“Manners Maketh Man”, as an English saying goes. But in the modern world, where Man is concerned with so many serious global problems, do manners really matter any more? Do we have the time, or the will*, to think about what modern good manners should include? And do they need any changing or modernisation, anyway? Some modern writers and thinkers believe that they do, and have recently decided to explore the subject, convinced that manners are as desirable as they were in the past, or maybe even more so, in our busy and overcrowded urban societies.

For many years manners were associated with a highly restrictive code of behaviour. A hundred years ago correct behaviour was, in fact, often used to enforce the class system. Of course, many of the old rules are also unsuitable for modern society. “Always open the door for a lady” is both patronising and sexist. “Never put your elbows on the table” is irrelevant to modern eating habits. “Children should be seen and not heard” has always been much too severe! However, many people would like to return to the days when we were more openly respectful of each other, and used the words please and thank you in conversations with strangers and friends.

There are some new good manners slowly developing alongside new technologies, although there are few generally accepted norms. Mobile phones are essential to us, but a nuisance to others, so regulations have been introduced to ban their use during exams, lessons and performances. But what about people who use them when talking to shop assistants, or in the middle of a conversation with a friend, or who text messages during performances, or leave their mobiles on maximum volume in the office, ringing incessantly and disturbing everyone else? In fact, our environment is generally much noisier than it was in the past, and noise can lead to a vicious circle of disturbance, stress, frustration, anger, and louder noise to combat noise.

However, we often seem to associate manners with weakness. People who are considerate are ridiculed and laughed at as being old-fashioned, conformist and conservative, rather than civilised, respectful, courteous, and thoughtful – merely interested in improving the quality of our lives. But surely motorists should not have to fight for a place on the road, shoppers should not have to argue with “the clever people” pushing into the queue, and teachers should not be afraid of their students.

*will– volontà

1. In the first paragraph, we learn that …
   a. manners are irrelevant in modern society.
   b. modern society already has too many rules.
   c. some writers feel that good manners are still important.
   d. some writers feel that modern life is too complex and sophisticated.

2. In the first paragraph, what does the pronoun they refer to?
   a. changing or modernisation.
   b. writers and thinkers.
   c. manners.
   d. people.

3. In the context of the second paragraph, we understand that the writer …
   a. wants to reintroduce the formal manners of a hundred years ago.
   b. does not want to bring back the formal manners of a hundred years ago.
   c. is a member of the older generation.
   d. feels that manners and respect for others are completely different concepts.
4. In the context of the second paragraph, the expression *unsuitable* means …
   a. inappropriate  
   b. too strong  
   c. too weak  
   d. not enough

5. In the context of the third paragraph, which of these statements is **NOT** mentioned?
   a. Mobile phones should only be used to text messages in public.
   b. Mobile phones can be a cause of annoyance to others.
   c. Some regulations have been introduced concerning mobile phones.
   d. Noise is now a more serious problem than in the past.

6. In the context of the third paragraph, the word *ban* means …
   a. control  
   b. permit  
   c. forbid  
   d. pursue

7. In the fourth paragraph, we learn that …
   a. people with good manners are just hiding their weaknesses.
   b. people today often think manners are out-dated.
   c. the writer wants teachers to be more respectful of the young.
   d. the writer thinks that motorists and shoppers are particularly bad-mannered.

8. In the context of the fourth paragraph, the best translation for *clever* is …
   a. losca  
   b. veloce  
   c. sensibile  
   d. furba


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Match the beginnings and ends of the phrases

1. I believe … a. to downloads
2. I’m interested … b. at planning things
3. I generally listen… c. on you
4. I spend too much … d. in astrology
5. I’m afraid … e. of spiders
6. I’m good… f. on magazines
7. I dream… g. in Eastern philosophy
8. I’m fed up … h. of winning the lottery
9. I’m so proud i. of passing my exams
10. We’re all depending… j. with this weather

PHRASAL VERBS – task 1

What do you think these phrasal verbs mean?

She was dressed up to the nines with high heels, a glamorous dress and a feather boa.

Some US companies have "dress-down" Fridays where everyone wears casual clothes.

I don’t want to do anything this evening except veg out in front of the TV.

The bomb went off at 15:12.

You have no idea what he put her through – she’s much better off without him.

But she keeps saying that she’ll never get over him.

a) Choose the correct particle (on, off, up, out or down) to complete these phrasal verbs. Indicate where the particle should be inserted.

1. If I were you I’d put your heavy coat. It’s really cold out today.
2. It’s very hot in here. Would you mind if I took my jacket?
3. Micky made that story. It isn’t true at all!
4. The match has been put until next week because of the snow.
5. If you look a word in the dictionary, it’s best to write the definition so you don’t forget.
6. It was dark when I got home, so I turned the lights.
7. My daughter’s very untidy she never picks her clothes.
8. Why don’t you put that suitcase and rest your arms for a minute.
9. Can you turn the radio? I’m trying to work.
10. I’ve done my homework but I left the exercise on conditionals because I didn’t understand it.

b) Complete the dialogues with the correct pronouns and particles.

1. A: What does “supercilious” mean?
   B: I’m not sure. If I were you, I’d look ____________________ in the dictionary.

2. A: Do you need to keep these newspapers?
   B: No, you can throw ____________________.

3. A: Is that a true story?
   B: No, he made ____________________.
4. A: How does this video-recorder work?
   B: Well, push this button to turn ___________________ and that one to turn ___________________.

5. A: My hands are freezing!
   B: You’ve got some gloves. Why don’t you put ___________________

6. A: I’ve got an appointment with Dr Sawbones at 10.30 on Monday morning.
   B: You’d better write ___________________ or you’ll forget.

7. A: Isn’t Katie home yet?
   B: I’m picking ___________________ after the party.

8. A: It’s Simon and Gilly’s wedding on Saturday, isn’t it?
   B: Actually they’ve put ___________________ until June. I’m not quite sure why.

c) Match a phrasal verb with a definition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ask out</th>
<th>call back</th>
<th>call off</th>
<th>give back</th>
<th>pay back</th>
<th>put back</th>
<th>put out</th>
<th>try on</th>
<th>turn down</th>
<th>turn up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- return something to someone
- return a call
- return money to someone
- put something in its usual or proper place
- decrease the volume of a radio, TV etc.
- increase the volume of a radio, TV etc.
- put on some clothes to see if they fit
- cancel an appointment or event
- extinguish a fire, a cigarette, a candle etc.
- invite someone to go out with you

Source: J. Crowle et al. (2006) Manuale ALTAIR ... pp97-98

PHRASAL VERBS – HOMEWORK TASK

• Look up a verb which has a clear meaning for you (http://oxfordparavia.it OR http://www.macmillandictionary.com )
  - e.g.: come, go, think, listen, look, read, write…
  - How many phrasal verbs are listed for it?
    - How are they explained?
    - How are they translated?
• Repeat the same procedure with a verb you don’t understand well
  - e.g.: get, set, put…
  - Are the phrasal verbs MORE or LESS specific?
a Complete the sentences with a noun formed from a verb from the list.

argue inform discuss propose predict imagine revise survive

1. The discussion went on for hours.
2. A writer needs to have a lot of ______.
3. There wasn’t much ______ on the notice board.
4. Scientists are pessimistic about the ______ of polar bears into the 22nd century.
5. What’s your ______ for the match tomorrow?
6. I had an ______ with my boss and she shouted at me.
7. You must do some more ______. The exam is next week!
8. The council’s ______ for the new road wasn’t popular.

b Complete the sentences with a noun formed from the adjectives in brackets.

1. His decision to leave now is complete ______ (mad)
2. My ______ depends on having a quiet, peaceful home. (happy)
3. His ______ to his brother was quite amazing. (similar)
4. The new airport is only a ______ – the planners haven’t taken a final decision. (possible)
5. Only a small ______ of people oppose the plan. (minor)
6. She showed great ______ during the training course. (able)