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Ready-to-use ESL/EFL Lessons

## Television shoes

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**19 May, 2005**

## THE ARTICLE

### Television shoes

**BNE:** An inspired invention by a British student is being hailed as the answer to all parents' concerns about their increasingly obese children. The device, nicknamed "Square-Eyes", fits into any shoe and measures the number of steps taken by a child each day. The information is relayed to the family computer and the child is rewarded with a calculated number of minutes of TV viewing time. The recommended average of 12-15,000 steps a day equates to a maximum of two hours viewing. Once the allocated time in front of the box has expired, the TV automatically switches off. Kids then have to hit the streets to earn more TV time. Device designer Gillian Swan says it "will help children to include exercise in their daily routines from an early age."

"Square-eyes" has long been a term associated with sedentary children who are exposed to too much television. This new device reverses this association by promoting more active lifestyles for kids. Ms. Swan hopes her invention will mean healthier children. She said: "Today's children are exposed to a raft of television programmes and children's channels. Ten years ago, children were entertained by playing games with their friends, now they are cooped up in their bedrooms watching hours of television programmes." Engineer Cliff Randall believes the invention is at the vanguard of computer-integrated clothing, which will allow clothes to monitor our health.

## WARM-UPS

**1. CONNECTIONS:** In pairs / groups, make as many connections as you can between the words "television" and "shoes". Talk about these connections. Change partners and "swap" your connections. Talk about whether any of these connections could become a newspaper headline.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics are most interesting and which are most boring.

*inventions / parents' dreams / child obesity / walking / children's television / square eyes / bedrooms / computerized clothing / health*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**3. SHOES:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with shoes. Share your words with your partner / group and talk about them.

**4. COMPUTER CLOTHES:** Tiny computers and monitors will become part of the clothes we wear in the future. In pairs / groups, talk about the possible health or lifestyle benefits of the following computerized clothes:

Hat	Gloves
Glasses	Coat
Underwear	Suit
Watch	Underpants
Shoes	Socks

**5. TV KIDS:** In pairs / groups, talk about your TV viewing habits when you were a kid. What were your favorite programmes? Did you watch Sesame Street? Were you glued to the TV set all day? Are things different for children today?

**6. TWO-MINUTE TV DEBATES:** Face another student and engage in these fun 2-minute debates. Your teacher will time you and tell you to change partners.

- TV should be banned. vs. No way.
- Children should exercise for 6 hours a day. vs. Too long.
- No televisions in children's bedrooms. vs. That would mean war.
- TV is educational. vs. It destroys young minds.
- Kids should only be allowed to watch TV if they exercise. vs. Not with today's kids.
- Children should be able to carry portable TVs. vs. That means the end of civilization.

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| a. New shoes have been invented fitted with TV screens.               | T / F |
| b. A device has been invented that rewards walking time with TV time. | T / F |
| c. Walking 120,000 steps means children can watch two hours of TV.    | T / F |
| d. The device will promote healthier lifestyles for children.         | T / F |
| e. "Square -eyes" is a nickname for televisions.                      | T / F |
| f. Today's children enjoy exploring on rafts.                         | T / F |
| g. Ten years ago kids were shut away in their rooms glued to the TV.  | T / F |
| h. Computer-integrated clothing will soon be monitoring our health.   | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| a. invention       | idle           |
| b. obese           | lot            |
| c. equates         | television set |
| d. the box         | holed away     |
| e. hit the streets | connection     |
| f. sedentary       | brainchild     |
| g. association     | go outside     |
| h. raft            | relates        |
| i. cooped up       | cutting edge   |
| j. vanguard        | overweight     |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| a. hailed as             | of 12-15,000 steps     |
| b. increasingly          | lifestyles             |
| c. recommended average   | is at the vanguard     |
| d. equates to            | the answer             |
| e. hit                   | clothing               |
| f. exposed to            | a maximum of two hours |
| g. promoting more active | in their bedrooms      |
| h. they are cooped up    | obese children         |
| i. the invention         | too much television    |
| j. computer-integrated   | the streets            |

## WHILE READING / LISTENING

**SYNONYM FILL:** There are six gaps in the article. There are six groups of synonyms below the article. Place the number of the synonym group in the correct gap (It is not important to guess a correct word - any of the synonyms from each group could be put into the relevant gap).

**BNE:** An inspired \_\_\_\_\_ by a British student is being hailed as the answer to all parents' concerns about their increasingly obese children. The device, nicknamed "Square-Eyes", fits into any shoe and measures the number of steps taken by a child each day. The information is relayed to the family computer and the child is rewarded with a calculated number of minutes of TV viewing time. The recommended average of 12-15,000 steps a day equates to a maximum of two hours viewing. Once the allocated time in front of \_\_\_\_\_ has expired, the TV automatically switches off. Kids then have to hit the streets to \_\_\_\_\_ more TV time. Device designer Gillian Swan says it "will help children to include exercise in their daily routines from an early age."

"Square-eyes" has long been a term associated with \_\_\_\_\_ children who are exposed to too much television. This new device reverses this association by promoting more active lifestyles for kids. Ms. Swan hopes her invention will mean healthier children. She said: "Today's children are exposed to a \_\_\_\_\_ of television programmes and children's channels. Ten years ago, children were entertained by playing games with their friends, now they are cooped up in their bedrooms watching hours of television programmes." Engineer Cliff Randall believes the invention is at the \_\_\_\_\_ of computer-integrated clothing, which will allow clothes to monitor our health.

**1**  
vanguard  
cutting edge  
forefront  
front line

**2**  
sedentary  
idle  
motionless  
inactive

**3**  
invention  
contraption  
gadget  
gizmo

**4**  
earn  
merit  
warrant  
bag

**5**  
the box  
the tube  
the small screen  
the telly

**6**  
raft  
lot  
glut  
wad

## AFTER READING

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'square' and 'eyes'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. SYNONYM FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare and talk about your answers to this exercise. After you agree, check your answers against the text. Research some of the words that are new to you.

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT KIDS TV SURVEY:** In pairs / groups write down questions about children and television.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make a mini-presentation to another group / the class on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- inspired
- nicknamed
- average
- box
- streets
- early age
- term
- reverses
- raft
- cooped up
- vanguard
- monitor

## LANGUAGE

### SYNONYM FIND:

1. In pairs / groups, find three synonyms that fit in the spaces for the words in *italics*. When you have finished, compare and swap synonyms with other students.

**BNE:** An [*inspired* \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ ] invention by a British student is being hailed as the answer to all parents' concerns about their increasingly obese children. The [*device* \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ ], nicknamed "Square-Eyes", fits into any shoe and measures the number of steps taken by a child each day. The information is [*relayed* \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ ] to the family computer and the child is rewarded with a calculated number of minutes of TV viewing time. The recommended average of 12-15,000 steps a day equates to a maximum of two hours viewing. Once the allocated time in front of the box has expired, the TV automatically switches off. Kids then have to [*hit the streets* \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ ] to earn more TV time. Device designer Gillian Swan says it "will help children to include exercise in their daily routines from an early age."

"Square-eyes" has long been a [*term* \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ ] associated with sedentary children who are exposed to too much television. This new device reverses this association by [*promoting* \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ ] more active lifestyles for kids. Ms. Swan hopes her invention will mean healthier children. She said: "Today's children are exposed to a [*raft* \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ ] of television programmes and children's channels. Ten years ago, children were entertained by playing games with their friends, now they are cooped up in their bedrooms watching hours of television programmes." Engineer Cliff Randall believes the invention is at the vanguard of computer-integrated clothing, which will allow clothes to monitor our [*health* \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ ].

2. Talk about whether any of your synonyms would be better replacements for the words used in the text.

## DISCUSSION

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What was your first reaction to the headline of this article?
- b. Do you like reading about technology?
- c. What do you think of the new invention?
- d. Do you think this device will take off and become a ubiquitous piece of technology?
- e. How would you feel if you had to walk for four hours every day just to watch your favorite TV drama or news programme?
- f. Don't you think kids will find a way around having to walk 12,000 steps every day?
- g. How much TV did you watch as a child?
- h. Were you cooped up in your room when you were younger?
- i. What was your favorite children's programme?
- j. Would you like Square-eyes shoes for yourself?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading the article?
- b. Do you need these new shoes?
- c. What other computer-integrated clothing will be useful?
- d. What do you think kids will say to this new invention?
- e. Can you think of any other rewards the walkometer shoes could be tied to (e.g. 3,000 steps for a chocolate bar)?
- f. What do you think of the term "square eyes" for kids who watch too much TV and for the new invention?
- g. Do you think kids who watch a lot of TV become abnormal adults?
- h. Is obesity in children a problem in your country?
- i. Will this new invention have the desired effect?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?



## SPEAKING

**SMART CLOTHES:** You are workers in a company that specializes in creating computer-integrated clothes. Design a new item of "smart" or "cyber" clothing. In pairs / groups decide on the following:

The item of clothing	
Its catchy hi-tech name	
The slogan for TV ads	
What it does	
What it replaces	
Advantages	
How it will improve our lives	
The design (materials, sizes, colors etc)	
The price	

After you have finished, present your ideas to other students and give each other feedback. Suggest changes in each other's products that might improve them.

Only one idea from the class can go into production. In different pairs / groups decide on which product is the best. Argue that your idea should end up on the market.

Repeat the above activity. This time you cannot choose your own product.

## LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### Television shoes

**BNE:** An inspired invention by a British student \_\_\_\_\_ the answer to all parents' concerns about their increasingly obese children. The device, nicknamed "Square-Eyes", fits into any shoe and measures the number of steps taken by a child each day. The information \_\_\_\_\_ family computer and the child is rewarded with a calculated number of minutes of TV viewing time. The recommended average of 12-15,000 steps a day \_\_\_\_\_ of two hours viewing. Once the allocated time in front of the box has expired, the TV automatically switches off. Kids then have \_\_\_\_\_ to earn more TV time. Device designer Gillian Swan says it "will help children to include exercise in their daily routines from an early age."

"Square-eyes" has \_\_\_\_\_ associated with sedentary children who are exposed to too much television. This new device \_\_\_\_\_ by promoting more active lifestyles for kids. Ms. Swan hopes her invention will mean healthier children. She said: "Today's children are exposed to a raft of television programmes and children's channels. Ten years ago, children were entertained by playing games with their friends, \_\_\_\_\_ in their bedrooms watching hours of television programmes." Engineer Cliff Randall believes the device \_\_\_\_\_ computer-integrated clothing, which will allow clothes to monitor our health.

## **HOMEWORK**

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find information on the Square-eyes invention. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

**3. CYBER-CLOTHES:** Write an imaginary article for a fashion magazine. Explain in the article what the future of fashion will look like and how the function of our clothes will change.

**4. A CHILD:** Imagine you are a child. Write a letter to the children's newspaper to tell people what you think of this new invention

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F      b. T      c. F      d. T      e. F      f. F      g. F      h. T

### SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| a. invention       | brainchild     |
| b. obese           | overweight     |
| c. equates         | relates        |
| d. the box         | television set |
| e. hit the streets | go outside     |
| f. sedentary       | idle           |
| g. association     | connection     |
| h. raft            | lot            |
| i. cooped up       | holed away     |
| j. vanguard        | cutting edge   |

### PHRASE MATCH:

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| a. hailed as             | the answer             |
| b. increasingly          | obese children         |
| c. recommended average   | of 12-15,000 steps     |
| d. equates to            | a maximum of two hours |
| e. hit                   | the streets            |
| f. exposed to            | too much television    |
| g. promoting more active | lifestyles             |
| h. they are cooped up    | in their bedrooms      |
| i. the invention         | is at the vanguard     |
| j. computer-integrated   | clothing               |

### SYNONYM FILL:

**BNE:** An inspired ----**3**---- by a British student is being hailed as the answer to all parents' concerns about their increasingly obese children. The device, nicknamed "Square-Eyes", fits into any shoe and measures the number of steps taken by a child each day. The information is relayed to the family computer and the child is rewarded with a calculated number of minutes of TV viewing time. The recommended average of 12-15,000 steps a day equates to a maximum of two hours viewing. Once the allocated time in front of ----**5**---- has expired, the TV automatically switches off. Kids then have to hit the streets to ----**4**---- more TV time. Device designer Gillian Swan says it "will help children to include exercise in their daily routines from an early age."

"Square-eyes" has long been a term associated with ----**2**---- children who are exposed to too much television. This new device reverses this association by promoting more active lifestyles for kids. Ms. Swan hopes her invention will mean healthier children. She said: "Today's children are exposed to a ----**6**---- of television programmes and children's channels. Ten years ago, children were entertained by playing games with their friends, now they are cooped up in their bedrooms watching hours of television programmes." Engineer Cliff Randall believes the invention is at the ----**1**---- of computer-integrated clothing, which will allow clothes to monitor our health.