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Reading Exam

ENGLISH FILE

EOI Exam Power Pack (Intermediate cycle)

PART 2

Read the newspaper article about life in old age. For sentences 1–5 choose the best option, a, b, or c. Sentence 0 is the example.

SENTENCE	0	1	2	3	4	5
OPTION	c					

				TOTAL	

EOI Topic: Family life and lifestyles
See: *English File third edition* Intermediate
 Files 1B, 2B, 5B; PE3

0 *Most older people in Western Europe...*

a are only alive because of modern medicine.

b live alone.

c are living longer and are fitter.

1 Life expectancy...

a has increased by five years in Western Europe.

b has increased by over five hours a day.

c will cost a lot more by the year 2050.

2 The study reported that...

a older people are consciously making changes to their lifestyles.

b older people need to make more changes to their lifestyles.

c people in their eighties are moving out of nursing homes.

3 Older people who made changes to their lifestyle...

a usually gave up drinking and smoking first, and frequently visited their doctors.

b lived longer and were healthier.

c ate fresh fruit and vegetables and got lots of sleep.

4 Important factors in old age were...

a to be happy by the age of 70.

b to take up a new sport.

c to be constructive, and to do many different activities.

5 Linda Weston thinks that...

a many older people still enjoy being active.

b many older people are unprotected and weak.

c too many older people prefer to stay at home and watch TV.

PART 2

Living longer

A recent study carried out by the EU reveals that pensioners in Western Europe are now living longer, healthier, and more productive lives than any time in the past. This contradicts the typical image we tend to have of old people living alone, ill and helpless, or packed off to special old people's homes. The report tells us that life expectancy is extending by almost five hours a day, each day. By the year 2050, older populations will cost the world's leading economies a lot more money than they do today. The EU findings warn us that an ageing society has to be planned for and given much more resources in the future.

Statistics demonstrate that older people have definitely made changes to their lifestyles in recent years. Today, pensioners are conscious that they can live longer, and they have a strong desire not to spend their golden years in nursing homes. The amount of people in their eighties who need to live with help and assistance due to illness is considerably less than it was just a decade ago. Experts agree that changes to lifestyle and preventative medical treatments have certainly helped more people reach a healthy old age. Seeing a local doctor for regular check-ups, eating more fruit and vegetables, giving up alcohol and cigarettes, and doing regular exercise, have all contributed to people living longer lives.

New medicines which help reduce high blood pressure and heart complaints are also having an impact reducing deaths from heart attacks, and since the 1990s there have been 40% fewer deaths from heart disease recorded in Western Europe.

Added to these factors, a positive attitude to life is also seen as vitally important in old age. People in their seventies who still do sport, belong to clubs, travel, or spend time doing crosswords or Sudoku puzzles are happier, healthier, and more active. In fact, many pensioners seem to be thoroughly enjoying life in their old age. One example is 78-year-old Linda Weston from Folkestone in south-east England. Linda likes to wear the latest in fashion, she does voluntary work at a local hospital, plays golf, and spends most of her weekends travelling. 'I'm not one for staying at home all day sitting in front of the telly,' she says. 'People think that old age means you become more vulnerable and frail with nothing to do, but there are plenty of us in our seventies and even eighties who still like a bit of get-up-and-go! It's all about positive thinking.'

The study concludes that in Western Europe this drive to have healthier lifestyles and to live longer will continue to increase in the future. It also recommends that guidelines need to be formulated to plan for an older population, and that governments need to plan and resource for that situation now. As one medical expert puts it, 'the longer-life tendency is an unavoidable reality and a fact of human evolution; many people in their sixties today enjoy the lifestyles of 40-year-olds a century ago.'