

Introduce yourself

Discuss: These paragraphs contain some different vocabulary and some idioms. Read the paragraphs and explain them in your own words. Tell what the bold words and phrases mean. Then answer the questions.

1-When I was young, I always tried to **keep up with** my big brother and his friends. They liked to ride their bikes through the fields behind our house. I would get on my bike and try to follow, but they were four years older and much bigger and stronger. **Before long**, they would **leave me behind**. I would ride home and cry to my mother that they wouldn't let me **catch up**. Mother would comfort me and explain that my brother wanted to play with his friends and didn't want his little sister always **tagging along**. Sometimes she would sit down and play with me so I wouldn't be so sad.

Did you have a situation like this when you were a child? Were you the oldest sibling? Did you play with your siblings or play with friends more? Do you think Mother handled the situation well or should she have made the older kids slow down and let the younger sibling go with them?

2-Dana is a little shy. Sometimes in a crowd or at a party, she will withdraw and keep to **herself**. She'll only talk to the people she knows well.

Do you like to keep to yourself when you are in a crowd or do you introduce yourself to others? Would you describe yourself as **outgoing** or **introverted**?

3-As a child, one of our favorite games was "**Keep Away**". We would stand in a circle. One person would be in the middle. Everyone on the outside of the circle would throw a ball around the circle. We would try to keep the person in the middle from getting the ball. This game can also be called, "**Monkey in the Middle**." We also loved "**Hide and seek**." We especially loved to play this in the evening when it was getting dark. One person would be "it". They would close their eyes and count to 50. Then they would open their eyes and start trying to find the other players. We would pick a big tree as "base". If the searcher got too far away from base, the hiders could run to base and call "in free".

Describe some games you played as a child. Were you allowed to play outside after dark?

4- I **missed out** on participating in athletics when I was in school. In those days, there were very few girls sports teams. In my school, we only had girl's volleyball. I wasn't very good at volleyball, so I couldn't **make the team**. But I was a very fast runner and could even beat several of the boys in races. I would have loved to be on a track team. Sadly, there wasn't a girls track team.

What was something you missed out on as a youth? Are there lots of opportunities for girls to participate in sports in your country?

5. When I was a **teenager**, several of us **sneaked out** of our houses one night. We all met at another friend's house where the parents were not home. We had a late night party. We got a little loud and someone called the police. I was afraid the police would call my parents and I

would be in **big trouble**. I ran out the back door and ran all the way home. Fortunately, I never **got caught**.

Did you ever sneak out? What did your parents "catch you at"? Did you ever get in big trouble?

6-I have a new car. I really love it. It is **second to none**. It's my favorite color, blue. It's got pretty leather seats inside. I plan to drive it for a long time.

Do you have something that you really **value** and feel like is second to none?

7-The teacher spent the first two days explaining a difficult type of math problem. She had told the students they would be tested on Thursday. But on Wednesday, the teacher realized many students were still confused about how to solve that kind of problem. She felt the students needed to spend more class time working on that kind of problem. The teacher asked the students if they wanted to **postpone** the test until Friday. She asked for **a show of hands**. Almost everyone voted for postponing the test.

Would teachers in your school allow the students to vote on things? Is the teaching style different in the U.S.? Do you feel like U.S. schools are behind schools in your country?

8- Sara thought her boss was nice, but today Sara asked for a day off to go visit her mother in the hospital and the boss **denied** her request. Her boss got really mad and told her if she didn't **show up** for work he would **fire** her. He **showed his true colors**.

Can you give an example of when someone showed their true colors?

9- I have three grandchildren. Two are girls and one is a boy. The two girls always **side against** the boy. So my grandson doesn't often **get his way**.

When you were young did any of your siblings side against you? Did you get your way very often as a child?

10- I asked my husband if he wanted chicken or beef for dinner. He said, "**six of one, half dozen of another**".

Do you think he had strong opinions about which meat to eat? Do you prepare lots of meals with meat or do you mainly cook vegetarian dishes? Do you give your family a choice of what you cook for dinner?

12- Martha has 4 sons. When she is taking all of them someplace, they run out to the car and call "**shotgun**". The first one to call shotgun gets to sit in the front passenger seat. The other boys ride in the back seat.

The idea of a shotgun seat dates to the Wild West, when an armed man rode beside the driver on a stagecoach (a public transportation coach pulled by horses) to protect passengers from would-be attackers. Hollywood Westerns popularized the phrase "riding shotgun," and by the 1950s, it was a common slang term used by American kids.

Have you ever heard this phrase? Did you prefer riding in the front seat when you were a kid?