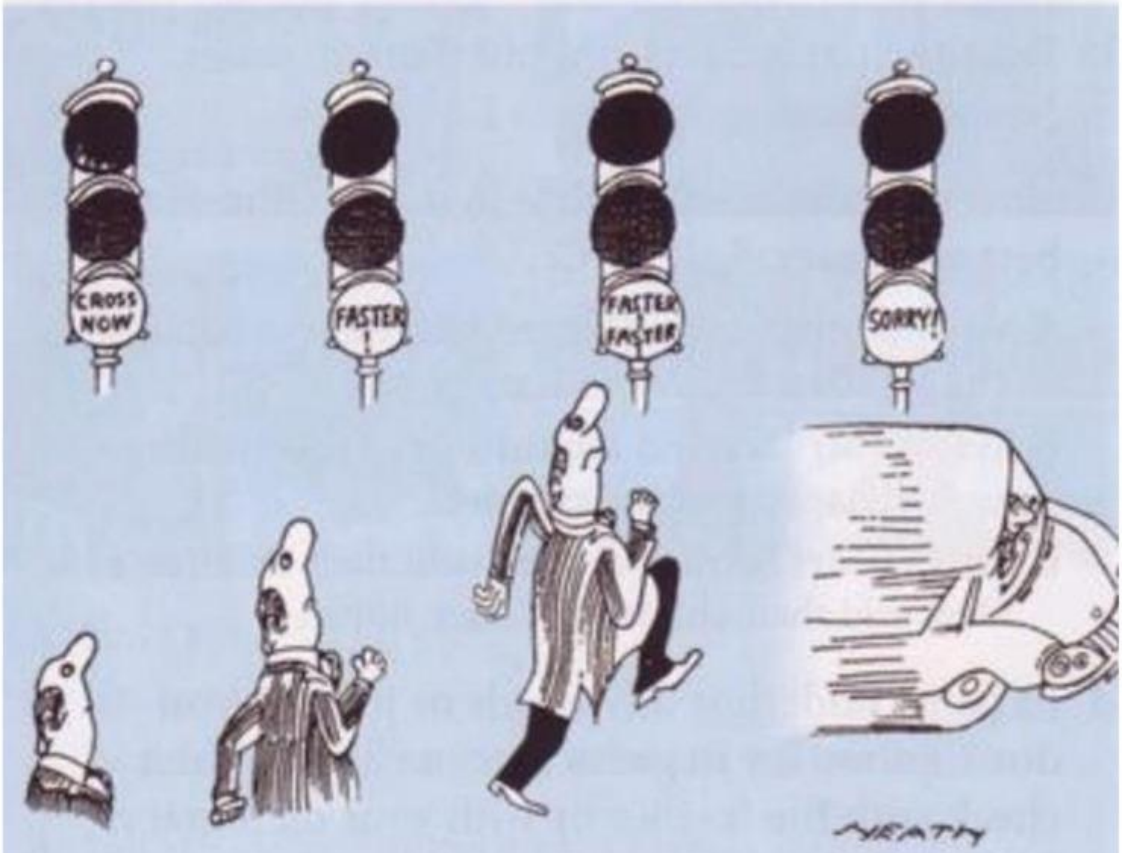
# WE'RE LIVING FASTER




NOT LONG AGO people believed that in the future we would work less, have more free time, and be more relaxed. But sadly this has not happened. Today we work harder, work longer hours, and are more stressed than ten years ago. We walk faster, talk faster, and sleep less than previous generations. And although we are obsessed with machines which save us time, we have less free time than our parents and grandparents had. But what is this doing to our health? An American journalist James Gleick in a new book, *Faster: the Acceleration of just about everything*, says that people who live in cities are suffering from 'hurry sickness'– we are always trying to do more things in less time. As a result, our lives are more stressful. He says that if we don't slow down, we won't live as long as our parents. For most people, faster doesn't mean better

LIVEWORKSHEETS

## 1 GRAMMAR comparatives, *as… as, less… than…*

a Read the introduction to the article *We're living faster…* Is it optimistic or pessimistic? Why?

b Read it again and cross out the wrong word.

According to James Gleick, today we…

1 work **longer** / **shorter** hours.
2 have **more** / **less** free time.
3 talk **faster** / **more slowly**.
4 are **more relaxed** / **less relaxed**.
5 will probably have **longer** / **shorter** lives than our parents.

c Complete the sentences with *as* or *than*. Then check with the text.

1 We sleep less ____ previous generations.
2 If we don't slow down, we won't live ____ long ____ our parents.

d **p.132 Grammar Bank 4C.** Read the rules and do the exercises.

## 2 PRONUNCIATION sentence stress

⚠ Remember! *-er*, and unstressed words like *a*, *and*, *as*, and *than* have the sound /ə/

4.8 Listen and repeat the sentences. Copy the rhythm.

1 I'm busier than a year ago.
2 Life is more stressful than in the past.
3 We work harder than before.
4 We walk and talk faster.
5 I'm not as relaxed as I was.
6 We won't live as long as our parents.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

## 4 LISTENING & SPEAKING

a 4.9 Look at the questionnaire. Listen to four people answering question 1. Which activity (working, studying, etc.) are they talking about?

1 _____
2 _____
3 _____
4 _____

b Listen again. Why do they spend more (or less) time on these things?

c In pairs, interview each other using the questionnaire.

### ARE YOU LIVING FASTER...?

1 Compared to two years ago, do you spend more or less time on these things? Say why.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| working or studying | sitting in traffic | cooking |
| talking on the phone | seeing friends | eating |
| working on a computer | shopping | sleeping |

2 Do you have more or less free time than a year ago? Why? What don't you have enough time for?

3 How do you get to work / school? How long does it take you? Is this longer than a year ago?

4 Do you usually arrive on time...? Why (not)?
at work/school for your English class to meet your friends

5 What machines do you have which save you time? Do they make your life simpler or more complicated?

6 Do you waste a lot of time every day? Doing what?

LIVEWORKSHEETS