

Reading comprehension worksheet

How do you build a children's home out of flip-flops?

British brothers Rob and Paul Forkan have experienced tragedy and success in their short and unusual lives. When they were still children, their parents took them out of school in the UK and moved the family to India to travel and do charity work. The experience taught them about life in other places and made them confident and independent. Tragedy struck in 2004 when the Asian tsunami hit the coast of Sri Lanka, where the Forkans were staying. The giant wave killed their parents, but Rob (17), Paul (15) and their younger brother and sister survived. The children, now orphans, managed to hitchhike across Sri Lanka to the airport. From there, they flew back to Britain, where friends and family were waiting. Six years later and now adults, the brothers decided to do something in memory of their parents. Their idea was simple. Make and sell attractive casual footwear and use the profits to help other orphans. Their company *Gandys* and their charity *Orphans for Orphans* were born.

After a lot of hard work and with the support of celebrity customers such as Richard Branson and Jamie Oliver, the comfortable rubber flip-flops became a hit. Customers love *Gandys'* stylish and fashionable designs and that the brothers give ten per cent of the profits to their charity. In 2014, three years after *Gandys* began, *Orphans for Orphans* opened its first children's home in Sri Lanka. *Gandys'* head office now employs a large team and is possibly the only office in London where you can wear flip-flops to work! Rob and Paul's charity work even got them an invitation to meet British princes William and Harry. Normally of course, you must wear smart clothes at Buckingham Palace, but the brothers ignored the dress code and looked cool in their colourful flip-flops! Rob and Paul's story shows that positive can follow negative and that you don't have to wear a smart suit to be successful in business!

Glossary

hitchhike (v) to have people give you a ride in their car, usually by standing at the side of the road and holding out your thumb or a sign
In memory of someone (phrase) in honour of someone who has died, so that people will remember them
tragedy (n) a very sad event that causes people to suffer or die



A SPEAK Work in pairs. How important to you are the things on the list when you are buying new clothes? Decide whether they are very important (1), quite important (2) or less important (3). Compare your ideas.

The product ...

- a is available in different colours and designs. _____
- b is fashionable. _____
- c is popular with celebrities. _____

The company ...

- a pays its staff fair wages. _____
- b gives money to charity. _____
- c does charity work. _____

C READ FOR DETAIL Read again and answer the questions.

- 1 What was unusual about Rob and Paul's education?
- 2 How did the brothers become orphans?
- 3 Why did the brothers start Gandys?
- 4 Which six adjectives are used to describe the company's flip-flops?
- 5 What was unusual about the brothers' visit to Buckingham Palace?