



Read the text and choose the correct item.

You are What You Think You are

Two teenagers, Joe and Kate, are standing in front of their mirrors getting ready for school. Joe thinks to himself: 'I'm too skinny. Why aren't I tall and muscular? It's not fair. And look at those spots - I look really awful!' A little inner voice tells Kate: 'You're fat and ugly in these jeans. Your legs should be longer. And your hair's horrible - all curly and frizzy. No one will look at you twice!' If these thoughts sound familiar, that's because Joe and Kate are far from being alone.

It's very common for teenagers to have a negative image of their own bodies. They insist they are hopelessly ugly, no matter how much their parents and friends tell them otherwise! Magazine problem pages and Internet blogs are full of agonised accounts. The young people who write them are convinced they are unattractive and therefore unloved and rejected by others.

Why do teenagers see themselves in an unflattering way? The fact is, puberty has a lot to do with it. During your early teens, the body is preparing itself for adulthood. New chemicals are moving around the body as it adjusts to adult hormone levels. The body alters its shape, sometimes resulting in puppy fat. Skin problems such as acne are also common. Teens are affected psychologically too. They become confused and anxious about their changing appearance. This in turn can lead to feelings of insecurity and low self-esteem.

Nor is the situation helped by the media. Young people are bombarded with images of the ideal body. Top fashion models in glossy magazines are all far taller and skinnier than the average woman. They have their hair and make-up done professionally. After a fashion shoot, magazine editors have the photographs airbrushed before they are published to give the models a flawless complexion. Male actors in epic films flex beautifully toned rippling muscles. But more than likely, they have had them digitally enhanced, or 'photoshopped', as they call it in the trade. Not to mention the fact that many celebrities choose to have cosmetic surgery done to enhance their appearance. None of this reflects a realistic body image, so it's no wonder adolescents are made to feel inadequate and unsure of themselves.



The good news is that, however dissatisfied you are with your looks, the chances are it's only temporary! Those extra kilos and that spotty skin usually disappear by themselves in time. While your body is sorting itself out and 'settling into' its final form, you need to ride out the change! Resist the temptation to compare yourself with your peers. This is easier said than done when you are the tallest girl in your class or the only boy who has started growing a beard. You tend to feel the odd one out and may even get teased or bullied. Just remember that although teens' bodies change at so different speeds, everyone ends up at more or less the same place in the end!

It's important to realise what things you can change about yourself and what things you can't. Correct diet and exercise can do wonders for your appearance. Having your hair restyled, your nails manicured or your teeth whitened will also help boost your self-confidence. The things you can't alter, like your height or your shoe size, should be seen as strengths and not weaknesses. They are, after all, the features that make you a unique individual!

So don't be like Joe and Kate! Stop worrying so much about the way you look and learn to accept yourself as you are. Tell yourself you are just as attractive, intelligent and cool as the next person. If you feel good about yourself, the chances are other people will feel good about you too!

- 1. The first paragraph of the text implies that _____**
1. being unattractive is unfair.
 2. no one has a perfect body
 3. boys and girls compete to look good.
 4. many teenagers worry about their appearance.
- 2. According to the text, puberty is a time _____**
1. that influences your mental well-being.
 2. to seek help from an adult.
 3. that is difficult to prepare for.
 4. A when you are sure to gain weight.
- 3. Fashion models _____**
1. are as keen as film stars to have cosmetic surgery.
 2. are a source of inspiration to the average woman.
 3. have their appearance improved artificially.
 4. travel with their own personal make-up artist.
- 4. Teens are advised not to compare themselves with others because _____**
1. it's difficult to make accurate comparisons.
 2. everyone develops at a different rate.
 3. they may end up getting bullied.
 4. it will upset their classmates.
- 5. Joe and Kate are examples of teenagers who _____**
1. don't worry about the right things
 2. try hard to be accepted.
 3. don't make the most of their good points.
 4. are unattractive to their peers.

