



GIA SƯ CHUNG CƯ

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New words are invented all the time. I know that, and I know it's inevitable. For my part, and perhaps this is because I'm an old man now, I tend to think we've got enough words already and if we only used them properly we wouldn't need to come up with new ones.

There is a fairly new word, though, which I heard for the first time only a year or two ago. I believe it's American in origin, which makes it all the more surprising that I've added it to my vocabulary. And, I must point out, it's not unwillingly that I've accepted and embraced it. I honestly cannot imagine how I got through eighty-two years of life without it. Looking back, I can see occasion after occasion where the word would have been useful, where its existence might actually have changed things for the better, because to define something is to understand it, and be able to change it. The word is: nimby.

For those of you who are still unaware of this word, let me explain. A nimby is a person who does not want something such as a new building or road built near where they live. It's not that they can't see the value of the building project; often they can. They just want it built somewhere else – somewhere that won't disturb their peace and quiet at home. If you have an interest in language, you may like to know that nimby is an acronym, its letters being formed from the first letters of the words "Not In My Back Yard".

I have lived in the same small village in Sussex (population: 2,500) for over 30 years. I had always thought I was surrounded by neighbours, friends and fellow lovers of rural life. Now I have discovered I am surrounded – with a few notable exceptions – by nimbys (or "nimbies", opinion seems to be divided on the plural). The village is at war with itself, and, unfortunately, the nimbys are winning. A few of us are fighting them, though, and I am confident that we shall win eventually.

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The war is over a proposed new community centre. I see it – as any sensible person should – as a much-needed addition to the village. It would be a place for the youth of the village to meet at night and would, frankly, help keep them out of trouble. It would be a place for pensioners like me to go for a coffee and chat in the mornings. It would have meeting rooms, a cafe, sports facilities, a small stage for performances, even a gym. It would create jobs. How could anyone oppose it? But of course for nimbys, the issue is not that the village doesn't need a community centre. I think I'm right in saying that every single one of them supports the concept in principle. They just don't want it next to their house.

There are four possible sites. This means there are four groups of nimbys. Each group wants the centre to be built in one of the three sites that are not near their own houses. While they fight amongst themselves, the centre is not being built. It could have opened six months ago, if the village had united and backed the proposals. The money – all £250,000 of it – is sitting in a bank account waiting to be spent. Some doubt it ever will.

For me, the campaign goes on and I have one key strength. One of the proposed sites is almost right next door to my house. Am I terrified that there will be busloads of people arriving in the middle of the night and disturbing my sleep? No, I am not. Am I afraid that all the youths leaving the centre when it closes will smash my windows and burgle my house? No, I am not. Am I worried that a community centre next door will decrease the value of my house? No, I am not. Am I proud that I am not and never will be a nimby? Yes, I am.

1. In the first paragraph, the writer says that he _____
 - recognises the importance of inventing new words.
 - believes he can stop the invention of new words.
 - thinks the invention of new words is unnecessary.
 - is very careful to always use new words properly.
2. The word "nimby" is now used by the writer despite the fact that _____
 - it originally came from the USA.
 - he was unwilling at first to use it.
 - it would have been more useful in the past.
 - he can't understand exactly what it means.
3. The writer suggests that a nimby wouldn't oppose _____
 - worthwhile construction in their neighbourhood.
 - construction in their neighbourhood if it's quiet.
 - construction in other people's neighbourhoods.
 - any construction that adds value to their life.

4. The writer has recently _____.
 A. discovered that he has new neighbours.
 B. learnt the truth about his neighbours.
 C. realised he is alone in his struggle.
 D. become more confident about winning.

5. The word "frankly" in paragraph five emphasises that _____.
 A. the centre would solve all the problems caused by young people.
 B. there are very few young people living in the village anyway.
 C. most people do not believe the centre would be used at night.
 D. young people in the village do sometimes get into trouble at present.

6. The four groups of nimbys _____.
 A. agree that the village doesn't need a new centre.
 B. have agreed where the centre should not be built.
 C. disagree about where the centre should be built.
 D. agree that one of the four sites is acceptable.

7. The first three questions which the writer asks in the final paragraph _____.
 A. demonstrate how courageous the writer is.
 B. help show us what nimbys are scared of.
 C. suggest that nimbys sometimes use violence.
 D. show that the writer has a very secure house.

Are you preparing for a big test? If so, you may want to go play some basketball in between hitting the books. Doctors are starting to find more and more information that suggests a connection between exercise and brain development. Judy Cameron, a scientist at Oregon Health and Science University, studies brain development. According to her research, it seems that exercise can make blood vessels, including those in the brain, stronger and more fully developed. Dr. Cameron claims this allows people who exercise to concentrate better. As she says, "While we already know that exercise is good for the heart, exercise can literally cause physical changes in the brain."

The effects of exercise on brain development can even be seen in babies. Babies who do activities that require a lot of movement and physical activity show greater brain development than babies who are less physically active. With babies, even a little movement can show big results. Margaret Barnes, a pediatrician, believes in the importance of exercise. She thinks that many learning disabilities that children have in elementary school or high school can be traced back to a lack of movement as babies. "Babies need movement that stimulates their five senses. They need to establish a connection between motion and memory. In this way, as they get older, children will begin to associate physical activity with higher learning," says Margaret.

Older people can beef up their brains as well. Cornell University studied a group of seniors ranging in age from seventy to seventy-nine. Their study showed a short-term memory increase of up to 40 percent after exercising just three hours a week. The exercise does not have to be very difficult, but it does have to increase the heart rate. Also, just like the motion for infants, exercise for older people should involve some complexity. Learning some new skills or motions, such as with yoga or tai-chi, helps to open up memory paths in the brain that may not have been used for a long time.

For most people, any type of physical activity that increases the heart rate is helpful. The main goal is to increase the brain's flow of blood. And your brain can benefit from as little as two to three hours of exercise a week.

1. What is the main idea of this reading?

- A. How to exercise
- B. How exercise helps the brain
- C. How to get good scores on a test
- D. How the brain can change

2. According to the reading, what is the connection between exercise and brain development?
 - A. Exercise makes us stupid.
 - B. The brain needs special mental exercise.
 - C. The more exercise, the bigger the brain.
 - D. Physical exercise helps us think better
3. The minimum amount of exercise required to gain any benefit is
 - A. three hours per week
 - B. 40 hours per week
 - C. three hours per day
 - D. 40 hours per month
4. Why is yoga recommended for seniors?
 - A. It is easy on joints.
 - B. It does not increase the heart rate.
 - C. It can be done in groups.
 - D. It includes learning new motions.
5. What type of patients does a pediatrician probably treat?

A. Poor people	B. Children
C. Animals	D. Old people



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Damian would never have called himself a bully. A victim of bullying himself on occasion, if he'd thought for one second that he was bullying his classmates, he would have been devastated. The idea that he bullied his friends had never even entered his head. But now he was having to face up to the fact that perhaps in certain ways he was a bully.

It had all started in the mid-morning break, when Damian and a couple of his friends were discussing what to do about Frank Rice. Frank Rice was a bully and the whole school knew it. The question was, should they tell a member of staff the next time Frank picked on one of them? Damian thought they should. Chris and Will thought that

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they shouldn't. As they were arguing, Damian said: "We've got to do something. He's making people's lives a misery. It can't go on like this." There was silence when Chris replied: "Well, he's not the only one, you know. You should take a look in the mirror, Damian, before accusing other people. You're not perfect, you know."

Damian was so shocked, he didn't know how to reply. He didn't know where to begin. Finally, he managed to ask: "What on earth do you mean? You're not suggesting I'm a bully, are you? How am I like Frank Rice?"

Will explained. "No, you're not like Frank Rice at all. Chris didn't mean that. You don't hit people, you don't want to be horrible and nasty. You're usually just trying to be funny, but sometimes the things you say do hurt people. Quite often, in fact."

"Give me an example," said Damian.

"Well, take yesterday, for example," said Will, "when we were in the changing room after football. You kept saying how Chris was such a terrible goalie, you seriously wondered if he'd been bribed by the other team."

"I was only joking!" protested Damian. "You know that, Chris, don't you? I was only teasing." "That's exactly the point," said Will. "You were teasing Chris. And you do that a lot. It's not very nice, you know. I could see that Chris was upset, even if you didn't notice."

"Were you, Chris?"

"Well, I can't say I enjoyed it, to be honest. And Will's right. You do seem to do it a lot."

The bell rang, and they went off to class. Damian found it hard to concentrate for the rest of the morning. The conversation he'd had with Will and Chris kept coming back to haunt him. Was he a bully? If he was, he certainly didn't mean to be. But there was no escaping the fact that two very good friends of his thought that his comments often hurt them.

At lunch, Damian, as usual, sat next to Chris and Will. "Guys, I've been thinking about what we were talking about earlier and I think you're right. I just want to say that I'm really, really sorry. You're my best friends, and I'd never do anything to hurt you on purpose. I can see that I do sometimes say things that would upset you, and I'm going to make a real effort not to do that from now on. Still friends?"

"Of course we are, Damian," said Chris. "But thanks."

"No problem," said Will.

In the changing room that afternoon after football practice, Damian,

Chris and Will were discussing the game. Will had fallen over the ball at one point, and Damian was just about to make a joke about it when he stopped himself. "Am I allowed to say something like that?" he thought to himself. "We are friends. We've got to be able to joke with each other. Or is it too nasty?" Damian decided not to say anything on this occasion, but he began to realise that keeping his promise to Chris and Will would not be as easy as he'd thought.

1. From the first paragraph we learn that Damian has _____.
 - A. sometimes been bullied by other people.
 - B. never thought about bullying before.
 - C. briefly considered bullying his classmates.
 - D. only been bullied once in his life.
2. The boys disagree about whether _____.
 - A. Frank will bully them again in the future.
 - B. they should have told a teacher about Frank.
 - C. Frank is making people feel very miserable.
 - D. to tell a teacher if Frank bullies them again.
3. When Chris tells Damian to "take a look in the mirror", he means Damian should _____.
 - A. look at what Frank has done to him.
 - B. take more care with his appearance.
 - C. think about his own behaviour.
 - D. remember that no one is perfect.
4. Will's explanation to Damian suggests that Frank Rice _____.
 - A. never tries to make people laugh.
 - B. sometimes uses physical violence.
 - C. doesn't want to be nasty either.
 - D. only uses language to hurt people.
5. The example from the previous day that Will gives shows that _____.
 - A. Will thinks it is extremely funny when Damian teases Chris.
 - B. Damian only teases Chris and never makes jokes about Will.
 - C. Damian's jokes about Chris and Will can sometimes be cruel.
 - D. Chris gets more upset by Damian's comments than Will does.
6. Damian finds it difficult to concentrate in class because he _____.
 - A. is angry his friends have accused him of being a bully.
 - B. believes he will never be friends with Chris and Will again.
 - C. is continually looked at by Will and Chris during the lessons.
 - D. can't stop thinking about what he's been accused of.

7. In the changing room, Damian understands that _____

- A. it is difficult to balance making jokes with being nice.
- B. he has already broken his promise to Chris and Will.
- C. keeping his promise is the most important thing to him.
- D. stopping himself from saying nasty things will be impossible.

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