

A Reading

Then and now

by Johnathan Meak

I visited my sister, Katy, during the summer holidays. It was the first time I had seen her and her family for more than ten years. I live in Australia now and I don't have children, so it was wonderful to spend time with my niece and nephew. They are both adolescents. Life is so different for teens now.

The first thing I noticed was how many of their activities were planned. For example, parents organized days at the park or trips to ice rinks. It was rare for the kids to go out for a walk or make an unplanned decision to visit friends.

When Katy and I were that age, we would spend every day of the summer holidays meeting friends in town or going for walks in the countryside. We used to get on our bikes and cycle to friends' houses or play cricket in the park. I said this to my sister. She was delighted by the memories, but very uneasy about letting her children have as much freedom as we had.

We seem to believe that there are more dangers today. For example, Katy believes that, due to the greater number of vehicles on the roads, there must be more accidents. I don't think that's true. I think roads have become less dangerous due to the many safety rules we now have.

Anyway, regardless of the traffic, I think teenagers are missing out on a sense of freedom. The long days of summer felt full of adventure. We used to disappear from the house after breakfast and not return until dinner time. However, I look at my niece and nephew and see two smart kids who have more information available than we ever had. They learn to make and fix things from YouTube™ videos. In discussions, they can make arguments against my points of view with facts straight from the internet. And, most importantly, they're safe.

So, though I like to think well of my childhood, I think the conclusion I've come to is that there's no harm at all in teenagers leading the kind of lives they do. And the truth is, if I was to have children now, I would probably want to keep them home more now, too.

Read the text. Choose the best summary of it.

- A A man talks to his niece and nephew about his teenage years.
B A man compares his teenage years with those of his niece and nephew.

Read the text again. Choose the correct answers.

- How long is it since the writer last saw his sister's family?
A ten years
B ten months
- What did the writer notice about his niece and nephew's activities?
A There weren't many.
B They were arranged.
- What does the writer disagree with Katy about?
A There's more traffic on the roads.
B The roads are more dangerous.
- What does the writer think about the differences in family behaviour that he saw?
A He has mixed feelings.
B He doesn't like it.

B Listening

 Listen to two friends talking about a project. What is the topic of the project?

- A elderly people
B memory

 Listen again. Complete the sentences with the numbers in the box.

40 8 10 70 63

- 1 People between 50 and _____ had trouble recalling recent things.
- 2 Jaxon gave people a list of _____ items to remember.
- 3 Teenagers aged 14–18 years old could remember about _____ items.
- 4 Jaxon gives an example of a _____ year-old woman who could remember details about the past.
- 5 One person could remember details from more than _____ years ago.