

Reading

Passage 1

When I was a little kid, I wanted to learn to fight like the heroes in my favorite Kung Fu movies. I asked my parents to sign me up for Kung Fu classes. To my surprise, they said yes! I thought they wouldn't want me to learn to fight, but they thought Kung Fu would be good exercise. I think my parents also understood something I didn't know at the time: Kung Fu is about more than beating up people. It's not even just about defending yourself. Kung Fu teaches you to have discipline and to work hard for your achievements. As I advanced in my Kung Fu classes, my teacher began giving lectures about the history of this martial art. Now that I've studied Kung Fu for fifteen years, I know different Kung Fu styles, like Praying Mantis, and I also know more about Chinese history. Pretty impressive for a kid who just wanted to beat up other kids in the neighborhood, right?

Passage 2

Most people agree that fast food is unhealthy, but there are different ways in which it affects people. If you eat fast food *and* have other bad habits, you're in for trouble! My uncle used to eat McDonald's pancakes for breakfast, KFC chicken for lunch, and Pizza Hut pizza for dinner a few times every week. He also smoked and didn't exercise. Last year, he got a pain in his chest and had to go to the hospital. Guess what? He was having a heart attack! The doctor told him he almost died. He said there was more to my uncle's problem than just eating fast food. He suggested that my uncle quit his stressful job, give up smoking, exercise more, and start eating more fruits and vegetables. Now, my uncle runs his own organic vegetable farm, and only snacks on food he grows or makes himself. Everyone in my family is glad he's healthier. Also, he's now a really good cook, so we enjoy going to his house for dinner instead of eating at McDonald's!

Part 2

1. What are you anxious to do this weekend?

I'm anxious to go to the store, buy a few new DVDs I've been wanting to see, and spend all weekend sitting around the house, watching movies.

2. When do you ask your teacher for help?

I ask my teacher for help when I don't understand something she said in English, or when I can't find an English word in my electronic translator.

3. What do you work hard at?

I really want to join the baseball team next year, so I have been working hard at hitting the ball farther than I was able to before. I'm getting stronger!

4. What are you saving money in order to do?

Since last year, I have been saving money in order to buy my own scooter. Right now, I have to share one with my brother, but when I get enough money, I'll buy my own.

5. What kinds of things do you like to look through without really reading them?

I like to look through magazines about actors and actresses. I don't usually read all of the articles, because most of them are pretty stupid. However, I like looking through those kinds of magazines because I like to see what new movies are coming out, and I like to gaze at pictures of actors and actresses.

6. Do you like to eat fast food? Why or why not?

I like to eat fast food, but not that often, because I know it's not good for me. Usually, I eat a lot of vegetables, noodles, and rice, but sometimes I really want a hamburger, pizza, or French fries. Some people refuse to eat fast food, but I think that as long as you usually eat healthy food, it's okay to eat fast food once in a while. Sometimes you just need to eat something delicious, even if it is bad for you.

7. What do you think is the key to making friends?

I think the key to making friends is to find out what makes a person interesting. Sometimes, when I talk to a person for the first time, that person is shy and doesn't want to talk about himself or herself. So, I like to ask a lot of questions. I find out something that person does that is unfamiliar to me, and then I ask a lot of questions about it. Most people like to tell you about the things that are important to them.

8. What famous place would you like to get a closer look at one day? Why?

I'd really like to get a closer look at Paris one day. I have heard it's really beautiful, and it seems to be full of things I love, like coffee, cakes, and art museums. I would love to walk around the little stone streets and see flowers on the outside of houses. Plus, I think it would be great to go up in the Eiffel Tower and see Paris from up high!

9. What did you like to snack on after school when you were a little kid? What do you like to snack on now?

When I was a little kid, I would only eat chocolate cookies after school. It made my mom so mad, but I wouldn't eat anything else, no matter how hungry I was. Now that I'm older, I still sometimes eat cookies after school, but usually I eat something healthier, like a banana or an apple. I also sometimes eat a piece of bread with butter on it, or I have some tea and eat a few crackers or chips.

10. Do you think it's important to buy things that have a well-known brand name on them, like Sony or Apple, or do you think it doesn't matter what brand you choose? Explain.

A lot of people like brand names, but I bet many of those people can't tell you exactly why Sony, Apple, or any other brand is better than a lesser-known brand. So, I don't think it's important to buy things with brand names. Of course, sometimes things that don't have brand names are not well-made, but usually there is not much difference. I don't think it's important to pay more just to have a brand name, as long as the two things are of the same quality.

Questions:



1. Why is the girl in the hat handing out fliers?
2. What kind of band is on the flier?
3. How does the girl in the black skirt feel about the guitar player?
4. Do you like to go to concerts? Why or why not?

Answer: (1) The girl in the hat is promoting a concert. (2) The Beat Up Band is a rock and roll band. (3) The girl in the black skirt thinks the guitar player is impressive. (4) I love going to concerts! Usually, when you see a band in concert, the music sounds different than it does when you listen to the band at home on a CD. I like to go with my friends and dance to the music. I also think it's interesting to see the band up close and see what the people in the band are like when they play their music.