

UK race relations

1 Speaking: Diwali – The festival of lights

- a) Visit the BBC News website and read at least three of the texts on Diwali.



BBC news search: Diwali
[News on Diwali](#)

- b) Prepare a presentation about Diwali with pictures from the internet. In your presentation, you should:
- explain what the origin of Diwali is
 - describe how it is celebrated
 - comment on the importance of this festival



2 A menu for a Chinese restaurant in London

- a) Go to the following webpage or any other site on Chinese restaurants in London and read at least three reviews of Chinese restaurants.



Squaremeal restaurant guide:
[Chinese restaurants](#)

- b) Draw up a comprehensive menu for a Chinese restaurant with explanations in English, so that your customers know what to expect. Your menu should contain at least three sections: starters, main courses and desserts.



- c) Use the information collected and design a poster for a Chinese restaurant in London.

3 Writing: Letter to the editor on race relations in the UK

- a) Go to the references section of the following page (you will find it at the end of the article) and read at least one of the texts mentioned there. Focus on two aspects that you would like to discuss.



Wikipedia article: Ethnic groups in the United Kingdom:
[Ethnic groups in the UK](#)

- b) Write a **letter to the editor** in which you comment on the article you have chosen. In your letter, you should:
- describe which aspects you found interesting/disturbing/encouraging/...
 - explain why you think these aspects are worth discussing
 - express your own opinion on these aspects

Write about **200 words**.

4 Reading: A civil society

a) Read the following text and use an online dictionary (e.g. <http://onelook.com>) to look up words and expressions you do not understand.

A civil society needs the kindness of strangers and acquaintances

The quality of tiny interactions in shops and streets seriously affects our daily wellbeing. No wonder we're anxious about it.

It was an elderly Turkish Cypriot neighbour whom I credit with having taught me about civility. Passing his house one evening in summer, I commented to him that the rose in his front garden smelled heavenly. He promptly disappeared and I wondered if I had offended him, but he returned with a pair of scissors and cut the stem of a perfect red rose and gave it to me. It was the beginning of a friendship between our two families in which we have exchanged recipes, herbs, spiced teas, cakes, vine leaves and flowers.

That experience is part of why I am not in the least surprised by the finding of the new Young Foundation report: that how people treat each other – civility – is more important than crime statistics in influencing how people feel about where they live and their sense of belonging. Much of our day-to-day wellbeing is rooted in the granularity of tiny interactions in the shop, on the street and buses. Isolation can be eased by a greeting, anxiety assuaged by friendliness; and the reverse, an irritated or aggressive response can reverberate in someone's mind for days, and leave lasting damage in how someone might perceive a place. The research found that many said it was the single most important factor in their quality of life.

Listen to anyone talking about a place – somewhere where they have lived or visited, or somewhere they have worked – and what they talk about are the people they interact with. We deal with vastly more strangers and acquaintances than at previous ages in history, and the impact of these small encounters are out of all proportion to their size.

But we have no language left to adequately describe this pervasive phenomenon. Politeness? Friendliness? It's interesting that the Young Foundation have landed on "civility", which is a rather quaint word; the understanding of "civil" has been downgraded to the lowest denominator, almost akin to rudeness. But it's a good word in need of revival because these kinds of social interactions are closely related to the civic, and hence to our common deliberations, politics.

Another word, "politeness", is also much derided as something from the 50s; a sort of "please and thank you" set of rules called manners, which we have pushed aside in favour, we believe, of more spontaneity.

We don't know how to talk about this subject. That is partly because the institutions that promoted civility – the Anglican church, for example, is a religion of civility – are in decline. Instead of moral exhortation, the Young Foundation uses metaphors of biology – civility is like a bacteria in a culture, they claim – to try and explain its importance.

But even if we can't talk about it, we still instinctively understand what's at stake. The research conducted by the Young Foundation found that people well understood the most important characteristic of civility – that it is contagious. Treat people well and they, more often than not, respond in like manner.

What the research also showed was a disconnect, that while people were enthusiastic about civility of their neighbourhood, they worried about an overall decline. The same disconnect has been evident in the research on people's experience of public services – they rate the ones they use but persist in believing there's a widespread decline.

b) Answer the following questions as fully as possible and refer to the text.

- According to the article, what are the most important aspects when dealing with other cultures?
- What is the most important aspect when people talk about a place they have visited or where they have lived temporarily?
- Why have traditional values lost their importance in society?
- What is the most important characteristic of civility?
- What does the term "disconnect" describe in the text?

c) Find out more about the Young Foundation and its objectives and write a short text about it which could be published in your school magazine.



The Young Foundation:

<http://www.youngfoundation.org/>