



# Personality and Development

## Warm-up

### Reference answers

#### Picture 1

These two pictures reveal contrasting attitudes toward life in the face of difficulty. Although both climbers say “Because it’s there!”, they convey substantially different meanings. In the picture on the left, the climber doesn’t surrender himself to the difficulty and makes every endeavor to reach the summit of the mountain. He acts confidently and optimistically, believing that he can conquer every barrier on his way to success. This reminds me of George Mallory, an English mountaineer who took part in the first three British expeditions to Mount Qomolangma in the early 1920s. When asked “Why do you want to climb Mount Qomolangma?”, George Mallory responded by the retort “Because it’s there,” showing his indomitable spirit. In the picture on the right, a man is sitting back at the foot of a mountain. He also utters “Because it’s there!”, which I think conveys a different meaning. It means that he is afraid of approaching danger and wants to bury his head in the sand.

As for me, I am more inclined to optimism. While participating in a competition or a test, I always expect the best result. When something bad happens, I tend to see it in its least threatening light. I think it is a temporary challenge to be overcome and that I will benefit tremendously from conquering hard knocks. Hence, seldom do I feel depressed or frustrated.

#### Picture 2

In the picture on the left, a girl is sitting on the couch, watching TV and eating popcorn with great relish. It appears that she is very indoorsy and enjoys the luxury of staying at home alone. In the picture on the right, a boy is going cycling amid the spectacular natural surroundings. He has such a great time that he says “How fabulous it is to stay close to nature!” Apparently, he is quite outdoorsy, enjoying outdoor activities.

As for me, I fall somewhere in between. I am neither too indoorsy nor too outdoorsy. Sometimes, I am more willing to stay at home, doing some reading, listening to music and playing computer games. Sometimes I prefer to indulge in outdoor recreation, such as cycling along city paths, mountain biking down steep terrain, trekking through the back country, or camping in picturesque natural settings.

### Picture 3

In front of two travelers lie two diverged roads. The man in the picture on the left chooses to take the road trodden black while the man in the picture on the right opts to take the road less traveled by. I think two different personality traits are reflected in these two pictures. The man in the left picture is less adventurous whereas the man in the right picture is a risk-taker.

As for me, I am more of a risk-taker than of a safe-player. I believe in the motto that “Not taking any risks in life is the biggest risk.” For example, if I see something good in an event, I will take the opportunity to do it, though most people think it is a waste of time, difficult and not repayable. To stay in my comfort zone will bring me a sense of security or certainty, but it may also lead to numerous regrets simply because I don’t have enough courage to try out something new. However, though I am a risk-taker, I don’t want to take unnecessary risks that will harm me or my family.

## Listening and Speaking

### 1 What does your taste in music reveal about your personality?

#### Scripts

Could the playlists lurking on your iPod really reveal information about your personality? Research conducted by psychologists Jason Rentfrow and Sam Gosling suggests that knowing the type of music you listen to can actually lead to surprisingly accurate predictions about your personality.

For example, researchers found that people could make accurate judgments about an individual’s level of extroversion, creativity and open-mindedness after listening to 10 of their favorite songs. Extroverts tend to seek out songs with heavy bass lines, while those who enjoy more complex styles such as jazz and classical music tend to be more creative and have higher IQ scores.

Another study conducted by researchers at Heriot-Watt University looked at more than 36,000 participants from all over the world. Participants were asked to rate more than 104 different musical styles in addition to offering information about aspects of their personality. The following are just some of the personality traits linked to certain musical styles.

Do you prefer to listen to the top 40 hits?

Do the latest tracks from Rhianna, Selena Gomez and Flo Rida make up your workout mix? If so, chances are that you tend to be extroverted, honest and conventional. While pop music lovers are hard-working and have high self-esteem, researchers suggest that they tend to be less creative and more uneasy.

Are Snoop Dogg and Dr. Dre more your style? In spite of the stereotype that rap lovers are more aggressive or violent, researchers have actually found no such link. Rap fans do tend to have high self-esteem and are usually outgoing.

Would you rather watch CMT instead of MTV? Country music fans are typically hard-working, conventional and outgoing. While country songs are often centered on heartbreak, people who gravitate toward this genre tend to be very emotionally stable.

Despite the sometimes aggressive image that rock music and heavy metal project, researchers found that fans of this style of music are usually quite gentle. They tend to be creative, but are often introverted and may suffer from low self-esteem.

Classical music lovers are typically more introverted, but are also at ease with themselves and the world around them. They are creative and have a good sense of self-esteem.

People who enjoy jazz, blues or soul music were found to be more extroverted with high self-esteem. They also tend to be very creative, intelligent and at ease.

According to researcher Adrian North of Heriot-Watt University, the reason people sometimes feel

defensive about their taste in music might be that it relates to their attitudes and personality. "People do actually define themselves through music and relate to other people through it but we haven't known in detail how music is connected to identity," he explained.

The next time you are putting together a playlist to listen to during your commute or workout, consider how your personality might be reflected in your song choices.

## Reference answers

### Listening and understanding

1

- 1) creativity
- 2) favorite songs
- 3) 36,000
- 4) 104 different musical styles
- 5) their personality
- 6) conventional
- 7) more uneasy
- 8) outgoing
- 9) hard-working
- 10) stable
- 11) gentle
- 12) low
- 13) at ease with
- 14) intelligent

### Thinking and speaking

2

	Music genres	Personality
Student 1	rock & roll	introverted, shy, emotional
Student 2	rock & roll	active, outdoorsy, aggressive
Student 3	classical	peaceful, romantic, carefree
Student 4	country	stable, careful, tranquil
Student 5	rap and hip-hop	energetic, outgoing, dynamic

I interviewed five of my classmates and did detect a moderate degree of correlation between personality traits and musical preferences. According to the results, it is not hard to draw a conclusion that those who have a liking for upbeat and rhythmic music, such as rock & roll, rap and hip-hop, tend to be more extroverted, dynamic and energetic while those who prefer to listen to quiet and soothing music, such as classical and country music, have a disposition toward peace and tranquility. However, exceptions do occur. For example, one rock & roll fan said that he was very introverted and shy, which was in stark contrast with those who have a preference for music with a strong tempo, and he also stressed that he was easily affected by his emotions.

## 2 Does your career fit your personality?

### Scripts

Everyone knows how hard it is to get along with others when there's a personality clash – so imagine how hard it is to be happy in a career that conflicts with your personality.

Similar to when you're looking for a mate, you want to find a career that complements your character, not conflicts with it.

For example, if you're active and outgoing, you might not do well sitting behind a desk all day. By the same token, if you're shy and soft-spoken, you might not do well in a job that requires a lot of social interaction, and if you like working alone, you wouldn't thrive in a team setting.

Here we have six personality groups which seem to encompass the majority of people. From there, we've listed what jobs might be suited to best fit your needs. Please note that each requires different education, training and qualification requirements.

Artistic personalities are creative by nature, with imaginations that stretch further than others can conceive. These people like to express themselves through their creative work versus completing structured tasks. They like to work without rules, and enjoy working with forms, designs, colors, words, and patterns. Their ideal jobs include editor, graphic designer, high school drama teacher, landscape architect, and perfumer.

Conventional people like conventional things: Rules, procedures, schedules, and instructions are all things that appeal to them. They prefer working with details and data versus ideas; they are practical

and like routine and order. Their ideal jobs include accountant, actuary, building inspector, cost estimator, and financial planner.

Enterprising people are leaders. They like to see projects through from start to finish, business ventures in particular. They are doers more than thinkers and are more interested in the "big picture" than the small pieces that make it up. Their ideal jobs include advertising sales agent, financial officer, management analyst, program director, and sales manager.

Investigative people prefer to work alone. They like using logic over imagination, solving problems and mysteries, and putting together pieces of a puzzle, and they pay extreme attention to detail. Their ideal job matches are computer systems analyst, librarian, optometrist, science professor, and software engineer.

True to their name, realists are ... well, realistic. They are results-driven, hands-on people who like problems and solutions. They like working outdoors, as well as with machines, tools and jewelry. Their ideal jobs include diagnostic medical sonographer, electrician, highway patrol pilot, locksmith, and nuclear engineer.

Social people like helping others and working with teams. They communicate well, thrive on human interaction and they'd rather talk than work with machines or data. The best jobs for them are the ones that let them be with other people. Their ideal jobs include family practitioner, personal coach, school psychologist, student affairs director, and teacher.

# Reference answers

## Listening and understanding

### 1

- 1) imaginations
- 2) designs
- 3) patterns
- 4) graphic designer
- 5) landscape architect
- 6) procedures
- 7) instructions
- 8) details and data
- 9) routine and order
- 10) accountant
- 11) cost estimator
- 12) see projects through
- 13) doers
- 14) big picture
- 15) sales agent
- 16) management analyst
- 17) logic
- 18) mysteries
- 19) detail
- 20) librarian
- 21) software engineer
- 22) results-driven
- 23) outdoors
- 24) jewelry
- 25) electrician
- 26) nuclear engineer
- 27) human interaction
- 28) personal coach
- 29) school psychologist

## Thinking and speaking

### 2

- interpreter: communicative, resourceful, quick-witted, unbiased, curious, attentive, empathetic

I think interpreters should ideally be equipped with the following personality traits. First, they should have great empathy so that they can sense and infer what the speaker is saying or trying to say, when so much of the message is conveyed by more than just words and with it, they also know how to express themselves in an understandable way. Thus empathy can help interpreters be communicative and expressive. Second, they should have an insatiable curiosity about the world. Learning about different languages and cultures at the level required for interpreting obviously takes a lot of time and commitment, and I would think that an enquiring

mind can make it easier. Third, they should be quick-witted. They should be capable of reacting quickly to emergency problems that arise during the process of interpretation.

- financial advisor: enterprising, visionary, prudent, confident, trustworthy, honest, meticulous, analytical, responsive

Successful financial advisors should have several personality traits as follows. First, they should be analytical, which allows them to assess their clients' various needs, current financial situation and future potential to create a portfolio that best serves the individual. They have to be able to take into consideration a number of outside variables as well when making their recommendations. Second, they should be trustworthy. The trustworthy behavior like being open and honest with clients, listening to their concerns and making accommodations for their needs and requests helps them maintain good relationships with new clients. Third, they should possess the kind of personality that is responsive to the needs of their clients. When they are responsive, their clients will feel encouraged to talk openly and continually, allowing them to find the best route to take for their finances.

- computer programmer: realistic, passionate, creative, patient, energetic, logical, cooperative

Computer programmers are very realistic. They are trying their best to solve practical problems in life. They are quite logical so as to solve the problem in a flawless way. They also show a tendency to be cooperative rather than antagonistic toward others, because they need to work as a team to create a perfect program.

- college counselor: sociable, loving, tolerant, unselfish, expressive, open-minded

I think college counselors should be, first of all, sociable and expressive, because they have to work with students and give students their suggestions. They should also be tolerant and forgiving. As Alexander Pope put it, "To err is human; to forgive, divine." It is inevitable that students will make mistakes. When students do something wrong, college counselors should do their utmost to help them rectify their mistakes. Furthermore, they should be open-minded. While working with young people, they should keep themselves well-acquainted with what is happening in the world and be open to novel things.

- surgeon: calm, careful, compassionate, patient, cooperative, studious, communicative

I think surgeons must be superior communicators to collect accurate patient histories, answer questions and communicate with patients about what they should do before and after surgery. They need the ability to explain instructions clearly to other healthcare workers in their office and the operating room. Teamwork skills are essential to operating efficiently with the help of other medical staff. Surgeons should also be studious, being eager to conquer new challenges, learning new technologies and continually developing their skills, because the field of surgery is constantly advancing. Surgeons must be calm and level-headed so as to respond to the emergency properly. At the same time, surgeons need compassion for other people which makes them truly stand by the patients.

- TV presenter: composed, quick-witted, eloquent, liberal-minded, humorous, enthusiastic

As far as I am concerned, TV presenters are expected to have the following personality traits. First, they should have the ability to show great composure in the workplace. While a live show is shot, there will definitely be contingencies which require the TV presenters to cope with calmly instead of losing control. Second, they should be quick-witted and eloquent. Many of their interviews are unprepared and unexpected, so they need to be armed with exceptional improvisation skills. Third, they should have a strong sense of humor. A humorous TV presenter can create a dynamic and welcoming atmosphere.

- tourist guide: passionate, considerate, good-tempered, well-organized, talkative, friendly, proactive

Ideally, tour guides should possess the following personality traits. First, they should be passionate. Their great enthusiasm enables them to withstand mentally and physically exhausting experiences. When they are

enthusiastic about some subject, they are prone to acquire more knowledge about it and are therefore more confident while presenting the information about it. Second, they should have an outgoing and approachable nature. Since guides are in the business of meeting, welcoming and working for strangers, it is vital that they are friendly and open in many types of situations and inspire others to do the same. Third, they should possess a proactive nature. One of the signs of a leader is the good ability to initiate changes and the willingness to assume responsibilities accordingly. This proactive behavior is essential for success in guiding because guides are subjected to challenges and unpredictable situations for which they must respond actively.

- English professor: humorous, impartial, passionate, devoted, perceptive, flexible

I think the following personality traits may make ideal English professors. First, they should be impartial toward every student. They should assess students on the basis of performance, not on the students' personal qualities, background or culture. Second, they should be flexible. Teachers should be willing to alter plans and directions in a manner which assists students in moving toward their goals. Third, they should be individually perceptive. Professors should see each student as a unique and valuable individual and look for the differences among students. This way, they can help different students to bring their potential into full play. Last but not least, they should have a sense of humor and employ humor spontaneously in a tasteful manner. In this way, they are able to take the tension out of tight situations and enliven the classroom atmosphere.

- diplomat: intelligent, quick-minded, powerful, eloquent, tactful

From my perspective, the following personality traits are key to becoming a successful diplomat. First, diplomats should be eloquent and tactful. They should be verbally fluent and concise. Pay attention, diplomats speak only when necessary and keep their comments brief. Second, they should be tough and powerful enough. Getting to yes is not the objective of a diplomat. They should begin instead with what best serves their country's national interests and then seek to achieve a negotiating outcome as close to those requirements as possible. Third, they should demonstrate an analytical temperament. They should have an opinion without first having a full command of the facts.

- science fiction writer: investigative, imaginative, determined, patient, assiduous, logical

From my point of view, the following personality traits may help science fiction writers be successful. First, they should be assiduous. If they are easily distracted, cannot keep on task, get bored really easily, and find any and every excuse not to sit down and concentrate, then they will not produce a good work. Writing is a solitary job. A writer does it best when alone. Second, they should be determined and patient. When the going gets tough, successful writers keep going! Writing life has lots of pitfalls. Determination is vital. And patience is like the gasoline for determination; without patience, determination has no fuel to keep it going. Last but not least, science fiction writers should be imaginative and creative. The subject that they focus on is very likely to be unreal in daily life. They need to use their imagination to create something original so as to capture the attention of readers.

## **3** Easy ways to be an optimist

### *Scripts*

Recent research suggests an optimistic state comes from a series of active inner processes – psychological somersaults. That's good news because it means that optimism – like other skills such as putting on eyeliner or hitting a tennis ball – is something we can improve with practice.

Firstly, one way you can use to enhance optimism is to play interpersonal ping-pong. If you serve up a smile to people, they usually bounce it back. Hit them with a snarl and watch them scowl instead.

Research shows that facial expressions and the moods that accompany them are contagious,

probably because they evolved as a means of nonverbal communication between people.

You can use the infectious effects of a grin to jump-start an optimistic outlook in yourself by sending others what you want them to lob back at you. A kind word to the man behind the deli counter can get your day bouncing in the right direction.

Secondly, you can try to short-circuit pessimism. Here's another reason for putting on a happy face: It influences your brain in a positive way.

In one study, subjects were asked to hold a pen in their mouth, thus causing them to inadvertently make the facial muscle movements characteristic of a smile. In this case, they rated cartoons to be funnier than did other subjects, even though they were unaware that it was the smile that was boosting their reaction.

There's an interesting biological reason for this effect: When you feel down, your brain tells your face you're sad, and your facial muscles respond by putting on a depressed expression and convey back to the brain that, yes, you're feeling blue.

Consciously changing the facial muscles so they don't correspond to what you're feeling is a way of sending a different message: "Hey, it's not so bad down here after all." The brain will respond by beginning to change your mood accordingly.

Thirdly, you should learn to shift your focus. Pessimists can't stop depressing facts or negative thoughts from poking into their consciousness, but they can choose not to dwell on them.

If you look through a camera lens, you'll find that when one part of the picture is in focus, the other areas blur a bit. This is a distortion, sure, but sometimes we need to sustain the idea of being in a protective bubble to feel optimistic. This active self-direction of your own moment-to-moment perspective allows you to create a new life story, one in which you take charge of your emotions and actions.

Since research shows that those who feel they have a better sense of control tend to be the most optimistic, why not take charge of where your psychological lens is focused?

## Reference answers

### Listening and understanding

①

B; C; E

②

- 1 It comes from a series of active inner processes – psychological somersaults.
- 2 To stress that optimism can be improved with practice.
- 3 If you serve up a smile to others, they usually bounce it back.
- 4 Probably because they evolved as a means of nonverbal communication between people.
- 5 A happy face can influence one's brain in a positive way, making the brain begin to change the mood accordingly.
- 6 To be in a protective bubble to feel optimistic, which means to self-direct our own moment-to-moment perspective.

### Thinking and speaking

③

#### Step 1

From the perspective of psychology, Answer A displays more optimism whereas Answer B is more prone to pessimism. Therefore, if you get more than 5 A answers, it means that you are more inclined to optimism. The more optimistic answers you get, the more optimistic you appear.



## Step 2

Optimists and pessimists differ from each other in many aspects.

- Optimists believe they can shape their future. They are firmly convinced that tomorrow will be better. Circumstances and previous failures don't matter as much to an optimist. An optimist's view of the world is such that life improvement is expected. This strengthens itself over time through positive reinforcement, especially with the right strategies. But pessimists often feel no sense of control over their lives. Quite often, pessimists base their gloomy expectations on prior experiences.
- Optimists see a setback as temporary while pessimists see it as permanent. To be more specific, optimists tend to see an unfortunate event as something limited in time and think that has no real impact on the future. Pessimists are inclined to view a negative event as permanent, as part of life, as destiny, as an indication of more to come.
- Optimists perceive difficulties as specific whereas pessimists see them as pervasive. When something goes wrong for optimists, they look at it as an isolated incident largely disconnected from other things that are going on in their life. An optimist perceives an unfortunate business incident as just that – a business incident. The pessimist is prone to question the validity of the entire business. He may well be stuck in a sense of helplessness, thus unable to make a difference to correct the issue.
- Optimists see bad events as external while pessimists tend to interpret bad events as personal. When things go wrong, the optimists tend to think that they result from external forces over which one has little control but can overcome. Pessimists are disposed to take negative events personally and as an indication of a personal shortcoming.

## Step 3

If you want to change your pessimistic attitude toward your life, you may try following tips.

- Do things that you gravitate toward, such as playing games, going shopping, hanging out with your friends, or ringing up your parents.
- Stay fit. Physical health is intimately related to mental health. When you are in perfect physical condition, chances are that you will be in a cheerful mood.
- Lend others a hand whenever possible. This will make you feel content with yourself and give you a sense of accomplishment.
- Believe that you can be the master of your own fate and the captain of your soul. This way, you will be able to follow your heart and be happy.
- Focus on the possibilities, not the impossibilities. People become pessimistic when they focus their minds on the impossibilities. All they see is the enormity of the challenges ahead. That way, their minds are overwhelmed by the difficulties and they can no longer see themselves as the winners. So focus your mind instead on the possibilities. See how you are able to overcome the difficulties. See how you can go through all these and be victorious.
- Read inspiring stories. To help you focus on the possibilities, you should read inspiring stories of people who have made it before you. It will inspire you since you know that other people can do it despite the challenges they face. Just like you, they also face enormous difficulties, but they persist and achieve success. So you can, too.
- Get rid of negative words. Nothing takes your optimism away faster than negative words. So get rid of them at all costs. Always see the positive side of things, and speak about hope and possibilities. There is always a positive side in everything you face. This doesn't mean that you are denying the reality; you just look at it from a different angle.



# Viewing and Speaking

## 1 The secret power of introverts – A quiet revolution

### Scripts

J = Jenna Goudreau; S = Susan Cain

J: Your new book, *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*, just launched this week, and it's getting fantastic reception. Can you summarize for us the thesis of the book and how you arrived at it?

S: Yeah, so the idea of the book is that we live in a culture that is biased against a constellation of traits, namely shyness, seriousness ... introversion, and that this leads to a colossal waste of talent and of energy and of happiness, and that introversion really does have, er, all kinds of attributes to it ... some, some real surprising powers to what it means to be an introvert. And ... and yet this is not something we're mindful of, and ... and instead, what we do is we encourage introverts to act more like extroverts instead of acting like their best selves.

J: That's interesting. Can you explain for us briefly what the difference between an introvert and an extrovert is?

S: Yeah, good question! So, introverts are people who like ... more quiet, less stimulating environments, whereas extroverts crave more stimulation to feel at their best, and this is an important thing to see because people often assume that being an introvert means being antisocial, but it's really not that at all. It's just differently social. So an introvert, preferring less stimulation, will often prefer to have, you know, a glass of wine with a close friend as opposed to going to a loud party full of strangers.

J: And you say that this part of your personality may be as crucial as your gender and race. Why is that?

S: Yeah, because you know ... your, your, the question of what your orientation is ... In general, are you oriented more towards the outer world or more towards ... um ... the world of your own inner riches? That ... it's very profound, and it affects ... it affects every day-to-day interaction in your life. It affects how you like to spend your time. You know, it, it affects you in similar ways to the way gender does in terms of achieving your life.

J: And if there really is a bias against introverts, that's a bias against almost half our population.

S: Yes, yes, and this is another way in which there is a parallel to gender. You know, I, I often say that the, the place of introverts in our culture today is very similar to where women were around the fifties, or the early 1960s: It was half the population; it was a ... a piece of the population that was discounted because of something that went to the core of who they were. And I will also say it was a part of the population that was on the verge of coming into its own, and I believe that's what's happening with introverts now. I think we're ... we're at the cusp of a real sea change in the way we understand this personality type.

J: And do you think that, um, now, er, in workplaces and society in general we're mistaking the person with the loudest voice and maybe the person with charisma as a good leader?

S: Oh yeah, yes, we absolutely do that, and in fact we know that extroverts are much more often groomed for leadership positions than introverts are. And this isn't to say ... extroverts, of course, can be wonderful leaders, but there's also interesting new research, um, by Adam Grant at the Wharton School showing

that in certain circumstances introverts make the better leaders, and specifically when you, when you have employees who are really proactive and really engaged ... they often do better with introverted leaders because those leaders let the proactive employees run with their ideas and implement them, whereas an extroverted leader, almost without realizing what they're doing, maybe, you know, putting their own stamp on things and being more dominant, so that the, the ideas of the employees may never actually come to light.

J: So tell me a little bit more about the sea change. How do you actually see this going into effect? What do you hope to accomplish?

S: Well, it's a few things. I mean ... the first thing

I would like to change is people's psyches. So many of the introverts who I interviewed for my book – and many of the people ... they don't appear, um, introverted – um, but so many of them told me about a kind of secret sense of shame that they had about who they were and how they prefer to spend their time. So the first thing that I want to see changing is people's psyches, you know, er, er, to ... for people to have a comfort level with who they are. But then I'd also like schools and workplaces to really rethink how they are structured, um, and to think about meeting the needs of their introverts as well as their extroverts.

## Reference answers

### Viewing and understanding

①

1 F    2 T    3 F    4 T    5 F    6 F

②

- 1) talent, energy and happiness
- 2) more quiet, less stimulating
- 3) feel at their best
- 4) being antisocial
- 5) your own inner riches
- 6) spend your time
- 7) a real sea change
- 8) really engaged
- 9) implement
- 10) psyches

### Thinking and speaking

③

I agree with Susan Cain that there is a bias against introverts in the society, particularly on social occasions. For example, when it comes to an interview, an introvert will most likely be at a disadvantage. They may strike a panel of interviewers as cool, indifferent and ill-equipped with communicative skills, because they talk far less than their peers. This kind of interview doesn't cater for the introverts. And the introverts will be seen as unqualified for the job, for they talk less and are shy.

#### 4

Ladies and gentlemen,

Imagine a typical leader. A quiet, reserved introvert is probably not what first comes to mind. Aren't leaders supposed to be gregarious and commanding – verbally adept and able to inspire others with the sheer force of their personality? No wonder the advice for introverts who want to be entrepreneurs or politicians has long been some form of “Be more extroverted.”

Now, though, experts and psychologists are starting to see that this is misleading. It disregards the unique skills that introverts possess – the ability to focus for long periods, a propensity for balanced and critical thinking, a knack for quietly empowering others – which may make them even better suited for leadership than extroverts.

Indeed, some of the most successful or admired people, in the past and at present, are introverts. Take, for example, Abraham Lincoln, Eleanor Roosevelt, Bill Gates or Warren Buffett. The list goes on. As mentioned before, introverts are equipped with some of the traits that make them especially well-suited to leadership.

First, they don't need external affirmation. They tend to rely on their own inner compass – not external signals – to know that they're making the right move or doing a good job. That can give them an edge in several ways. For instance, they generally don't look for people to tell them whether an idea is worth pursuing. They tend to think it through before speaking about it to anybody, and rely on their own judgment about whether it's worth pursuing.

Second, they're better listeners. Extroverts talk – a lot. And in all that talking, they sometimes forget to let others get a word in, a trait that can be particularly damaging to their relationships with others. Introverts don't have this problem – they wait to speak until they have something to say, not because they're shy and socially inept, but because they are thinking and processing. As a result, introverts are excellent listeners and observers. They can make unexpected connections because they're more focused on information input than output. And they're often good at connecting discrete dots.

Thirdly, they possess a better sense of inner tranquility and composure. Introverts' even temper creates a peaceful atmosphere that engenders trust and safety for those around them. Trust, in turn, helps us do business more effectively. Staying stable and calm in all situations are the hallmarks of introverts. These attitudes can radiate to others.

All in all, introverts can make better leaders if they are capable of capitalizing on their strengths.

## 2 Is personality a matter of nature or nurture?

### Scripts

**V = Voice-over; R = Reporter; TS = Tim Spector;  
D = Debbie; T = Trudi**

**V:** I'm starting at St Thomas Hospital in London where, for many years, a research unit has been analyzing and probing a very special group of people – twins. Twins are one of nature's wonders. Identical twins share the same DNA. They often dress the same, look the same, laugh at the same jokes. And so, hundreds of twins have been scrutinized to understand the subtle interplay of

nature and nurture.

**R:** I just ... It's absolutely wonderful, I must admit, being surrounded by identical twins.

**V:** Professor Tim Spector has studied twins for over 20 years. The first and most obvious question I want to ask is, when it comes to your personality, how much is inherited directly from your parents?

**TS:** Twin studies have told us that personality has a heritable component, and they tell us that generally 40 to 50 percent of personality, of differences between us in

personality, are due to genetic factors, and the rest, either random, or due to environment.

**V:** Tim spent the early years of his career investigating what made identical twins uncannily similar. Then he changed the focus of his research, began to wonder why identical twins are not always identical.

**TS:** Three years ago, I just changed my mind, because twins don't get the same disease, don't die of the same things. It can't just be genes alone and let's look at the differences between identical twins and that could probably tell us more than why they're similar.

**R:** That's great about being a scientist rather than a politician – you can change your mind.

**TS:** You can change your mind and no one stops voting for you. That's right.

**V:** Tim wanted to find out how people who are born with the same DNA can end up very different. I've come to meet a particularly unusual pair of identical twins, Debbie and Trudi. Like all identical twins, Debbie and Trudi were born with the same DNA. They shared the same environment for the first 20 years of their lives, went to the same schools, had the same friends.  
(I think that's brilliant. You just couldn't coordinate, could you, really?)

**D:** We were cute, weren't we?  
(You are cute, honestly.)

**V:** You might expect them, like most other sets of identical twins, to have similar personalities. The twins are still extremely close and spookily similar in many respects, but these days, there is a critical difference. Unlike her twin, Debbie has developed clinical depression.

**R:** If I had met you at 16, would you have been able to predict which of you would have become depressed?

**D & T:** No.

**R:** Would you have said either of you would become depressed?

**D & T:** No. No.

**V:** Today, Debbie and Trudi have come to St Thomas Hospital for test. They're part of a group of what is known as discordant twins that Tim is studying. How can twins who share the same DNA and the same life experiences end up being so different? Tim thought it must be because something had happened to their DNA, so he began looking for differences. Because, surprising though it may seem, our genes aren't fixed. They can change.

**TS:** As we go through life, all our genes are changing constantly. As we age, some of them are being switched on; some of them are being switched off. And we think that these are actually reflecting things like our environment and the lives we've led. They're like a marker of our ... like our lifelines in a way.

**V:** This process is known as epigenetics, and I think it is one of the most exciting developments in modern medicine. Life events can change the activity of our genes, so it seems at some point in Debbie's adult life, changes to genes in her brain made her more vulnerable to bouts of depression.

**R:** So with somebody like Debbie and with Trudi, did you actually find differences in their DNA?

**TS:** We did, and when we looked at a larger group of 30 of our, our twins, where one was depressed and one wasn't, we saw certain genes coming up time and time again. We identified about five or six that were clearly different, particularly in areas like the hippocampus, which we know are very important in anxiety and depression, where a lot of the emotions are.

**R:** I have to say, I do find it mind-boggling.

**TS:** Well, that's the exciting bit of science, and the fact is that we're only able to do this in the last couple of years because of the amazing advance in technology.

# Reference answers

## Viewing and understanding

①

- 1 To understand the subtle interplay of nature and nurture.
- 2 Forty percent to 50 percent.
- 3 What made identical twins uncannily similar.
- 4 How identical twins end up very different. / To find out the differences between identical twins.
- 5 Debbie has developed clinical depression while Trudi hasn't.
- 6 Genetic changes. / The changes in their DNA.
- 7 It is about the switch on and off of our genes as we age, which reflect things like our environment and the lives we've led.
- 8 It is very important in anxiety and depression.

②

- 1 nature's wonders; dress the same
- 2 genetic factors
- 3 extremely close; a critical difference
- 4 changing constantly; reflecting things; a marker
- 5 the activity of our genes; more vulnerable
- 6 exciting bit; amazing advance

## Thinking and speaking

③

- 1 In my opinion, no characteristic is caused exclusively by either nature or nurture. On one hand, genes do exert a considerably strong influence on our personality traits. When identical twins are raised together or in similar environments far removed from each other, they demonstrate striking resemblances in terms of their character. I still remember one book entitled *Identical Strangers: A Memoir of Twins Separated and Reunited*, a memoir written by Elyse Schein and Paula Bernstein. They were abandoned by their mother and separated as infants to participate in a twin study. They were adopted by separate families who weren't told they were twins. Although they were brought up in two different cities, one in Paris and the other in New York, they displayed an extremely high degree of similarity in personality, taste and hobby. For instance, they were both very talkative and optimistic and they had identical tastes for books, movies and music. This strongly suggests the power of genes. On the other hand, genes do not work in a vacuum. Take, for example, a set of identical twins brought up in contrasting environments. Alice was adopted by a family that placed much emphasis on education while Jessica was raised by a family in an isolated mountainous area where there was no formal school. As a result, Alice received good education and graduated from college, but Jessica didn't receive much education. When they met each other, they showed much distinction in personality. Alice was confident and polished while Jessica was self-conscious and reserved. This case illustrates that genes alone are never absolutely responsible for any trait and that what we are is predominantly patterned by the environment.
- 2 I think it is definitely possible to change a person's personality through education or some other external factors. Take myself as an example. Before I entered college, I was kind of shy and timid. I didn't have adequate courage to give a speech in the presence of a large audience. When I was asked to say something in public, I would blush and stammer. However, since I entered college, I have changed tremendously. I think I have become bolder

and braver. I find myself able to summon up courage to speak before a large crowd. It may be partly due to my roommates. They are all very confident and willing to air their opinions. In fact, they devise smart and cunning ways to compel me to volunteer to answer questions in class. For instance, if I don't volunteer in class, I will be asked to give them a treat, such as an ice-cream and a film. In order to save my pocket money, I force myself to volunteer to answer questions. In the very beginning, I am very nervous. But little by little, I become confident and bold enough to speak in public with great ease.

## Project

### Reference answers

Every person has a unique personality that characterizes the totality of being an individual. Personalities may be perceived as positive or negative. A negative personality will apparently produce an adverse impact on life. For example, the Psychology Clinic has recently received dozens of messages from students talking about their frustrations at work or in study caused by particular personality traits. I'd like to share with you one typical case and see how we can improve our personality traits.

Well, one message reads "When others turn to me for help, I find it hard to say no to them. I fall into a people-pleaser trap because I am afraid that others may perceive me as lazy, uncaring and selfish." This student is apparently not alone and I bet many of you may also be bothered by this.

Why is it very hard for people-pleasers to say no? Typically, the intense need to please and care for others is deeply rooted in either a fear of rejection or a fear of failure. They may think "If I don't do everything I can to make this person happy he might leave or stop caring for me." This kind of feeling may stem from early relationships in which love was conditional or in which they were rejected / abandoned by an important person in their life. Or they may think "If I make a mistake, I will disappoint people and / or be punished." This may arise from early experiences with severe punishment for even minor mistakes. People who had highly critical parents may develop a people-pleasing pattern. Early experiences with harsh criticism or punishment can lead to significant anxiety upon attempting a task.

This may produce a series of unpleasant consequences. First, people-pleasers devote very little time to taking care of their own health. When they channel their efforts into taking care of others, they reduce time needed to be active, de-stress, and plan healthy meals, etc. As a result they may be more prone to health problems. Second, by always saying yes to requests for favors, people may begin to take advantage of the kindness of people-pleasers by asking for more than is reasonable. Even worse, they may become the target of exploitative people who will quickly see that they can't say no and take as much as they can. This way, they may be overtaxing themselves and have difficulty in understanding where their boundaries are. Last but not least, people-pleasers may set themselves on a path of becoming alienated from their innate, true self. This is evidently harmful when you cannot find your own worth or value.

Don't worry if you are a people-pleaser. Following are useful strategies to help you stop being a people-pleaser and finally say no. First, learn how to say "no." Don't make up excuses – give your reasons for not wanting something. For example, your best friend wants you to go with him to a party that will be teeming with people that you can't stand? Say, "No thanks, Bob. It's just not my scene." You don't have to say "Seriously, Bob? Your friends are all jerks and I gag a little when I see them." A simple "No, thanks." will generally suffice. Second, ask for what you want. If everybody's going to the movies, and most people in the group want to see a particular movie, but you'd rather watch something else, speak up! It doesn't mean that you get to watch the movie you want, necessarily, but who knows – maybe there are others in that group that would prefer to see your choice, and were

people-pleasing, too! Actually, there's nothing wrong with voicing your opinion, and it doesn't have to mean you're making a demand. Simply reminding people that you're an individual with your own preferences is a big step forward. Third, assess your fears. Are they realistic? Are they truly terrible? You might be afraid that no one will like you, that someone will leave you, or that you will be left all alone if you don't say the right thing. However, they are all imaginations. That is a prison you have trapped yourself in, and it's time to unlock the doors and walk out! Just be yourself. Last but not least, set your priorities. Knowing your priorities and values helps you put the brakes on people-pleasing. You know when you feel comfortable saying no or saying yes. Ask yourself "What are the most important things to me?"

People-pleasing can stem from different situations. It is harmful, but we can overcome it. Let's not allow people-pleasing to rob us of a rich and fulfilling life.