

AMERICAN TEENS TALK!



American Teens Talk!

Author: Nancy Ackles

Cover and CD Photos: U.S. Department of State/D.A. Peterson

All other photos: Nancy Ackles

Unless noted, this United States Department of State publication may be reproduced with proper attribution. Photographs and illustrations without explicit copyright restrictions may be reproduced. If copyrighted, permission must be sought from the copyright holders, as credited.

This publication is available free of charge online at AmericanEnglish.state.gov.

Office of English Language Programs
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
United States Department of State
Washington, D.C.
americanenglish.state.gov

Introduction

In the summer of 2009, I had a wonderful opportunity to spend three weeks with a group of Tajik English teachers. One of the teachers said that her students would like to have a book of stories about American teenagers. When I returned home, I couldn't find a book like that, so I began to interview ordinary young people about their everyday lives and send the interviews to some English teachers and learners. When I asked teenagers for an interview, they almost always said, "But I don't do anything special." I told them, "That's exactly what I want: ordinary life and ordinary English."

When the U.S. State Department's Office of English Language Programs decided to publish this little book, they asked for sound recordings and pictures of the teens. Sometimes I could get a picture and a sound recording from the young person I interviewed in the past. Sometimes I couldn't. I needed a parent's permission to use a photo or record a voice, and sometimes parents asked me not to use the student's real name. Some of the boys were older now and their voices had changed. As a result, sometimes the interview, photo, and voice are all from the same person, and sometimes they are from two, three, or four different people. However, in every case, these are real interviews with real kids about their real lives. No professional models, actors, or readers helped with this project. This is ordinary English from ordinary kids talking about their ordinary lives.

There are several people who deserve special thanks. First, the young people who helped with the project. Second, Robert Kirk, of Treehouse Mobile Studio in North Carolina (treehousemobile.com), who recorded all the interviews. Third, Scott Bennett, a teacher who encouraged some of his speech students to read for the recordings. Fourth, my wonderful husband Will, who helped in every way he could.

I hope that this will be an interesting way for you to practice reading and speaking English and that you will enjoy learning a little bit more about America and American life. In one of the interviews, a young man says, "We're probably not that different from you." I think he's probably right.

Wishing you success in your studies and a very bright future,

Nancy Ackles

Contents

	TEENS TALK
4	Bianca
6	Max
8	Sol
10	Michael
12	Trevor
14	Alex
16	Bella
18	Blake
20	Amy
22	Gordon
24	Jacob
26	Jasmine
28	Kyle
30	Sue
32	Four Friends
34	Gabriela
36	Andrew
38	Nichole
40	Casey
42	Aidan
44	Lilac
46	Brian
48	Caroline
50	Caleb
52	Landry
54	Walker
56	Hannah
58	James
60	Hunter
62	Haley
64	POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of English Language Programs
americanenglish.state.gov