1.  If you ____________, you do more than one thing at the same time.
2.  If something is ____________, it happens or exists in many places.
3.  A ____________ life is one in which all parts combine well together and exist in the correct amounts.
4.  A ____________ is a set of questions that you ask a large number of people.
5.  ____________ are things such as rooms or pieces of equipment provided at a place for people to use.
6.  A ____________ is a reduction in the amount or quality of something.
7.  If something is ____________, it is completely necessary.
8.  A ____________ is something people do regularly for fun in their free time.
9.  If you are ____________ to do something, you don’t want to do it.
10. If an activity is described as ____________, it involves a lot of sitting and not much exercise.

2 Find the information

Look in the text and find this information as quickly as possible.

1. What percentage of British children watch TV in bed at night?
2. How much time on average do British children spend in front of a screen each day?
3. How many children read books in their own time each day?
4. How many children did the survey interview?
5. What percentage of five to 16-year olds use the Internet?
6. How much time on average do children spend online (on the Internet)?
Life through a lens: How Britain’s children eat, sleep and breathe TV
Lucy Ward, social affairs correspondent
January 16, 2008

1 A generation of ‘multitasking’ children are living their daily lives – including eating and falling asleep – to the accompaniment of television, according to a survey of young people’s media habits. They watch TV before they go to school, when they return home, as they eat their evening meal and then – for 63%, a much higher percentage than read a book each day – in bed at night. The survey of five to 16-year-olds shows that four out of five children now have a TV set in their bedroom.

2 Television has become so widespread that many children now combine it with other activities, including social networking online, looking from their laptop to the TV screen and back again. Even if they are concentrating on the television, young people are now unwilling to watch just one programme, with boys in particular often switching between channels to keep up with two programmes at the same time. The survey, conducted by the market research agency Childwise, will increase worries that childhood is increasingly about private space and sedentary activities and less about play, social interaction or the child’s own imagination.

3 The government’s recent Children’s Plan focused on improving play facilities as a means of ensuring a more balanced life for young people who spend a lot of time watching television. Today’s survey findings show that after declining for three years, television-watching among children is now increasing again. This is mainly the result of more girls watching soap operas.

4 Internet use is also continuing to increase rapidly. This means British children spend an average of five hours and 20 minutes in front of a screen a day, up from four hours and 40 minutes five years ago. Reading books for pleasure, on the other hand, continues to decline as a regular pastime. While four out of five children read books in their own time, only a quarter do so daily and 53% at least once a week.

5 The report, based on interviews with 1,147 children in 60 schools around England, Scotland and Wales, found television viewing now averages 2.6 hours a day across the age group, though one in ten say they watch more than four hours daily. The survey, which has been conducted annually for 14 years, asked for the first time whether children watched television while eating dinner or in bed before going to sleep. It found that 58% watch during their evening meal, while 63% lie in bed watching the screen (rising to almost 75% of 13 to 16-year-olds). Two-thirds – particularly the youngest children – watch before school, and 83% turn on the television after returning home.

6 Rosemary Duff, Childwise research director, said television was now “a part of children’s lives”, but added that the quality of viewing had changed. “People used to pay more attention when they watched television. It used to be less widespread but much higher in its importance. Now it is widespread but just part of the background, not just at home but wherever you go.”

7 “It seems that children now multitask, keeping one eye on the television as they flick through magazines or use the computer,” Duff added. When the company asked boys to choose between programmes on different channels they often refused, saying they would ‘watch both’. “They switch from one to another and cannot imagine that they should have to make a decision. They are surprised that you should put them in a situation where they have to make a choice.”

8 Computers are also now a key part of children’s private worlds. “The Internet is now an essential part of most young people’s lives,” says the study, with 85% of five to 16-year-olds using the Internet, and over a third (including a quarter of five to six-year-olds) owning a computer or laptop of their own. On average, they go online just over four times a week, spending two hours each time.

9 The survey shows a rise in Internet use, particularly among younger children. This is mainly the result of social networking sites, primarily Bebo. Communication, says the report, “has overtaken
fun (e.g. online games) as the main reason to use the Internet and study is now far behind”. Almost three quarters (72%) of children have visited a social networking site, and over half have their own profile – sometimes lying about their age to avoid minimum age requirements. Children as young as eight are now signing up.

10 Kathy Evans, policy director of the Children’s Society, which is conducting its own inquiry into modern childhood, said there was now “growing public and professional concern about the possible effects of children’s TV and Internet viewing habits”.

The inquiry will report next month on children and technology as part of its two-year investigation.
5 Verb + noun collocations

Match the verbs in the left-hand column with the nouns in the right-hand column to make collocations.

1. visit  a. facilities
2. turn on  b. the Internet
3. improve  c. a magazine
4. flick through  d. attention
5. make  e. a survey
6. use  f. a choice
7. pay  g. a website
8. conduct  h. the television

6 Word building

Complete the table using words from the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>noun</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. interact</td>
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<td>2. imagine</td>
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<td>3. decline</td>
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<td>4. research</td>
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<td>5. refusal</td>
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<td>6. inquire</td>
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<td>7. investigate</td>
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<td>8. please</td>
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7 Discussion

Do you think children spend too much time watching TV and using the Internet? What are the advantages and disadvantages of these activities?
Life through a lens
Level 2 • Intermediate

KEY

1 Key words
1. multitask
2. widespread
3. balanced
4. survey
5. facilities
6. decline
7. essential
8. pastime
9. reluctant
10. sedentary

4 Find the word
1. to the accompaniment of
2. keep up with
3. annually
4. flick through
5. refuse
6. minimum
7. sign up
8. childhood

2 Find the information
1. 63%
2. Five hours 20 minutes
3. A quarter (25%)
4. 1,147; 5. 85%
5. Two hours (four times a week)

3 Comprehension check
1. T
2. T
3. F
4. F
5. F
6. T

5 Verb + noun collocations
1. g
2. h
3. a
4. c
5. f
6. b
7. d
8. e

6 Word building

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