

TRANSKRYPCJA NAGRAŃ

TASK 1.

For all the reputed benefits of homeschooling, teaching children at home has always had its potential problems. Let's listen to some opinions on the issue.

SPEAKER A

It all started five years ago. We took our daughter Ashley, and son, Derek, out of middle school after discovering love notes that Ashley had been exchanging with a boyfriend and learning that Derek was being beaten up daily on his bus ride home from school. Some people say that all the fighting you see in school is the real world and that children should be prepared for it, but I don't want to risk my children's health or life for such real-life experience. I want to give them the best education they can get and I'm ready to take the extra time and effort to make sure they get it. That's why I gave up my job and made the decision to stay at home until they grow up. My husband and I strongly believe that homeschooling provides a better and safer education.

SPEAKER B

I must say I'm shocked and saddened to hear about the growing numbers of parents who are joining the homeschooling movement. I consider it to be an incredibly foolhardy philosophy. Not even older teenagers, much less the very young, should be put in the position of making unchangeable decisions regarding their future welfare. Getting a satisfying and rewarding job is tough enough for those with a mainstream education. Many homeschooled children may very well become deeply disappointed when, as adults, they find that the doors leading to exciting endeavors in disciplines like science, medicine or technology are closed to them. Somehow, tossing precious potential to the wind seems a costly and irresponsible way to provide a freedom-filled childhood.

SPEAKER C

It was a big commitment to homeschool our three kids. Right now Amelia is the only one of our three children still being educated at home. Our youngest girl - Kitty - entered Pocantico Hills School for the first time this year, after telling us she longed for more friends. She followed her older brother, Josh, who returned to public school four years ago. Recently our kids debated the merits of homeschooling. On the positive side, Kitty and her brother made the high honor roll when they entered public school. But on the negative side, they discovered they needed to learn how to write compositions and reports. They were also a little afraid of bullying and wondered how they would get on with their peers. Kitty says that one person, I mean - one parent - might not have all the ideas. She claims school expands your horizons. But Amelia disagrees saying she doesn't need a lot of people around her to learn. Anyway, I'm proud my children can frame their arguments and that they've learned to think for themselves.

SPEAKER D

In this country a few states allow parents to remove children from school without reporting that they are doing so. Additionally, several states ask homeschoolers to report that they are keeping their children at home, but require very little else. These lax regulations stem in some instances from the old patterns of American farming communities, where parents needed to keep their children around to help with the crops. In some states, the rules remain unchanged because the groups that hold homeschooling sacred have political power. In others, the desire to save money and avoid responsibility obviously comes into play. While I'm not against homeschooling as such, it's clear that the regulations should be updated.

adapted from www.query.nytimes.com

TASK 2.

Journalist: Good morning. You may have noticed that from time to time a book comes out that proves to be a true eye-opener. Leslie Savan's latest publication is precisely this kind of book. It's been almost eight years since she stopped writing her advertising column in *The Village Voice* and hunkered down to write what is likely to become the think-book of the year, *Slam Dunks and No-Brainers*, in which Leslie provides us with an analysis of the phenomenon she calls pop language. Leslie is with us in the studio today. Hello, Leslie.

Leslie Savan: Hello. I'm really glad that the book is finally available in the bookstores.

Journalist: Leslie, what was it about the way Americans talk that inspired you to write the book?

Leslie Savan: I used to write a column about advertising, and I started to notice that certain words and phrases kept popping up in ads. I don't mean obvious ad lines like *new and improved*, but the more subtle stuff, like *You're goood!* or *Yesss!* After a while I would read the same phrases in blogs and hear them in sitcoms or conversations I'd overhear in the street. Although they may sound like regular clichés, pop words and phrases are much more than just that. They stand out from all other words that surround them and seem to work as punchlines – as if they came with built-in applause signs and laugh tracks. If said properly, these pop words and phrases are certain to help us just jam an argument into the basket and pull consensus our way.

Journalist: Hm, interesting. Now, Leslie, are we to think that pop talk is a purely 21st-century invention?

Leslie Savan: Oh, no. Not at all. Popular catchphrases run throughout history. During the early 19th century, for instance, London went crazy over *Flare up!* and *There he goes with his eye out!* People have always used catchphrases in a rote manner. Imitation, repetition and plugging in ready-made phrases are, after all, the methods by which humans learn speech. The roots of pop talk go deep and in many directions, but as often as not the source is black. From the days of slavery on through jazz, rock'n'roll, and now hip hop, African Americans have influenced the speech that went on to become pop more than any other group of people. Some black-inspired phrases we speak with an implicit nod to their source, like *You da man*, while others we think of as almost sourceless, like the all-famous pop word of all time, *cool*. It's a word we use all the time, no matter what our age, and the vast majority are totally oblivious to its source.

Journalist: So what kind of phrases are best candidates for the pop phrase status?

Leslie Savan: Whether a phrase becomes pop language or not is typically determined by how universally that phrase is used. No matter whether a phrase starts as slang, jargon, a line in song lyrics or a group of words pronounced with attitude, it doesn't become a pop phrase unless it gets picked up by a mass audience. You might think of these phrases as the contestants on *American Idol*. To get votes from viewers, or in our case, the thumbs-up from the scriptwriters and language users generally, the words not only have to skillfully hit all the familiar notes but they have to evince some glamour. If they continue to win media exposure, and if they express something the wider public wants expressed, these phrases, no matter where they are from, will step into the spotlight as celebrity words, the stars, if you will, of our sentences.

Journalist: When are we most likely to employ these celebrity words and phrases, then?

Leslie Savan: Oh, there are hundreds of situations when people will resort to these pretested, media-favored phrases. They'll be used when we're stressed, or when we're

defending our social turf, or when we're angry and just want to wind up the window of our car on the frustrations of everyday life. In all these situations, instead of thinking, we'll just grab the nearest item from the enormous arsenal of phrases which, when we use them, will almost always guarantee a largely predictable outcome. We just say *Don't go there* if someone we talk to gets too nosy and we immediately start to feel more in control. We've even turned nice words, like *hello* and *excuse me*, into their evil twins: *Hel-lo?!*, *Ex-CUSE me?* What makes such phrases and words powerful, what makes them so persuasive is the crowd of millions of people using them on an everyday basis.

Journalist: Leslie, thank you very much.

Leslie Savan: Not at all, my pleasure.

adapted from www.randomhouse.com

TASK 3.

On Saturday, I witnessed the Henley Veterans' Regatta, a famous rowing competition. The river Thames at Henley was a picture of grey. Contented, fulfilled, cheery, but undeniably grey. And occasionally bald. Rowers in their forties, fifties and sixties and in several cases seventies wheezed and sweated their way down the very same course that elite athletes take regularly. Everywhere you looked, the joys of competition were in evidence. Although for a few it was the winning that provided a singular pleasure, for the vast majority it was the fact they could still take part that brought so much fun. The clutch of nerves gripping the stomach at the starting line, the adrenaline rush of the first few strokes, the long haul up the most picturesque sporting track in the world: it made them feel more alive. For these people, sporting competition has been a vital part of their being for as long as they can remember, something they can't live without.

I couldn't help comparing the energy and the vibrancy with another event I attended: a non-competitive team morning at a primary school. This was, emphatically, not a sports day: sport, for the head teacher, needed to be eradicated in all its forms, as pernicious an evil as sexism and racism. Sport represented competition at its most corrupting: to this head teacher, trying to beat someone else at games was morally indefensible. And so the children were obliged to stand in line, hanging around waiting to do things like tip water into a bucket or sort plastic bricks into color-coded lines. Running was banned as someone might get hurt, and winning didn't happen. As the head walked between the rows, every child she passed wanted to know one thing: who was winning. "Nobody wins here," she'd trill, apparently oblivious to the groans her every remark solicited. I have never seen such a listless and bored bunch of children. Those veterans at Henley may have been 10 times older, but they had 10 times the spark of those seven-year-olds.

My memories were stirred this week when the Prime Minister announced his wholehearted support for competitive sport in schools. Of all the things he said, this is the most important. Yet the gap between prime ministerial proposal and reality can be as wide as the space between that head teacher's ears. The authorities need to ensure competition is given room on the curriculum, that those teachers who appreciate its value are supported, and that the facilities are developed. We have allowed almost a whole generation to be schooled without sport, marooning them on the sofa, sagged down by their ever-expanding waistbands. The next generation must rediscover the spirit of their grandparents competing at Henley; and that requires actions, not words.

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