

## Modern women today

Modern women today see balancing their work and home lives as their biggest challenge in today's world. They also see Nelson Mandela and Margaret Thatcher as their greatest role models. Almost two out of five women now see themselves as feminists. Nearly three out of four women would rather have a man, than a woman, as their boss. Nearly half of women (46%) think a couple should live together before they marry. This figure rises to more than three quarters (77%) among women aged 18-24, but falls to nearly one in four (27%) among women aged 55 and over. These figures come from research compiled for *Stella* magazine by *YouGov*, a research agency, which interviewed more than 1,000 women of all ages and backgrounds on everything from family values to their eating habits, and from their views on plastic surgery to those on sex and shopping. Health and weight are clearly major issues for the modern woman. Four in five (80%) say losing their health is their greatest concern, followed by putting on weight (52%) and losing their job (24%).

Nearly one woman in four (23%) is currently on a diet and nearly three women in five (58%) has dieted in the past. Exercise however is lower down on the priorities of many women. More than one in five women (21%) take no exercise during the week and less than one woman in twenty (4%) takes seven hours or more of exercise a week (an average of an hour a day or more). Women have high expectations of a partner. Two thirds would rather hold out for the perfect romantic partner than settle for a man who's "good enough". One in five women (20%) smokes but nearly one in three (31%) does not drink. 50% of women are "very unhappy" or "fairly unhappy" with their body. Less than one woman in 200 has had Botox. When questioned about family values the women interviewed were asked to choose from a list of the biggest challenges faced by women today. Balancing work and home life was the main challenge followed by raising happy children (56%) and finding time for yourself (52%).

**Category: Lifestyle / Survey / Women**

**Level: Intermediate / Upper intermediate**

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## Modern women today – 30<sup>th</sup> March 2011

Almost half of women (49%) think that between 25 and 29 is the best age to get married. An identical amount think between 25 and 29 is also the best age to have children. Nearly three out of five women (59%) think fathers should take more responsibility for their children and two thirds of women (66%) think it is better to divorce than to stay in an unhappy marriage for the sake of the children. More than half of women (51%) think it is best for a couple to marry before having children, while nearly two out of five women (38%) think a woman should stay at home until her child goes to school. More than half of women with partners (51%) say they currently do three quarters of household chores.

It is known that 18 is the average age for women to lose their virginity, yet the survey shows that one woman in 50 (2%) remains a virgin and 7% of women lost their virginity aged 14 or younger. Yet, those women now aged 18 to 24, 30% lost their virginity aged 15 or less – below the age of consent. The average number of sexual partners for a woman is seven. However the survey shows 17% of those aged 18-24 have already had ten partners! The average number of women who have cheated on their husbands is 10%. The average for all women prepared to forgive their partners is 16%.

Nearly two women in five (38%) regards herself as a feminist. This rises to 41% in the age group 55 and over. The issue of role models throws up some interesting names from Prime Ministers to pop singers and from actors to models. The most admired women are Margaret Thatcher (7%), the Queen (5.5%) and Katie Price/Jordan (4.6%). The most admired men are Nelson Mandela (5.6%), Winston Churchill (4.2%) and David Beckham (5.5%). The most attractive men are George Clooney (8.9%) followed by Brad Pitt (6.1%) and Johnny Depp (5.5%). Actress Angelina Jolie (9.4%) tops the list of famous women that fellow females find attractive followed by Cheryl Cole (3.9%) and actress Catherine Zeta Jones (2.6%).

## EXERCISES

1. **Modern women today:** How do you see the modern woman today? What do you think she wants in life? What are her habits? Does she diet? Is she happy?

2. **Dictation:** The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self-correct your work from page one - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - you need to do some work!

3. **Reading:** The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

4. **Vocabulary:** Students should now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

5. **The article:** Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?

6. **Let's think!** Think of five things a modern woman wants. Then add five admired women. Write them below. Explain to your partner why you chose these.

Five things a modern woman wants	Five admired women
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

7. **Let's talk! Woman FM:** *In pairs/groups.* You are in the Woman FM radio studio. One of you is the presenter; the other student(s) is the guest. Today's subject is: **Modern women today**. *5 minutes.*

8. **Let's think!** In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with '**Modern women**'. *One-two minutes.* Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

9. **Quick debate:** Students A thinks women are under more pressure today than ever before. Explain why. Students B think opposite. Explain why.

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**10. Modern Woman: Advantages and disadvantages:** In pairs. Think of five advantages of being a modern woman. Then add five disadvantages. Discuss together.

Advantages		Disadvantages	
1		1	
2		2	
3		3	
4		4	
5		5	

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

**11. Let's debate: Modern women today:** As a class debate the issue: **Modern women today**. 15 minutes.

**12. Let's do 'The Article Quiz':** Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

**Student A**

- 1) How many women are currently on a diet?
- 2) What percentage of women are happy with their bodies?
- 3) Name the magazine.
- 4) Who do women see as their greatest role models?
- 5) What is modern woman's biggest challenge in today's world?

**Student B**

- 1) Who are the most attractive men to women?
- 2) Who are the most attractive women to women?
- 3) What is the average number of sexual partners a woman has had?
- 4) What percentage of women have cheated on their husbands?
- 5) What is the average age for a woman to lose her virginity?

**13. Let's write an e-mail:** Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about: **Modern women today**. Your e-mail can be read out in class.

**14. Sentence starters:** Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- a) Modern women \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Women want \_\_\_\_\_
- c) The perfect partner \_\_\_\_\_

## DISCUSSION

### Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) Are children happier today than when you were a kid?
- 3) Is health important to you?
- 4) What household chores do you do?
- 5) Which woman do you admire most?
- 6) Which man do you admire most?
- 7) Should a woman stay at home until her kids are old enough to go to school?
- 8) Is it better to divorce rather than stay together in an unhappy marriage? Why?
- 9) Is 25-29 the right age to get married?
- 10) What happens if a person is older than 29 when they get married? Does it matter? Are they past it?

### Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you read?
- 2) How do you see modern women in the world today?
- 3) Do you know any feminists?
- 4) Are family values still as they used to be?
- 5) Do you read women's magazines? Which? When?
- 6) Have you ever had plastic surgery?
- 7) Have you ever been on a diet?
- 8) How much exercise a week do you do?
- 9) How different is home life today compared to when you were a kid?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

## SPEAKING

### Class survey

*Allow 10-15 minutes – As a class / small groups / pairs / 1 to 1*

Look at the 10 questions below.

Go round the room asking them. Compile your results below.

What conclusions do you come to?

1) Are you worried about losing your job?	6) Are you bored with your partner?
2) Is health a major concern to you?	7) Do you worry about your weight?
3) Do you worry about not having enough sex?	8) Are you on a diet?
4) Do you do enough exercise?	9) Do you smoke?
5) Do you want plastic surgery?	10) Are you happy?

The teacher can moderate the session.

## GAP FILL: READING:

*Put the words into the gaps in the text.*

Modern (1)\_\_\_\_\_ today see balancing their work and home lives as their biggest challenge in today's world. They also see Nelson Mandela and Margaret Thatcher as their greatest role models. Almost two out of five women now see themselves as (2)\_\_\_\_\_. Nearly three out of four women would rather have a man, than a woman, as their boss. Nearly half of women (46%) think a couple should live together before they (3)\_\_\_\_\_. This figure rises to more than three quarters (77%) among women aged 18-24, but falls to nearly one in four (27%) among women aged 55 and over. These figures come from research compiled for *Stella* magazine by *YouGov*, a research agency, which interviewed more than 1,000 women of all ages and backgrounds on everything from (4)\_\_\_\_\_ values to their eating (5)\_\_\_\_\_, and from their views on plastic (6)\_\_\_\_\_ to those on sex and shopping. Health and weight are clearly major issues for the modern woman. Four in five (80%) say losing their (7)\_\_\_\_\_ is their greatest (8)\_\_\_\_\_, followed by putting on weight (52%) and losing their job (24%).

*concern*

*habits*

*marry*

*health*

*family*

*feminists*

*surgery*

*women*

Nearly one woman in four (23%) is currently on a (1)\_\_\_\_\_ and nearly three women in five (58%) has dieted in the past. Exercise however is lower down on the (2)\_\_\_\_\_ of many women. More than one in five women (21%) take no (3)\_\_\_\_\_ during the week and less than one woman in twenty (4%) takes seven hours or more of exercise a week (an average of an hour a day or more). Women have high (4)\_\_\_\_\_ of a partner. Two thirds would rather hold out for the perfect (5)\_\_\_\_\_ partner than settle for a man who's "good enough". One in five women (20%) smokes but nearly one in three (31%) does not drink. 50% of women are "very unhappy" or "(6)\_\_\_\_\_ unhappy" with their body. (7)\_\_\_\_\_ than one woman in 200 has had (8)\_\_\_\_\_.

*priorities*

*romantic*

*diet*

*less*

*fairly*

*Botox*

*expectations*

*exercise*

## GRAMMAR

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

### Modern women today

Modern women today see balancing their work and home lives as their biggest challenge in today's world. They (1)\_\_\_ see Nelson Mandela and Margaret Thatcher as their greatest role models. Almost two out of five women now see themselves as feminists. Nearly three out of four women (2)\_\_\_ rather have a man, than a woman, as their boss. Nearly half of women (46%) think a couple should live together before (3)\_\_\_ marry. This figure rises to more than three quarters (77%) among women aged 18-24, but falls to nearly one in four (27%) among women aged 55 and over. (4)\_\_\_ figures come (5)\_\_\_ research compiled for *Stella* magazine by *YouGov*, a research agency, which interviewed (6)\_\_\_ than 1,000 women of all ages and backgrounds on everything from family values to their eating habits, and from their views on plastic surgery to (7)\_\_\_ on sex and shopping. Health and weight are clearly major issues for the modern woman. Four in five (80%) say losing (8)\_\_\_ health is their greatest concern, followed by putting on weight (52%) and losing their job (24%).

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Nearly one woman in four (23%) is currently (1)\_\_\_ a diet and nearly three women in five (58%) has dieted in (2)\_\_\_ past. Exercise however is lower down on the priorities of many women. More than one in five women (21%) take no exercise during the week (3)\_\_\_ less than one woman in twenty (4%) takes seven hours (4)\_\_\_ more of exercise a week (an average of (5)\_\_\_ hour a day or more). Women have high expectations (6)\_\_\_ a partner. Two thirds would rather hold out (7)\_\_\_ the perfect romantic partner than settle for a man who's "good enough". One in five women (20%) smokes (8)\_\_\_ nearly one in three (31%) does not drink. 50% of women are "very unhappy" or "fairly unhappy" with their body. Less than one woman in 200 has had Botox.

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## SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings: **Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20**

1	exercise	11	attractive
2	challenge	12	yet
3	expectations	13	virginity
4	diet	14	responsibility
5	chores	15	identical
6	forgive	16	major
7	perfect	17	priorities
8	values	18	biggest
9	romantic	19	feminists
10	concern	20	backgrounds

### LINKS

<http://www.womengateway.com/enwg/Life+Style/Diet+and+Fitness/slim+lines+Pressures+on+Modern+Women.htm>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/3464246/Revealed-the-values-habits-and-role-models-of-modern-women.html>

<http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/bronte/cbronte/lowes1.html>

### ANSWERS

GAP FILL: Modern women today: Modern **women** today see balancing their work and home lives as their biggest challenge in today's world. They also see Nelson Mandela and Margaret Thatcher as their greatest role models. Almost two out of five women now see themselves as feminists. Nearly three out of four women would rather have a man, than a woman, as their **boss**. Nearly half of women (46%) think a couple should live together before they **marry**. This figure rises to more than three quarters (77%) among women aged 18-24, but falls to nearly one in four (27%) among women aged 55 and over. These figures come from research compiled for *Stella* magazine by *YouGov*, a research agency, which interviewed more than 1,000 women of all ages and backgrounds on everything from **family** values to their eating **habits**, and from their views on plastic **surgery** to those on sex and shopping. Health and weight are clearly major issues for the modern woman. Four in five (80%) say losing their **health** is their greatest **concern**, followed by putting on weight (52%) and losing their job (24%).

Nearly one woman in four (23%) is currently on a **diet** and nearly three women in five (58%) has dieted in the past. Exercise however is lower down on the **priorities** of many women. More than one in five women (21%) take no **exercise** during the week and less than one woman in twenty (4%) takes seven hours or more of exercise a week (an average of an hour a day or more). Women have high **expectations** of a partner. Two thirds would rather hold out for the perfect **romantic** partner than settle for a man who's "good enough". One in five women (20%) smokes but nearly one in three (31%) does not drink. 50% of women are "very unhappy" or "**fairly** unhappy" with their body. **Less** than one woman in 200 has had **Botox**. (V1)

(This is a remodelled lesson)

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