it is here to stay and it reflects our life. Personally, I think it is a good way to relax and a wonderful opportunity for people to boost their careers.

### **37. Реклама. За и против**

These days we all are exposed to a continuous chain of advertising messages. Sometimes advertising may be entertaining and sometimes it may disgust us. But does it really do anything to us? Can advertising be a positive force in society, or does it deserve to be avoided?

On the one hand, we cannot imagine our world without any advertising. It would be impossible to learn about new products, films or travel options. Besides, advertisements help people get the best value for their money as they have access to price information, availability of products, and improvements being made. On the other hand, clever and informative advertisements help companies sell their products and develop their business. Many TV companies also get most of their money from advertising.

But it cannot be denied that advertising does have its drawbacks. Some advertisements show life unrealistically and give untrue information. In adverts all people seem to be happy consumers, all kids seem to be healthy and well off. But this is not true at all. In addition, adverts do not talk about products defects. What is more, advertising increases prices for consumers and put pressure on them making them buy things they don't need. I also think that we should not advertise alcoholic drinks and cigarettes as these products are really harmful.

In conclusion, I'd like to say advertising is very important in our society nowadays. We need advertising, but it needs to be done correctly. Otherwise it will mean annoying consumers and wasting money.

### **38. Родители дают деньги за хорошие оценки. За и против этого**

Many parents see pocket money as a way of encouraging their children to do well at school. It cannot be denied that money oils the wheels of the world. But can pocket money really improve school performance?

On the one hand, getting pocket money for good school grades teaches pupils that money does not grow on trees and develops a sense of how much has to be done to earn it. Besides, children become more interested in good results at school and try to study better. What is more, for many students studying is really hard work so they consider it fair to be rewarded for their efforts just like adults.

On the other hand, it is normal to expect pupils to do their homework properly because it is their duty as are household chores. Another argument against this practice is that children get upset when they do badly at school not because of their poor knowledge but because they will get no money. Finally, getting pocket money may become their main target and students may start cheating so as to get good grades.

To sum up, I think that this practice has more bad than good sides. That is why I strongly believe that parents should not give their children any money in order to encourage them to study better. Pupils should be ready to learn for learning's sake. Of course they may be rewarded but for extra work, not for their duties.

### **39. Семьи с одним ребенком или многодетные. Ваше мнение про семьи с одним ребенком**

One-child households have doubled over the last two decades making it one of the fastest growing family units in most European countries. But is it really beneficial to be an only child in a family?

On the one hand, if you are an only child, you don't have to share your room with anybody else. As a result, these children may have friends to stay over on a regular basis. Besides, they have more privacy and no one disturbs them while they are studying. What is more, parents give all their love and care to their only child. Such children also benefit from having the family financial resources focused upon them.

On the other hand, if you have a sibling, you have someone to play with or to talk to, and you'll never feel bored or lonely. And if you get into trouble, you have someone to give you a helping hand or at least some advice. Moreover, children in large families are usually not overindulged by their parents. Kids learn at the very early age that the world doesn't revolve around them and that they have to share their possessions or wait for their turn.

In conclusion, I want to say that one-child families have their pros and cons. Personally, I believe that having a brother or a sister is an amazing feeling, because no matter what happens in life, you will not be lonely and you will always have someone to share your thoughts and feelings.

#### **40. Смертная казнь - справедливая казнь для убийц. За и против**

At one time capital punishment was used in almost every part of the globe, but over the last few decades many countries have abolished it. However, many people consider the death penalty to be the best punishment for murderers.

There are several arguments in favour of capital punishment. First of all, the death penalty acts as a deterrent. In other words, people are afraid of committing crimes as long as the death penalty exists. Besides, the punishment should fit the crime therefore the appropriate punishment for murder is death. Finally, capital punishment is truly cost effective when compared with the cost of life imprisonment.

On the other hand, killing a person is inhumane and society should show how much it values a life by never killing anybody, even murderers. A second argument against capital punishment is that sometimes innocent people are found guilty. If they are imprisoned, they can be released. This cannot happen if they have already been executed. What is more, criminals can have different reasons for murder so it is unjust to apply capital punishment to all murderers.

To sum up, there are several good arguments both to support and oppose capital punishment. Although it seems reasonable to apply death penalty to the most violent criminals, we ought to do it with great caution. I personally believe that people should focus on the reasons of crimes rather than on their punishment.

#### **41. Современная молодежь не такая здоровая (healthy) как молодежь 50 лет назад.**

##### **Согласны ли вы**

We often hear a statement that the health of modern teenagers is much worse than that of their counterparts who lived fifty years ago. But is it really so?

In my opinion, nowadays young people are not as healthy as they used to be. To begin with, young people today eat lots of genetically modified and junk food, which is definitely harmful. Besides, modern teenagers often smoke, drink alcohol and take drugs, which leads to serious diseases. What is more, lots of teenagers are addicted to computers or watch TV all day long instead of walking and doing sports. As a result, many young people are overweight and suffer from heart diseases;

However, many people ignore these facts claiming that teenagers' health is steadily improving due to modern health care and better nutrition. Of course, young people do not die today of such diseases as pneumonia and tuberculosis but their health is definitely getting worse because they breathe polluted air, drink polluted water and eat food with different harmful additives. Additionally, teenagers usually ignore their parents' advice to eat healthy food and eat what they want or even skip meals. What is more, we must admit that today we are threatened by such incurable diseases as AIDS or hepatitis.

In conclusion, I want to say that our society should pay more attention to the health of younger generation because they are the basis of our future development. I strongly believe that teenagers should be actively involved in various health projects.

#### **42. Спорт. За и против**

Sport is one of those things that make our lives really worth living. In one way or another, everyone is involved in sports, whether they play or watch it, or just know someone who does either. Although a lot of people seem to be interested in sports, not all of them consider it useful.

On the one hand, we must admit that sport takes a lot of energy and time and it can be really exhausting. Sportsmen train all day long and have to follow a diet, which does more harm than good. Besides, some sports such as snowboarding or rock climbing can be rather dangerous. As a result, people often have serious injuries. Moreover, sport makes you unhappy when you lose, which can lead to psychological problems.

On the other hand, sport helps us to keep fit and to stay healthy. Among the benefits of regular exercise are a healthier heart, weight control and less susceptibility to illnesses. In addition, sport helps us to overcome difficulties and gives a chance to acquire self-confidence. What is more, sport makes us more organized and better disciplined in our daily activities. It is also a good way to spend free time and to make friends.



To sum up, I would argue that sport is very important for people's health. However, it is not necessary to become a professional sportsman. If you go in for sports just for pleasure, to stay in good shape or to relax, then sport is definitely useful.

#### **43. Телевидение. За и против**

A lot of people learn about the world from TV because it is the easiest way of getting information as well as an ideal way of relaxation. Despite this fact, some people believe that TV is not really worth watching.

On the one hand, television helps people to expand their outlook as it reflects our world. It gives us an opportunity to travel<sup>4</sup> around the world, to see different people and learn about their customs and traditions. Besides, watching TV is the best way to be in the know of everything. TV news and current affairs programs keep you informed about your country and the rest of the world. Moreover, there are lots of educational channels such as *Discovery* or *Animal Planet*, which help people to broaden their mind.

On the other hand, there are TV addicts who watch TV for hours without choosing programs and spend time in front of television which they could spend studying. In this case, television makes them really waste time. In addition, there are a lot of commercials on TV, which are often misleading and unhelpful. More than that, not all TV shows are made in good taste and some of them are really boring.

To sum up, television has both good and bad points and people should learn how to make the best use of it. If you watch TV for an hour a day to find out what is happening in the world or to relax, then television is really useful.

#### **44. Телевидение - многие родители думают, что дети смотрят слишком много телевизор. Согласен ли ты**

Most kids plug into the world of television long before they enter school. No wonder that their parents are worried about the consequences of excessive TV viewing.

In my opinion, nowadays children are too addicted to watching television. On average, kids spend several hours in front of a TV screen every day. As a result, TV can get in the way of studying, exploring, playing and interacting with parents and friends. In addition, excessive TV viewing can result in obesity as kids are inactive and tend to snack while watching TV. What is more, there is a lot of violence on television and TV characters often depict smoking and drinking, which can set a bad example for children.

On the other hand, kids need entertainment and they consider TV one of the best ways of spending their free time. They also say that TV helps them to learn about the world. Although TV can be an excellent entertainer and educator, there are lots of active ways of entertainment such as playing games or doing sports, which are actually much healthier. Moreover, we should not forget about the educational value of reading a good book.

To sum up, I agree that television, in moderation, can be a good thing. However, if children watch TV all day long without choosing programs, then it is really harmful. That is why I believe parents should set viewing limits to ensure their kids do not spend too much time watching TV.

#### **45. Туризм. За и против**

It goes without saying that tourism can bring economic gain to the development of all countries. Nevertheless, some people think that the price for this development is too high. So is tourism a blessing or a curse?

On the one hand, tourism is extremely beneficial as it provides people with jobs and brings substantial profit for the country's economy. In addition, most of the money from tourism is spent on schools, roads, cultural development and maintenance of architectural sights, which otherwise would be in a sorry state. What is more, travelling is a part of people's education and it is a good way to broaden our minds. We may say that tourism brings cultures and people closer.

On the other hand, we must admit that tourism does have some disadvantages. To begin with, most popular resorts are polluted and litter has become a major problem. Besides, many ancient monuments are being destroyed by unstoppable march of tourism. To make things still worse, the

historic centers of many great European cities, such as London or Rome, are fast becoming occupied by tourists with clicking cameras and left by all local residents except for the souvenir sellers.

In conclusion, I want to say that the problems caused by tourism are not something that cannot be solved or prevented. In my opinion, tourism should be given a humanistic direction. Personally, I am for tourism that minimises its own environmental impact, respects local cultures and human rights as well as promotes knowledge and understanding.

#### **46. Тюрьма - самое лучшее наказание для преступника, но некоторые считают, что есть другие варианты наказания. Ваше мнение**

There is a lot of violence in the modern world. Although prisons keep us safe from dangerous criminals, they do not completely solve the problem of crime.

In my opinion, people should find more effective punishments for criminals than prison because imprisonment in fact works adversely against crime. First of all, prisoners face horrible conditions such as inadequate medical care or abuse by guards, which, coupled with an environment of criminal peers, often make prisoners more violent than when they went in. In addition, some criminals learn in prison how to commit worse crimes. What is more, they are released with only a few rubles in their pockets and a perspective of being unemployed. As a result, most ex-prisoners commit a crime again.

Yet some people consider prisons to be the most effective punishment for criminals. They also believe that prisons protect people from those who might harm us. Although murderers and other violent criminals deserve being sent to prison, a vast majority of prisoners are locked up for non-violent crimes such as low level property crimes. In this case they only need help finding jobs. Moreover, some people who commit crimes are mentally ill and doctors can help them much more than prisons.

In conclusion, I believe that prisons are necessary for criminals who are a real danger to society. It may be better if less dangerous criminals receive different punishments, such as community service or a fine. Rehabilitation programs cost far less and are more effective than prisons.

#### **47. Фастфуд. За и против. Еда, которую ты предпочитаешь**

Fast food restaurants are becoming increasingly popular nowadays, especially among teenagers. But have you ever stopped to think how fast food affects your health?

On the one hand, fast food is very convenient, because you do not have to wait for a long time until your food is prepared. It is especially useful for people who do not like to cook. In addition, fast food is rather inexpensive, which is very important for teenagers who usually do not have much pocket money. What is more, there are a lot of fast food restaurants such as McDonalds all over the world so you may be sure that you will have good quality meal in almost every country.

On the other hand, this kind of food is not nutritious because it is high in fat, which is believed to be one of the major causes of obesity and heart disease. Besides, it is loaded with calories because fries, burgers, nuggets and other items you can find at fast food establishments are usually three times larger than the amount you should be consuming. Moreover, fast food may be addictive as the high levels of salt and sugar content found in most fast food items cause the brain to seek them out.

As for me, I think that fast food is rather harmful to our health so I prefer home-made meals. In conclusion, I want to say that everybody should make their own choices whether to eat junk food or healthy food.

#### **48. Школьная форма. За и против**

Although wearing school uniform is not compulsory any more, it continues to be a subject of heated debate between teachers and schoolchildren.

On the one hand, it is believed that pupils who wear school uniforms perform better academically in school. It is true because children are often so focused on their wardrobe that it distracts them from learning. In addition, experts claim that teenagers who wear school uniforms behave more appropriately in the school environment. What is more, lots of pupils are often teased

because they do not wear expensive designer clothes to school. So those students whose parents cannot afford stylish clothes will feel more comfortable.

On the other hand, children hate wearing the same clothes all the time because it stifles their self-expression and remove their individuality. Besides, most school uniforms are formal and rather uncomfortable, especially in hot weather, whereas children need to feel comfortable in order to maximize learning. Uniforms can therefore deter academic success. Moreover, although school uniforms cost less than trendy children's clothing, they increase the amount of clothing parents will have to buy for their children.

To conclude, when both sides of the argument are looked at, I would argue that the best solution would be to design a cheap comfortable uniform that allows children to wear individual items so as to express their individuality. Personally, I do not mind wearing a uniform because it gives me a sense of belonging and makes me feel a bit different from students of other schools.

#### **49. Экзамены - это самый справедливый путь оценивания учеников. Согласны ли вы**

Every year thousands of students take important exams which can decide their future. For example, students have to pass exams with excellent grades in order to get a place in a university. However, are exams the ultimate solution to judge one's knowledge?

On the one hand, exams seem fair because the questions are the same for all students. Besides, the exams are marked according to a strict scheme and usually by more than one examiner. Furthermore, students do exams at the same time and under the same conditions. If the examination procedure is strict, students have no opportunity to cheat, that is why the results of exams are quite objective.

On the other hand, exams do not truly reflect the knowledge students hold. Despite some students deserving to pass, they might be so nervous on the big day that they make a mess of the exam. In addition, there may be other reasons, such as illness, which affect a student's performance in an exam. Moreover, exams do not judge your intelligence. What is really evaluated is your self-confidence and your short term memory.

To sum up, exams are not the ideal way of testing students therefore the idea of assessing students' work over a longer period is becoming more popular. In my opinion, the best system would be a mixture of exams and course work, in which students will be able to show their creative abilities.

#### **50. Экстремальный спорт. За и против**

There is no doubt that extreme sports are becoming more and more popular nowadays. Nevertheless, these sports are considered rather dangerous and it is quite difficult to understand why people put their lives at risk.

As for me, I can understand people who are addicted to risky sports. First of all, they try extreme sports for the thrill and excitement. They just want a new experience and new emotions to conquer. For them extreme sport is an antidote to our safety-first, shrink-wrapped world. Besides, risky sports enable people to confront fears and to satisfy their curiosity. Finally, young people are likely to take risks because they want to look daring and outrageous.

However, parents are often against extreme sports because of the possibility of injury. They are also afraid that young people will become addicted to taking risks. As a matter of fact, many extreme sports are even less dangerous than traditional ones. Improvements in equipment allow the reduction in risk and if you do not take things to the edge, extreme sports are rather safe. In addition, risky sports help people to relax and to find new friends who share the same passion. In my opinion, it is much better than drug addiction.

To sum up, I strongly believe that extreme sports are as beneficial as traditional kinds. They offer the opportunity to carve your own path and find out where your limits lie. Personally, I am not a risk taker but I respect people who go to extremes.