Coming of Age

Read the text carefully

A. Some laws make sense. Others don´t. In Britain, for example, the law states that you can get married at the age of 16 (with your parents´ approval), but you may not have a tattoo. You can choose your life partner, but not a piece of body art. Age limits vary hugely around the world due to different historical, political, social and cultural factors. Here we examine some rules, regulations and prohibited activities in the UK and explore where childhood ends and adulthood begins in different areas of life.

THE LAW

B. The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child says that children have the right to get help from a lawyer and a fair trial that takes account of their age or situation.

C. The age of criminal responsibility is 10 years old in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and in Scotland it is 12. Some people believe that a low age of responsibility acts as a deterrent and stop young people from committing crimes. However, there is concern about how children between the age of 8 and 12 can fully understand the consequence of their actions.

Recent research has shown that the age of 10 is probably too low because the part of the brain that has to make decisions and judgment is still developing. D. However, there is one area where teenagers' decisions and opinions are taken into account that is voting. In the UK, voting is optional and is not a legal duty. Teenagers do not have the right to vote until the age of 18, but even then, they don't have to vote in any election if they don't want to.

For many, this is a waste of a vote and a lot of UK teenagers feel voting should become obligatory so that it has more value. They feel they must take more responsibility if they want things to change and voting is an effective way to do this.

TRANSPORT

E. British law authorizes 16 years old Britons to ride mopeds with small engine and quad bikes off road, but they can´t drive a car or a quad bike on the road until the age of 17. Although Britain has some of the safest roads in the world, car accidents are the biggest cause of death of young people between the age of 17 and 21. For this reason many people feel that 21 is a more appropriate age to hold a driving license.

EDUCATION AND WORK

F. Compulsory education in Britain continues until a child is 16 and all students have to stay in full or part-time education until then, but this will probably soon increase to 18. Some school-leavers continue to work in jobs that they were doing part-time while they were at school. Young workers may start a part-time job at the age of 13 in Britain and the most common jobs are babysitting and doing paper rounds. Young people mustn't work for more than 2 hours on a school day or a Sunday and they can't work for more than 12-hour during the school week. There is a view that such laws are restrictive and that younger children need to be encouraged to work more, especially if they are willing and able.

1- Look for the highlighted words in the text that mean the same as: (use lowercase letter)

a- authorization: _____

b- limiting: _____

c- authorized: _____

d- compulsory: _____

e- just: _____

f- preventive: _____

g- alternative: _____

h- discernment: _____

i- consent: _____

j- banned: _____

LIVEWORKSHEETS

2- Write the letter of the paragraph related to these comments.

There are one extra sentence which you will mark 'X':



a- 'It's not necessary for teens to vote' ____

b- 'By law children will have a designed lawyer to help them'. ____

c- 'Teenagers under 18 are allowed to get cosmetic surgery'. ____

d- 'Teenagers are not allowed to work more than twelve hours a week'. ____

e- 'A sixteen-year-old cannot be consider an adult'. ____

f- 'A child under 8 cannot understand responsibility matters'. ____

g- 'Under 17 cannot be allowed to drive on roads'. ____

LIVEWORKSHEETS