

## Healthy lifestyles

Do you think people in your country are less healthy than they used to be?

How can we encourage young people to stay healthy?

Should governments intervene to force people to be healthier?

### Sample answers:

#### Keeping fit

**Examiner:** What are the best ways to keep fit?

**Candidate:** The best way to keep fit is to do exercise that raises your heart rate. The heart is a muscle and has to be worked like any other muscle. So golf, in my opinion, is not the best form of exercise. Something like jogging or swimming or surfing is much more beneficial.

**Examiner:** Do you think most people consider exercise a chore or do they find it fun?

**Candidate:** I think most people feel it is something they *should* do. That is a mistake, as far as I'm concerned, because the best way to exercise is not to think about the fitness aspect and just have fun. You can exercise without even noticing you're doing it if you play volleyball with your friends, or go snorkelling, or go for a long walk on a sunny day, or something like that.

**Examiner:** What is the most popular form of exercise in your country?

**Candidate:** I would say the most popular form of exercise is going to the gym. I'm in two minds about the gym as a way to keep fit. On the one hand, it is convenient. But on the other hand, a gym is a very controlled environment, somewhat lacking in imagination and spontaneity.

#### Healthy lifestyles

**Examiner:** Do you think people in your country are less healthy than they used to be?

**Candidate:** Yes, definitely. I would argue that the invention of TV has led to people being much too sedentary. I know some people who refuse to have a television because they think that without one they are much more likely to keep active – it's all too easy to become a couch potato. Also, most people work in offices so they just sit in a chair all day long and only move to go to the photocopier. That's very unhealthy. People used to work the land and so be on the go from morning till night. Obesity was unknown then, except among the super rich, I imagine.

**Examiner:** How can we encourage young people to stay healthy?

**Candidate:** Parents should set a good example. But I strongly believe that schools have a crucial role to play. Not only can they offer a wide range of sports for children to play, they can teach them about eating a balanced diet, and the negative effects of eating junk food and not exercising. If children don't hear all this from home, they have to hear it from somewhere, and I would argue that it's the schools' responsibility. Once they get a taste for playing sports, they will love the sense of achievement it can give you and the feeling of camaraderie with your team mates, and then hopefully they won't ever want to stop playing sports.

**Examiner:** Should governments intervene to force people to be healthier?

**Candidate:** Hmm, I'm highly sceptical of the idea that governments should force their citizens to be healthy. People ought to be encouraged to lead healthy lives, but not forced to. They could, for example, run an ad campaign showing people how to eat a balanced diet – that you need to eat some carbohydrates, some vegetables and fruit, some meat and so on. I think most people don't know that. But I'm unconvinced that trying to force people into healthy habits would work because when bullied like that people tend to resent it and react by sticking even more firmly with their unhealthy lifestyles. The one area where I strongly believe legislation is necessary is with smoking. Smokers can harm others through passive smoking so they should not be allowed to smoke in public places. In fact, this has just recently been outlawed in my country.