

Luyện Nghe và Luyện Đọc Tiếng Anh #3

Study with me – I'm Mary

Bài đọc 1: I Want to Dye my Hair Green

Many of my friends have dyed their hair different colors.

I don't mean normal hair colors like brown or black.

My friends have dyed their hair orange, purple and blue.

I told my mother that I would like to dye my hair green.

I explained to my mother that I would only use food coloring.

The green would not last forever.

My mother said that dyeing your hair was a silly fad.

She said that I would not look good with green hair.

I said that if I couldn't dye my hair green, maybe I could get a nose ring.

My mother said "no."

I said that maybe a tattoo on my arm would be nice.

My mother said "no way."

My mother said that she did some crazy things when she was a young girl.

She said that she used to iron her hair to make it straight.

That sounds quite boring to me.

My friend Joan came over.

Her hair is dyed bright pink.

My father said "nice hair, Joan."

I don't think that he really meant it.

My mother says that when I am an adult I can dye my hair whatever crazy color I like, but for now she would like me to leave my hair its natural color.

I tried to tell her that all my friends were doing it.

My mother asked, "if all your friends were jumping off a cliff, would you do it too?"

I said "no."

I think I'll have to wait to have green hair, but maybe by the time I'm old enough to dye my hair green, I won't want it that color.

My mother says that fads change all the time.

One day something might be popular, and the next day it's not in style at all.

I'll just have to live without green hair for now.

I wonder what the fad will be next month.

Bài đọc 2: Why Do People Dislike Other People?

Some people don't like other people just because they look different.

I think that is silly.

I don't think that it is fair to judge someone by the way they look.

Some people look very nice, but they are mean or cruel.

Some people look very ordinary, but they are incredibly nice.

I remember when I was in grade one; I saw a girl across the room.

She had a mean look on her face.

I thought to myself that she was probably not a very nice person.

I stayed away from her, and played with the other children.

Then, we had to play a game, and the teacher said that she would pick partners for us.

The teacher picked the girl with the mean face as my partner.

I didn't think that the game would be much fun at all with a partner who seemed as mean as that girl.

I walked up to her and said hello.

The girl's face changed.

She smiled at me, and she began to talk to me.

Her mean face disappeared.

We had lots of fun playing the game.

We laughed a lot and enjoyed each other's company.

That girl became my best friend.

Now when I look at her I see what is inside her.

Sometimes she doesn't smile, but I know what she is like.

She is a kind and funny person.

I have learned that you can't "judge a book by its cover."

It is not fair to dislike someone just because they don't look like you want them to look.

You have to get to know a person.

It doesn't matter to me what color a person's skin is.

It doesn't matter to me if they are short or tall, skinny or fat or happy or sad looking.

I judge people by how they treat me, and I try to treat people like I would want to be treated.

Bài đọc 3: The Birthday Gift

It is going to be my father's birthday.

What can I give him?

I don't have much money.

I have looked all through the stores, and I have not found anything that I think he would

like, or that I can afford.

I have thought very hard about what to buy for him.

I thought that he might like some candy, but my father really doesn't eat many sweets.

I thought that he might like a new shirt, but he has lots of clothes.

I can't afford a new car or computer for him.

I was watching him on the weekend.

He cut the grass, washed the car, took out the garbage, weeded the garden and watered the plants.

I got an idea.

I went to my room and took out some paper.

I cut out pieces of paper, and I wrote on them.

I wrote on one piece of paper that I would wash the car every weekend for the summer.

I wrote on another piece that I would take out the garbage every week for the summer.

I also wrote that I would cut the grass, weed the garden and water the plants every week for the summer.

I made a birthday card for my dad, and I put the pieces of paper inside it.

I went downstairs and gave my gift to my dad.

My dad thought that the gift was very thoughtful.

He said that it was a gift from the heart.

I did all those things for my dad all summer.

He said that he had a lot of free time because I helped him so much.

My dad and I are good friends.

I don't mind doing things for him because I know that he is always there to help me out.

A good gift doesn't have to be something that costs a lot.

My dad says that the best gifts are the ones that show how much you care for the other person.

I'm glad my dad liked his gift.

Bài đọc 4: New Year's Day

On New Year's Day people start a new year.

Many people make resolutions.

They resolve to be better people.

Some people decide that they will lose weight so that they can be healthier.

Some people decide to give up smoking.

They also want to be healthier.

There are all kinds of resolutions that people make.

Some people try not to lose their tempers.

Some people say that they will work harder.

There are people who try to give up bad habits.

Every year, my brother says that he will stop biting his nails.

He stops biting his nails in January, but by February he always starts again.

That is the thing about New Year's resolutions.

People seldom keep them.

Everybody starts out with good intentions, but it is very hard to stick with them.

I don't make New Year's resolutions.

I find that I just break them.

I just work day by day to break my bad habits.

I know that I eat too many sweets.

Every day, I just try to resist them.

I think that every day is a new day regardless of whether it is New Year's Day or not.

Bad habits are hard to break.

The best thing is never to start any bad habits.

I don't know if my brother will ever stop biting his nails, but I know that each January he intends to stop.

Maybe one of these New Year's Days he'll get over that habit.

Bài đọc 5: If I Could Fly

I sometimes imagine what it would be like if I could fly like a bird.

Just imagine what it would be like to soar into the sky, flying high above the trees.

You could stand on high rooftops and never be afraid of falling.

You would see so many things as you flew over rooftops and forests.

You would feel incredibly free as you traveled from place to place, not bothered by road signs or traffic jams.

If I could fly like a bird, I would start from my back yard and travel through town.

I would look down on the houses and factories.

When I got tired, I would land in a field and take a nap.

I would travel above rivers, and follow them as they wound along and emptied into lakes and oceans.

I would fly above parks, and I would call out to the children as I flew high above them.

I would dip and dive as I flew.

I would soar up high and dive down low so that I could almost touch the treetops.

Have you ever flown?

I know that you can't fly like a bird, but you might have taken an airplane ride.

When you're in an airplane, you pass through clouds.

It is exciting to take an airplane ride.

I love taking airplane flights.

I like to look down at the Earth.

When you are up that high, everything below you looks tiny.

That's the closest I'll get to flying like a bird.

But I can still use my imagination and spread my wings and soar high above the world just like a bird.

Bài đọc 6: Corruption

When an official of a government or business is acting dishonestly, we say that this person is corrupt.

Corruption is a serious problem in many countries around the world.

There are several different kinds of corrupt practices, including bribes, kickbacks, nepotism, and embezzlement.

A bribe is a payment of money or some other benefit, in exchange for a decision that would not otherwise be made.

For example, an accused criminal might bribe a judge so that the judge would make a decision of "not guilty."

Another example is that a business owner might bribe a government official so that the official would allow the construction of very unsafe buildings.

A kickback is similar to a bribe, except that the official receives some part of the money in a dishonest business deal.

For example, governments sometimes decide which company should build a road.

A company might offer money to the government official who makes the decision, so that this company will be chosen, even if it is not the best company for the job.

Nepotism happens when an official unfairly gives advantages to his or her relatives.

For example, a government official might hire a brother or sister to do a job even though other people would be much better qualified for the job.

Of course, all of us want to help our relatives, but it is wrong to do this at the expense of the public.

Embezzlement happens when an official secretly steals some money from a company or government.

For example, a manager at a company might secretly move some of the company's money to his or her own bank account, or that manager might lie about his or her expenses in order to receive more payment from the company.

Corruption has very bad effects on people, in several ways.

Sometimes it can lead to very dangerous situations.

One example of this is when unsafe construction projects are approved by officials who have been bribed.

Another example is when criminals are freed as a result of bribes.

Also, a country's economy can be damaged by corruption.

For example, if companies must pay bribes in order to do business, then they may decide to leave the country.

Also, if people's tax money is stolen by corrupt officials, this makes the people poorer.

In addition, when company officials are corrupt, it makes the company less able to compete with other companies.

How can corruption be stopped?

An important step is for each person to decide not to act in ways that are corrupt. People must agree to take this problem seriously.

Also, each company and each government must have strict rules about corruption.

It must be very clear to all employees-from the lowest to the highest-that corruption is totally unacceptable.

Bài đọc 7: Canada: Provinces and Territories

Canada is one of the largest countries in the world.

It is located in the northern half of the continent of North America, above the United States.

Canada is divided into ten provinces and three territories, each of which is different from the others.

The province of British Columbia is located at the far western end of Canada.

British Columbia stretches from the Pacific Ocean, at the west, to the Rocky Mountains, at the east.

British Columbia contains the city of Vancouver, where two million people live.

Most of the land of British Columbia is very mountainous, with vast forests covering the mountains.

In British Columbia, forestry is an important industry, providing wood for people around the world.

Moving east from British Columbia, the next provinces are Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

These are known as the prairie provinces, because they are mostly made of flat, grassy land called "prairie."

Alberta is the province where the flat prairie meets the tall and beautiful Rocky Mountains.

In Alberta, there are many fields where oil and gas are found, and there are also many farms where cattle are raised.

Saskatchewan is the Canadian province that grows the most wheat.

Wheat from Saskatchewan is sent around the world to make bread and pasta for many people.

Manitoba is the other prairie province.

Its largest city, Winnipeg, is about halfway between the Pacific and Atlantic oceans.

Winnipeg has the coldest winters of any large city in the world, with temperatures sometimes reaching -40 degrees Celsius!

Moving east, the next province is Ontario.

The land in the northern part of Ontario is very rocky and contains many thousands and thousands of lakes.

Many mines are found in northern Ontario. In the southern part of Ontario, there is good farmland, and there are also many cities where factories produce cars and steel.

Ontario contains Canada's largest city, Toronto, as well as the capital city of Canada--Ottawa.

In the southern part of Ontario are four of the largest lakes in the world, known as the Great Lakes.

Next to Ontario is the province of Quebec.

Unlike the other provinces, where most people speak English, most of the people in Quebec speak French.

The capital of Quebec is called Quebec City, and this is one of the oldest cities in North America.

Quebec City contains many buildings that are hundreds of years old.

Also in the province of Quebec is the city of Montreal.

Of all the French-speaking cities in the world, only Paris is larger than Montreal!

In the eastern part of Canada are the Atlantic provinces, which are next to the Atlantic Ocean.

These provinces are New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland.

In the Atlantic provinces, fishing is an important industry.

Tourism is also important as many people come to see the beauty of these provinces.

The people in these provinces are said to be the friendliest in Canada.

In the far north of Canada are the three territories that lie beside the Arctic Ocean: Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut.

Many of the people in these territories are the Native people of Canada, known as the Indians and the Inuit.

The northern areas have very cold, dark winters.

The summer is short, but the days are very long and bright.

Bài đọc 8: Two Great Artists: Leonardo and Michelangelo

Many people admire the paintings and sculptures that artists create.

Some very beautiful paintings and sculptures were created by two men who lived in the same country at the same time.

These men were Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo.

They both lived in Italy around the year 1500.

Leonardo da Vinci is most famous for his painting called the Mona Lisa.

This is perhaps the best-known painting in the world.

The Mona Lisa shows the head and shoulders of a dark-haired woman.

When people look at this painting, they are often captivated by her smile and by her eyes, which have a look of mystery.

Another painting of Leonardo's is called The Last Supper.

This painting shows a famous scene from the Christian religion.

In this painting, Jesus Christ is seated at the middle of a long table, with his followers (the disciples) seated around him.

Many of the paintings that were created at this time have a religious theme.

Leonardo was not only an artist; he was also interested in engineering.

He actually worked for some time as an advisor to a military leader, helping him to develop new machines for use in war.

Leonardo also made rough drawings of machines that are similar to those that were invented much later, such as submarines and helicopters.

Obviously, Leonardo was an extremely creative man.

Michelangelo was about 23 years younger than Leonardo. In addition to being a painter, Michelangelo was also a sculptor, and many experts consider him the greatest sculptor of all time.

One of his most famous sculptures is David, which is a statue of a young man who was a famous figure in the Bible.

Another great sculpture of Michelangelo's is called the Pieta.

The Pieta shows Mary, the mother of Jesus, holding the body of her son across her lap.

Michelangelo is also famous for painting the ceiling of a church known as the Sistine Chapel.

The leader of the Roman Catholic Church, Pope Julius, asked Michelangelo to paint the ceiling of this new church.

This project required many years of hard work, and the Pope complained that it took too long.

However, when the work was finished, the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel was covered with beautiful paintings of many scenes from the Bible.

Fortunately, many of the works of Leonardo and of Michelangelo can still be seen today in the art galleries of Europe.

During the past 500 years, the color of the paintings had faded somewhat, but in recent years, some work has been done to restore the paintings to their original appearance.

Bài đọc 9: The Viking

About a thousand years ago, people known as the Vikings were known and feared throughout Europe.

The Vikings were the people of the northern part of Europe, called Scandinavia, which includes the modern countries of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden.

The Vikings made their living by farming and fishing.

However, by about the year 700, they began making attacks, or raids, upon towns along the coasts of Europe in order to steal the wealth of those towns.

The Vikings made their attacks very quickly and without any warning.

They were very cruel to the people of the towns they attacked, and they sometimes destroyed the towns by burning down the buildings.

In some parts of Europe, the local kings would often fight against the Vikings.

Sometimes, however, the kings would pay the Vikings in order to persuade them not to attack.

Although the Vikings were known as fierce warriors, they also built excellent ships.

The wooden Viking ships, called longboats, were able to sail even in very bad weather.

Many Viking longboats were about 20 metres long, but some were nearly 90 metres long.

The Viking sailors used both sails and oars to move their ships.

The Vikings travelled across a large area.

They made many of their attacks in Britain, France, and Germany, but sometimes sailed south, into the Mediterranean Sea.

Other Vikings moved to the east, and then south along the rivers of Russia.

Some even went as far as the area that is now the country of Turkey.

In some places, the Vikings decided to stay.

Many Vikings settled in England and in France, and eventually they mixed with the local people.

Other Vikings settled in Russia and also mixed with the people there.

The most famous travels of the Vikings were in the Atlantic Ocean.

Vikings sailed westward to the island of Iceland where many of them stayed.

Today, the people of Iceland are descended from the Vikings.

Some Vikings sailed farther west to the cold island of Greenland.

Vikings lived in Greenland for several generations, but eventually they died out.

Some Vikings had gone even further west and reached the Canadian island of Newfoundland.

The Vikings only stayed for a few years, but they had reached North America about 500 years before Christopher Columbus!

Gradually, the Vikings became converted to the Christian religion.

They also stopped raiding the towns of Europe, and instead of fighting, they began trading with their neighbors.

Today, the Scandinavian countries are known as very peace-loving nations.

Bài đọc 10: William Shakespeare

There have been many great writers in the history of English literature, but there is no doubt about which writer was the greatest.

Many people consider William Shakespeare to have been the best writer who ever lived.

William Shakespeare was born in the town of Stratford, England, in the year 1564.

When he was a young man, Shakespeare moved to the city of London, where he began writing plays.

His plays were soon very successful, and were enjoyed both by the common people of London and also by the rich and famous.

In addition to his plays, Shakespeare wrote many short poems and a few longer poems.

Like his plays, these poems are still famous today.

Shakespeare's most famous plays include Romeo and Juliet, Macbeth, Hamlet, King Lear, Othello, and Julius Caesar.

Usually, Shakespeare did not invent the stories that he told in his plays.

Instead, he wrote his plays using stories that already existed.

However, Shakespeare's plays told these stories in a more interesting way than ever before.

Some of the stories were tragedies, some were comedies, and some described historical events.

In his plays, Shakespeare revealed a very wide knowledge of many areas of life.

The characters in his plays discuss many different topics, often with the knowledge of experts.

But what is even more impressive about these plays is Shakespeare's use of the English language.

His vocabulary was very large, and Shakespeare seems to have introduced many words to the language!

Also, many of the phrases that are said by Shakespeare's characters are now used in everyday conversation.

Today, writers often use quotations from Shakespeare's plays in their own works.

But perhaps even the most impressive features of Shakespeare's plays are the characters within them.

The many characters in his plays seem very different from each other, but they seem very realistic.

The emotions they feel, the words they say, and the actions they perform are all easily understood.

Many people who watch one of Shakespeare's plays will find that they know people who remind them somewhat of the characters in those plays.

Shakespeare died in the year 1619, but his writings are still popular today, 400 years after they were written.

The poems and plays are greatly admired by experts in literature, but also by people in general.

Each year, hundreds of thousands of people enjoy attending performances of Shakespeare's plays.

No other writer in the English language has remained so popular for such a long time.

Bài đọc 11: Chinese People in North America

In recent years, many people have moved to North America from China, but many people do not know that Chinese people have a long history in Canada and the United States.

During the nineteenth century, both Canada and the United States were rapidly expanding to the west, toward the Pacific Ocean. In those days, there were of course no cars or airplanes to allow people and goods to move across the land.

Instead, the best method of long-distance transportation was the railroad.

Railway trains could move quickly across the countryside.

However, there was one problem: before the railway trains could run, railroads had to be built across very long distances.

To build the railroads was a very big job.

Many men would be needed because the distance was so long and the land was so difficult, with many mountains and rivers to be crossed.

For the men who owned the railroad companies, it would have been too expensive to hire Canadian or American men to build the railroads because those workers would only work for high wages.

The railroad owners decided to get workers from overseas.

Many Chinese men were willing to work for low wages because they were very poor.

These men would work very hard and send much of the money back to their relatives in China.

Thousands of Chinese men were brought to North America to work on the railroads.

They did good work, but their employers treated them badly.

The work day was very long, and working conditions were very unsafe.

Many Chinese men died in accidents while constructing the railroads.

Some Chinese women also came to North America, but there were many more men than women.

After the railroads were completed, by about the year 1900, very few Chinese people were allowed to come to North America.

Most people in Canada and the United States were not familiar with Chinese people and did not want strangers to come to their countries.

Any Chinese person who came to North America had to pay an expensive tax.

This made it difficult for Chinese men to bring their wives and families to join them in North America.

Later, the governments of Canada and the United States made Chinese immigration illegal.

Eventually, the people of Canada and the United States realized that their laws had been unfair.

They changed the rules so that Chinese people could immigrate in the same way that people from other countries could do so.

In recent decades, many Chinese people have moved to North America, and have formed a very lively and successful community.

Many cities, such as Toronto, Vancouver, San Francisco, and New York, have been enriched by Chinese culture.

Chinese people are now very prominent in North America, just as they were many years ago.

Bài đọc 12: The History of the English Language

Most people know that the English language is spoken by many millions of people around the world.

However, few people are aware of the history of the English language.

Today, English is one language, but in some ways it is a mixture of many different languages.

The English language is most closely related to a group of languages called the Germanic languages.

This group also includes languages such as German and Dutch.

About 1500 years ago, these languages were not yet distinct from each other.

Some of the people of Germany and the Netherlands then moved to England.

Those people were called the Anglo-Saxons, and their language then evolved into English.

Most of the basic words of the English language are derived from these very old Anglo-Saxon languages.

For example, the words for the parts of the body, for numbers, and for animals are mostly Anglo-Saxon words.

Some new words were brought to England over 1000 years ago by people who came from the Scandinavian countries of northern Europe.

Many words that begin with the letters "sk", such as skin and skill, are Scandinavian words.

A major change happened in the English language after the year 1066.

In that year, England was conquered by a king from the northern part of France.

He and his followers spoke French, so French became an important language in England.

During the next few hundred years, the English language absorbed a very large number of French words.

In fact, today's English dictionaries contain more words of French origin than of Anglo-Saxon origin.

Part of the reason why the English language has so many words is that it often has two words for each idea—one word of Anglo-Saxon origin, and one word of French origin.

Many more words entered the English language a few hundred years ago, when science and technology became more widespread.

Most scientific and technical words are derived from words of the ancient languages of Latin and Greek.

Because there are so many of these scientific and technical words in the English language today, the influence of Latin and Greek has been quite large.

Other languages have also contributed many words to the English language.

Some words have come from the Celtic languages, spoken in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

Many words have been added to the English language by immigrants who came to North America from various countries of Europe.

Also, many more words have been adopted from the Native languages of North America, Australia, and the Pacific, and from the languages of peoples in Africa and Asia.

All of these words have made English a very interesting language!

Bài đọc 13: African Slavery in the Americas

One of the most tragic parts of the history of North and South America is the period of African slavery.

For hundreds of years, many people were taken from Africa, by force, to work in the fields of many different countries in North and South America.

When Europeans first came to the Americas, some of them realized that they might make money by growing crops and selling them in Europe.

However, in order to make money, they would need a cheap source of labor.

Few Europeans would come to the Americas to work for low wages, so instead, the landowners looked for slaves. In the areas of the great farms, or plantations, there were few Indians, so they used another source of slaves: Africa.

The plantation owners usually obtained slaves by buying them from local kings in western Africa.

This led to many wars between rival kings within Africa, who tried to capture each other's people in order to sell them as slaves.

A few kings tried to avoid the slave trade, but this was very difficult.

During a period of several hundred years, from the 1500s to the 1800s, about 12 million people were taken from western Africa to the Americas.

Many more people died as slaves before leaving Africa, and many more died on the ships that took them to the Americas.

This was because the conditions on the ships were extremely unhealthy: the ships were far too crowded, and there was little food and water.

When the African slaves arrived in the Americas, the plantation owners made them work on farms that produced goods such as cotton and sugar.

In many places, the work was very hard, and many of the slaves died from overwork.

They were then replaced by other slaves who arrived from Africa.

However, many slaves survived despite the brutal conditions.

In some places, the African slaves were able to revolt against the plantation owners.

However, this was difficult because the slaves who had recently arrived spoke many different languages.

Some slaves escaped into wilderness areas and were able to remain free from the plantation owners.

As time went by, many people in Europe and in the Americas realized that slavery was wrong.

By the 1830s, slavery had been ended, or abolished, in islands owned by the British, and in parts of the United States. In the southern United States, slavery was ended in the 1860s, during the Civil War.

In some countries, such as Brazil and Cuba, slavery only ended in the 1880s.

Today, many millions of people in North and South America are the descendants of slaves who were brought from Africa.

The effects of slavery have lasted for many generations, and there was much racial prejudice against African people even when slavery ended.

However, some have achieved success despite these disadvantages.

Today, the people of African background in North and South America are a very important part of the population in many countries.

Bài đọc 14: Worries About Physical Appearance

Most people would like to have an attractive physical appearance, but some people become very worried about the way they look.

This can sometimes lead them to do things that are unhealthy.

For example, many women believe that they must be very thin in order to be attractive.

They see pictures of fashion models who are very thin and then believe that an attractive woman must look the same way.

However, many men prefer the appearance of women who are not so thin.

In order to become thin, some women try to reduce the amount of food that they eat.

When this is taken to an extreme, a woman might eat far too little food to remain healthy.

Her weight may become dangerously low, as she tries to become thinner and thinner.

This condition is called "anorexia," and it affects many thousands of women in Western countries.

Anorexia is one of several conditions known as eating disorders. Another eating disorder is called "bulimia."

A woman who has bulimia will sometimes eat large amounts of food, but then will try to eliminate the food, by vomiting.

This is intended to prevent any weight gain, but it is also a very unhealthy behavior.

Unfortunately, some women are concerned about being very thin, but some women have different concerns related to the appearance of their body.

For example, some women believe that their breasts are not large enough, and undergo surgery to enlarge their breasts.

In this surgery, some artificial substance is implanted inside the breast to make it larger.

Many women have had this surgery, but many of them have suffered serious health problems as a result.

In recent years, many men have also become very concerned about their physical appearance.

For example, some men believe that they must become very muscular in order to have an attractive appearance.

To achieve this appearance, some men use drugs called steroids, which make it possible to gain large amounts of muscle.

However, steroids can have very unhealthy side effects.

In addition to drugs, some men have used surgery to change their physical appearance.

For example, some men have had implants to make their arms, legs, or chest appear larger.

It is unfortunate that so many people feel so unhappy about their physical appearance and that they do unhealthy things to change the way they look.

Of course, everyone should try to be healthy, but people must also learn to accept their physical appearance.

Many different body types can be attractive, and there is no single ideal body type.

There is no need to use unnatural methods of changing one's body.

Bài đọc 15: Physical Fitness

In modern society, many people find that they do not get very much exercise.

They travel by bus, train, or car, and they can move up or down in elevators.

They have machines that do most of the heavy work that was once done by people.

However, exercise is important for staying healthy.

A person who exercises frequently will be "physically fit."

There are different aspects of physical fitness.

One important element of being physically fit is called cardio-vascular fitness.

The word "cardio-vascular" refers to the heart and lungs.

If one's heart and lungs are in good condition, then one can exercise at a steady pace without soon getting tired.

To develop cardio-vascular fitness, it is important to perform some exercise that makes one's heart beat quickly.

For example, a person can improve cardio-vascular fitness by riding a bicycle, by running, by swimming, by rowing, or even by walking quickly.

Some people go to special places, called "health clubs" or "gyms," where they can use different exercise machines to develop their cardio-vascular fitness.

But many people improve their cardio-vascular fitness by playing recreational sports, such as tennis or soccer, or by dancing vigorously.

By having good cardio-vascular fitness, one is less likely to suffer from heart disease.

Of course, there is one way to improve cardio-vascular fitness that does not involve exercise: stop smoking!

Another important aspect of physical fitness is called flexibility.

Flexibility refers to one's ability to stretch comfortably. For example, a healthy person should be able to touch his or her toes without bending the legs.

People can perform various stretching exercises to improve flexibility.

By being flexible, a person can avoid injuries that might otherwise affect their body.

Yet another important aspect of physical fitness is the strength and endurance of one's muscles.

Many people suffer from injuries that result, in part, from weakness of the muscles.

Muscular strength and endurance can be improved by a variety of exercises.

Some of these exercises involve lifting a weight, but other exercises simply involve pushing or pulling against the weight of one's own body.

One example is an exercise called the "push-up."

In this exercise, a person lies on the floor, with the face pointing down.

The person bends his or her arms, so that the palms of the hands are on the floor, next to the shoulders.

The person then pushes with his or her arms, lifting the upper part of the body above the ground until the arms are straight.

Before starting to do any exercises, it is a good idea to have a medical check-up.

Some people do not want to exercise because they think it will be too much work.

However, many people find that they feel very good when they exercise.

Exercising can be an enjoyable and fun way to maintain health and fitness.