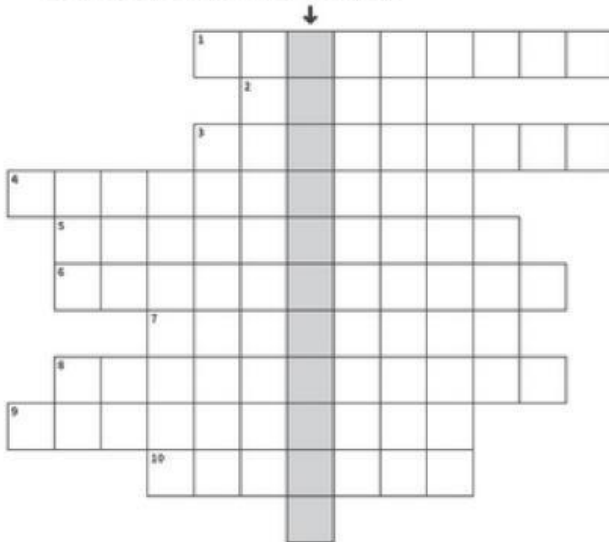


12 MY CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

VOCABULARY Personality adjectives

- 1 Use the definitions below to complete the word puzzle. Then write the mystery word in grey.



- easily annoyed by someone's mistakes or because you have to wait
- not liking to spend money, especially on other people
- usually relaxed and calm, not worried or upset
- always believing that good things will happen
- not able to be trusted or depended on
- a person who becomes angry and annoyed easily
- able to be trusted or depended on
- not noticing or not caring about other people's feelings
- kind and always thinking about how you can help other people
- being able to stay calm and not get angry, especially when something takes a long time

Word ↓ = _____

- 2 Choose the correct words to complete the sentences.

- I know I keep making mistakes. Thanks for being so *pessimistic* / *patient* with me.
- What's Annie shouting about now? She seems to be so *generous* / *bad-tempered* these days.
- He's only 14, but he seems older because he's very *reliable* / *insensitive* for his age.
- Sally will share her lunch with you if you forget yours; she's really *generous* / *unreliable*.
- Stop messing around in class – it's so *insensitive* / *thoughtful* to others.
- If you can't see the problems here, I think you're too *optimistic* / *bad-tempered*.

- 3 Complete the sentences with the opposites of the adjectives in the box.

bad-tempered generous insensitive
patient pessimistic reliable

- You should try to be more _____, because you accidentally hurt people's feelings too often.
- I wouldn't trust Mark to be part of our team – he's totally _____.
- Don't be so _____! Dinner will be ready in 20 minutes.
- Danielle is really _____ – nothing seems to upset her or make her angry.
- I'm quite _____ about the weather next weekend. The forecast isn't bad.
- It was very _____ of you not to give your sister a present for her birthday.

READING

- 1 Quickly read the article on page 49 and choose the best title.

- Friendship and evolution
- Friends are good for you
- The science of friendship

- 2 Read the article again. Choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the article.

- In the opening paragraph, the author shows his
 - trust in the findings of modern research.
 - concern about the consequences of loneliness.
 - suspicion that scientists might not always be correct.
 - interest in the relationship between friendship and health.
- What does 'it' refer to in line 13?
 - the desire to be healthy
 - the necessity of relationships
 - the negative impact of evolution
 - the connection between stress and ill-health
- When the author says 'humble acquaintance' in line 28, he/she means someone who
 - you see every day.
 - you don't know very well.
 - you meet through another friend.
 - you don't really want to be friends with.



Do you have a large circle of friends? Well, lucky you! Believe it or not, many scientists now believe that people with lots of friends live 22% longer than those with hardly any friends. It's even been suggested that having lots of friends may make it less likely that you will catch a cold. I must say, I'm not so sure about that – doesn't spending a lot of time with other people mean it's more likely you'll get more colds?

It seems that having a supportive social network can result in less stress and therefore better health. Why should this be? Well, the fact is we're sociable animals. We have evolved to live in groups, and need others line 13 for our **survival**. It is genetic. So people with lots of social connections are more relaxed, easy-going, and have higher self-esteem – all of which are related to better health.

Although friends help us cope with stress, they can also cause it. Think about it – how do you feel when your best friend says something hurtful to you? People we really like can **wound** us more deeply than anyone when they make an insensitive comment, or let us down – because they mean so much more to us. So would we be healthier if we didn't have any friends at all? Definitely not. When it comes to circles of friends, bigger is better.

So what should you do if your social life isn't going as well as you want it to? The research here is helpful. For a start, don't underestimate the value of the line 28 humble acquaintance. Interacting with people you see often but don't count as friends – your local shopkeeper, or that person you say 'good morning' to at the bus stop every day – can have a positive **impact** on your well-being. The first step is to tell them something about yourself. But if you want to build deeper friendships, you need to give it more time. Studies have found that it takes about 50 hours of socializing to become 'casual friends' with someone, 90 hours to become what would be considered 'real friends', and a total of 200 hours to become 'close friends'.

And what makes close friends so close? The old saying 'opposites attract' couldn't be further from the truth. Researchers have known for a long time that people choose friends who are the same as them in lots of ways – age, education level, politics. In fact, recent brain research has found that close friends have almost identical brain patterns!

Generally speaking, females are better at friendships than males. In stressful situations girls (and women) protect and care for others, and look for others to support them. They listen to their female friends' problems and help come up with solutions. Boys (and men) **tend** not to do that, as male friendships are often more about helping out with practical problems, mending things and so on. Their friendships have less emotional content.

Whatever you think about the scientific research into friendship, it is an unfortunate truth that people don't have as many friends as they used to. Or perhaps that's as many real friends. People, especially young people, have a lot of online friends these days, but the number of people who feel they have someone they can talk to about important subjects has dropped a lot: by nearly one third in the last ten years. There could be many reasons for this sad **decline**, but to my mind, the most likely is the growth of the internet – both the time we all spend alone with our computers, tablets and phones, and the mistaken belief that we are satisfying our social nature with virtual friendships.



- 4 What is most likely to produce a close friendship between two people?
 - A a combination of opposing personality types
 - B a willingness to share personal details
 - C a large amount of time spent together
 - D a similarity of many characteristics
- 5 Women's friendships are different from men's because women are
 - A not interested in practical things.
 - B more concerned with feelings.
 - C more helpful in general.
 - D better at fixing things.
- 6 What is the author's main point in the final paragraph?
 - A Communication is much easier these days.
 - B Technology is harmful to relationships.
 - C Scientists are too optimistic.
 - D True friendship is very rare.



3 Match the **highlighted** words in the text to the definitions.

- 1 when someone or something continues to live or exist _____
- 2 be (not) likely to do a particular thing _____
- 3 hurt or injure someone _____
- 4 when something becomes less in amount or importance _____
- 5 the effect that a person or situation has on something _____