

FAT GENE

Language Function: discussing issues; reading comprehension

Vocabulary/Topic: obesity; eating and drinking habits; genetics

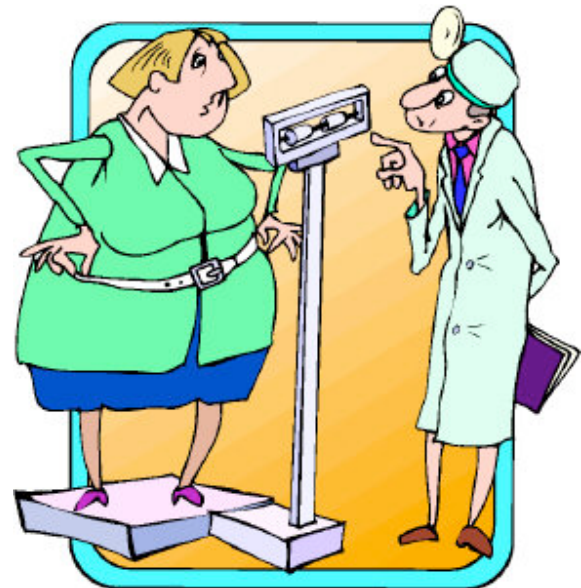
STUDENT WORKSHEET

INTERMEDIATE

focus on talking

activity 1. In pairs, ask and answer the questions below.

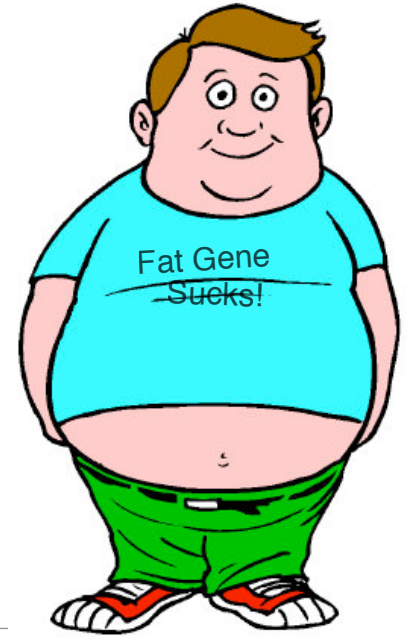
- What is wrong with being fat? What bad consequences of obesity can you list?
- Obese people come up with different explanations for their condition. Which of these explanations do you find credible?
 - ▶ *I'm big-boned.*
 - ▶ *It's glandular.*
 - ▶ *It's because of my genes.*
 - ▶ *I've quit smoking.*
 - ▶ *It's caused by the medicine I'm taking.*
- What ways of losing weight do you know? Which of them do you consider effective?
- Which food products do you believe to be especially fattening? Do you avoid eating and drinking some products because you are afraid of putting on weight?
- Have you ever been on a diet? What is the most popular diet at the moment?
- Is obesity a big problem in your country? Is it worse or better than in other countries? What are the reasons for this situation?



focus on understanding: reading

activity 2. Read the article and decide whether the statements below are true or false.

1. According to the study, genes increase one's appetite for cream buns.
2. The study showed that school food is to blame for children gaining weight.
3. Scientists have found that genes are not fully responsible for increased body mass in school children.
4. Children with 'fat genes' cannot avoid putting on weight.
5. We are more likely to become obese because of our inactive lifestyle.



Study pinpoints 'fat gene'

Genes are probably more to blame for **weight gain** than **an appetite for** cream buns, a new study has suggested.

Scientists have found that ease of **putting on weight** in school children is mostly inherited.

A study of more than 5,000 pairs of twins aged eight to 11 showed that genes contributed 77% of the amount by which their **body mass** and **waist circumference** varied.

Only 23% of the differences between the children was due to home environment.

Children born with "fat" genes are not inevitably **overweight**, but have to work extra hard to **stay slim**, said study leader Professor Jane Wardle, from University College London.

"In today's environment, which provides unprecedented opportunities for all children to **over-eat** and be sedentary, it is not surprising these tendencies result in weight gain," she added.

"It is therefore especially important to provide the best possible environment for all children to help protect those who are at higher genetic risk."

Twin studies disentangle "nature and nurture" influences by comparing identical and non-identical pairs of individuals.

Studies of twins can estimate the extent to which the home environment makes family members more similar than would be expected from their genetic relatedness. This is especially useful when looking at the factors behind **child obesity**.

Source: PA News

focus on talking

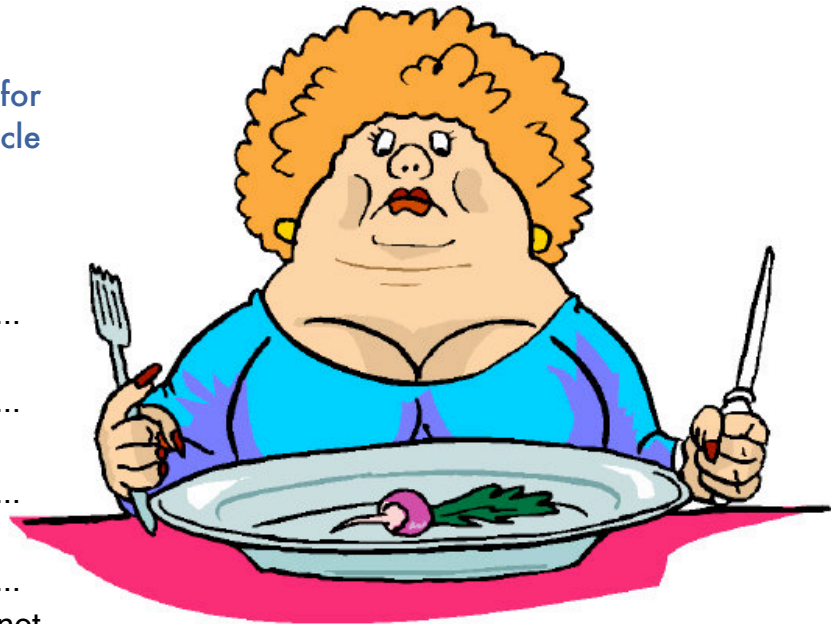
activity 3. In pairs, ask and answer the questions below.

- What possible influence could the discovery of 'fat genes' have on people's attitude to obesity?
- Do you believe that 'fat genes' are to blame for the growing problem of obesity in the world?

focus on vocabulary

activity 4. Write words and expressions for definitions. All the words appear in the article on page 2.

1. received from our ancestors
.....
2. a line that goes around a circle
.....
3. to be different from each other
.....
4. as is certain to happen
.....
5. spending a lot of time sitting down and not moving
.....
6. upbringing, education, and environment, not inborn characteristics
.....



activity 5. Put these words into correct categories

- | | | | |
|-------------|------------|--------|---------|
| obese | overweight | skinny | slim |
| underweight | plump | flabby | slender |

fat (formal term)	fat (disapproving term)	fat (approving term)	thin (formal term)	thin (disapproving term)	thin (approving term)
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