

READING COMPREHENSION TEST

'I'm losing my teenage years'

Teenagers affirm evidence that suggests they are particularly struggling with coronavirus crisis

Ava



Betsy



Jakob



Ava Twomey, 17, from south London, is reconsidering her choice of working in an industry that is going into freefall after she finishes her studies. She has dreamed of working as an airline cabin crew member since she was 13. "I really love travelling, airplanes, airports – I'm a bit obsessed." British Airways was her first choice, after she did work experience there last year and "fell in love". But BA has been upended by the collapse in aviation, and has planned to make up to 12,000 staff redundant. "It's not looking too good at the moment," says Ava, "but I'm trying to stay positive."

Exercise helped, until she overdid the running and tore her tendon; now she FaceTimes her friends. Ava says she appreciates her friendships more, and has enjoyed the extra bonding time with her parents: "I've learnt more about them as people."

When, in late February, **Betsy Sheil** turned 16, she thought she was staring down the end of secondary school, not the beginning of global pandemic. "I was going to finish year 11 and do my GCSEs, then I was going to have a really long summer with my friends, hopefully go abroad – have that summer that everyone has." Betsy is now many weeks into isolating with her parents at their family home in Nottingham, her holiday plans vanished – along with her exams, and end-of-school celebrations with her classmates

Many teenagers have tried to find comfort in Netflix. Betsy is storming through *Gossip Girl* at a rate of 2.5 series a week. Betsy and her friends have watched the *Twilight* and *Harry Potter* films together using the Netflix Party app ("She made me watch *Clueless*," says her friend Josh, grumbling). They used to go to a cafe to do their homework, now they gather on FaceTime and Zoom. "We're just doing what we normally do, but online."

Jakob McMaster, 17, from Belfast, has found it harder to adapt. He used to spend his days at school or outdoors, exploring abandoned buildings and forests with his friends. "I don't think I've stayed inside the house this long since I was 12 ... We simply love being outside." He has also been separated from his boyfriend of one year, who attends the same school. Before lockdown, the longest they had been apart was three days. Two months into isolating with his parents and younger siblings, Jakob says he feels bored and uncharacteristically irritable. Jakob has had weekly therapy since he was 11, but now his sessions have been put on hold. He has noticed the impact of the loss of support and being confined on his depression

For some teenagers, the isolation coronavirus has caused is nothing new but a review of 63 studies on isolation and loneliness in teenagers suggested physical distancing was likely to put them at higher risk of depression, and probably anxiety. The longer the lockdown restrictions go on, the worse outcomes are likely to lead to. It is important for teenagers to know coronavirus is a challenge for everyone – and that within that there may be opportunity to gain new perspectives, skills and maturity.

1. Read the text and say True (T), False (F) or Doesn't Say (DS)

- a. Aviation Industry is going through hard times
- b. Ava hasn't had a working experience yet
- c. Betsy is really excited about her plans for summer holidays
- d. Teenagers have found in Netflix a good way to pass the time.
- e. Some teenagers have suffered a lot of tension with their parents
- f. Betsy has felt really irritated lately
- g. According to different studies social distance can make teenagers feel depressed.

2. Say Who...

- a. has had problems with too much exercising?
- b. has had a boyfriend for a year?
- c. has started valuing family and friends more?
- d. hasn't stayed at home for so long since being a child?
- e. has had the idea of working in a flight company for 4 years?
- f. has used digital platforms to do homework with friends?
- g. Has been forced to stop therapy?
- h. has watched series with friends lately?
- i. really enjoyed being outdoors?