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## **U.S. teens taking to alternative medicines**

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### **Contents**

|                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| The Article                | 2  |
| Warm-ups                   | 3  |
| Before Reading / Listening | 4  |
| While Reading / Listening  | 5  |
| Listening Gap Fill         | 6  |
| After Reading / Listening  | 7  |
| Student Survey             | 8  |
| Discussion                 | 9  |
| Language Work              | 10 |
| Writing                    | 11 |
| Homework                   | 12 |
| Answers                    | 13 |

14th December, 2008

## THE ARTICLE

Alternative medicine is becoming more and more popular among young people in the USA. This is according to a new report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its recently released study reveals that nearly twelve per cent of children and teenagers use some form of alternative medicine or herbal supplements. The researchers report that under-seventeens are using a variety of remedies that include natural medicines, meditation, acupuncture and other treatments "that are not generally considered to be part of conventional medicine". This is the first time for the center to measure alternative medicine use in children and teenagers. The study states one in three adults have used alternative cures.

The study says children most commonly used alternative medicine for back or neck pain, head or chest colds, anxiety or stress, muscular problems, hyperactivity, and attention deficit disorders. The most popular medicines among children were "non-vitamin, non-mineral, natural products" such as fish oil. The most common treatments were massages, meditation, acupuncture, and yoga. Researchers also found that children were five times more likely to use these remedies if a parent or other relative does. An alternative medicine expert, Richard Nahin, was surprised at the report's findings. He said children were very healthy and the fact that one in nine youngsters used alternative medicine was "pretty amazing".

# WARM-UPS

**1. MEDICINE:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about medicine. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your partner(s) and share your findings.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

*alternative medicine / popular / disease / herbal supplements / meditation / cures / back pain / stress / hyperactivity / massages / yoga / natural products / amazing*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. ALTERNATIVES:** You and your partner(s) are in charge of marketing different alternative medicines. Complete the table below. Share what you wrote with other students. Decide as a class which marketing slogans would work well.

| Medicine        | Better because... | Marketing slogan |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Massages        |                   |                  |
| Acupuncture     |                   |                  |
| Meditation      |                   |                  |
| Herbal medicine |                   |                  |
| Hypnosis        |                   |                  |

**4. NEW THERAPIES:** Students A **strongly** believe alternative medicines and therapies are better than conventional (Western) ones; Students B **strongly** believe the opposite. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**5. MY CURE:** What do you suggest for the following problems? Talk about this with your partner(s). Change partners and discuss what you talked about.

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| _____ headache    | _____ tiredness / fatigue / exhaustion |
| _____ stress      | _____ colds                            |
| _____ muscle pain | _____ bad breath                       |
| _____ bad skin    | _____ diarrhoea                        |

**6. DISEASE:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'disease'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. A study says more U.S. teenagers are trying alternative medicines. T / F
- b. Over 10% of U.S. kids and teens have tried alternative medicine. T / F
- c. Under 17% of under-seventeens have never tried acupuncture. T / F
- d. The study measures the trends in alternative medicine use by children. T / F
- e. Children commonly use alternative medicine for stress. T / F
- f. Massages were among the most popular therapies for kids. T / F
- g. There was no link between parents and kids in the study. T / F
- h. An alternative medicine specialist was not at all surprised by the study. T / F

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. alternative  | a. illnesses  |
| 2. revealed     | b. different  |
| 3. considered   | c. probable   |
| 4. conventional | d. treatments |
| 5. cures        | e. quite      |
| 6. pain         | f. thought    |
| 7. disorders    | g. specialist |
| 8. likely       | h. normal     |
| 9. expert       | i. soreness   |
| 10. pretty      | j. showed     |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one. combination is possible):

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. becoming more and more popular       | a. findings                |
| 2. teenagers use some form              | b. conventional medicine   |
| 3. a variety                            | c. massages                |
| 4. considered to be part of             | d. chest colds             |
| 5. one in                               | e. to use these remedies   |
| 6. head or                              | f. among young people      |
| 7. The most common treatments were      | g. of remedies             |
| 8. children were five times more likely | h. amazing                 |
| 9. surprised at the report's            | i. three adults            |
| 10. pretty                              | j. of alternative medicine |

# WHILE READING / LISTENING

**GAP FILL:** Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Alternative medicine is becoming more and more \_\_\_\_\_ among young people in the USA. This is according to a new report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its \_\_\_\_\_ released study \_\_\_\_\_ that nearly twelve per cent of children and teenagers use some \_\_\_\_\_ of alternative medicine or herbal supplements. The researchers report that under-seventeens are using a \_\_\_\_\_ of remedies that include natural medicines, meditation, acupuncture and other treatments "that are not generally \_\_\_\_\_ to be part of conventional medicine". This is the first time for the center to measure alternative medicine \_\_\_\_\_ in children and teenagers. The study states one in three adults have used alternative \_\_\_\_\_.

*use*  
*form*  
*reveals*  
*considered*  
*popular*  
*cures*  
*recently*  
*variety*

The study says children most commonly \_\_\_\_\_ alternative medicine for back or neck pain, head or chest colds, anxiety or \_\_\_\_\_, muscular problems, hyperactivity, and attention deficit disorders. The most popular medicines \_\_\_\_\_ children were "non-vitamin, non-mineral, natural products" such as fish oil. The most common treatments were massages, meditation, acupuncture, and \_\_\_\_\_. Researchers also found that children were five \_\_\_\_\_ more likely to use these remedies if a parent or other \_\_\_\_\_ does. An alternative medicine expert, Richard Nahin, was surprised at the report's \_\_\_\_\_. He said children were very healthy and the fact that one in nine youngsters used alternative medicine was "\_\_\_\_\_ amazing".

*relative*  
*among*  
*times*  
*pretty*  
*used*  
*yoga*  
*stress*  
*findings*

## **LISTENING:** Listen and fill in the spaces.

Alternative medicine is becoming more \_\_\_\_\_ among young people in the USA. This is according to a new report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its \_\_\_\_\_ reveals that nearly twelve per cent of children and teenagers use some form of alternative medicine or herbal supplements. The researchers report that under-seventeens are \_\_\_\_\_ remedies that include natural medicines, meditation, acupuncture and other treatments "that \_\_\_\_\_ considered to be part of conventional medicine". This is the first time for the center to measure alternative medicine use in children and teenagers. The study \_\_\_\_\_ adults have used alternative cures.

The study says children \_\_\_\_\_ alternative medicine for back or neck pain, head or chest colds, anxiety or stress, muscular problems, hyperactivity, and attention deficit disorders. The most popular medicines \_\_\_\_\_ "non-vitamin, non-mineral, natural products" such as fish oil. The most common treatments were massages, meditation, acupuncture, and yoga. Researchers also found that children were five times \_\_\_\_\_ these remedies if a parent or other relative does. An alternative medicine expert, Richard Nahin, was surprised \_\_\_\_\_. He said children were very healthy and the fact that one in nine youngsters used alternative medicine \_\_\_\_\_.

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'alternative' and 'medicine'.

| alternative | medicine |
|-------------|----------|
|             |          |

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• more</li><li>• recently</li><li>• form</li><li>• generally</li><li>• measure</li><li>• cures</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• head</li><li>• popular</li><li>• common</li><li>• five</li><li>• surprised</li><li>• pretty</li></ul> |
|--|---|

# STUDENT ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about alternative medicine in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

|      | STUDENT 1<br>_____ | STUDENT 2<br>_____ | STUDENT 3<br>_____ |
|------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Q.1. |                    |                    |                    |
| Q.2. |                    |                    |                    |
| Q.3. |                    |                    |                    |
| Q.4. |                    |                    |                    |
| Q.5. |                    |                    |                    |

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.



# ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the term 'alternative medicine'?
- c) Have you tried any form of alternative medicine?
- d) Why do you think more young people are turning to alternative medicine?
- e) Why is alternative medicine called alternative?
- f) Would you prefer alternative medicine or conventional medicine?
- g) Do you think things like meditation and acupuncture work?
- h) Do you take any supplements?
- i) Do you think alternative medicine fans like conventional medicine?
- j) Why do you think alternative medicine isn't so common in hospitals?

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# ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What do you use for aches and pains?
- c) How do you deal with stress and anxiety?
- d) Do you think alternative medicine is best for some things and conventional medicine is better for other things?
- e) What needs to happen for alternative medicine to lose its alternative tag?
- f) What do you think medicine of the future will be like?
- g) Do you think all medicine works?
- h) What do you think is pretty amazing about medicine?
- i) Why do you think healthy children use alternative medicine?
- j) What questions would you like to ask Richard Nahin?

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# LANGUAGE

Alternative medicine is becoming more and (1) \_\_\_\_ popular among young people in the USA. This is according to a new report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its (2) \_\_\_\_ released study reveals that nearly twelve per cent of children and teenagers use some form (3) \_\_\_\_ alternative medicine or herbal supplements. The researchers report that under-(4) \_\_\_\_ are using a variety of remedies that include natural medicines, meditation, acupuncture and other treatments “that are not (5) \_\_\_\_ considered to be part of conventional medicine”. This is the first time for the center to measure alternative medicine use in children and teenagers. The study states one (6) \_\_\_\_ three adults have used alternative cures.

The study says children most commonly used alternative medicine for back or neck pain, head or chest colds, (7) \_\_\_\_ or stress, muscular problems, hyperactivity, and attention deficit disorders. The most popular medicines among children were “non-vitamin, non-mineral, natural products” (8) \_\_\_\_ as fish oil. The most common treatments were massages, meditation, acupuncture, and yoga. Researchers also found that children were five times more (9) \_\_\_\_ to use these remedies if a (10) \_\_\_\_ or other relative does. An alternative medicine (11) \_\_\_\_, Richard Nahin, was surprised at the report’s findings. He said children were very healthy and the fact that one in nine youngsters used alternative medicine was “(12) \_\_\_\_ amazing”.

**Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.**

- |     |               |                |                 |                 |
|-----|---------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1.  | (a) much      | (b) many       | (c) most        | (d) more        |
| 2.  | (a) recently  | (b) recentness | (c) recent      | (d) recency     |
| 3.  | (a) from      | (b) for        | (c) of          | (d) at          |
| 4.  | (a) seventeen | (b) seventeens | (c) seventeenth | (d) seventhly   |
| 5.  | (a) general   | (b) generally  | (c) generalize  | (d) generals    |
| 6.  | (a) an        | (b) on         | (c) in          | (d) un-         |
| 7.  | (a) anxiety   | (b) anxious    | (c) anxiously   | (d) anxiouslyly |
| 8.  | (a) is        | (b) some       | (c) so          | (d) such        |
| 9.  | (a) likes     | (b) liken      | (c) liked       | (d) likely      |
| 10. | (a) parents   | (b) parent     | (c) parental    | (d) parenting   |
| 11. | (a) expert    | (b) expertly   | (c) expertise   | (d) experts     |
| 12. | (a) beautiful | (b) cute       | (c) pretty      | (d) lovely      |



# HOMework

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find out more about alternative medicine. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. ALTERNATIVE OR CONVENTIONAL:** Make a poster about which is better, alternative or conventional medicine. Explain your thoughts on the different types. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. CURES:** Write a magazine article about a form of alternative medicine. Include an imaginary interview with someone who really believes in it.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

**5. LETTER:** Write a letter to alternative medicine expert Richard Nahin. Ask him three questions about alternative medicine. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T      b. T      c. F      d. F      e. T      f. T      g. F      h. F

## SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. alternative  | a. different  |
| 2. revealed     | b. showed     |
| 3. considered   | c. thought    |
| 4. conventional | d. normal     |
| 5. cures        | e. treatments |
| 6. pain         | f. soreness   |
| 7. disorders    | g. illnesses  |
| 8. likely       | h. probable   |
| 9. expert       | i. specialist |
| 10. pretty      | j. quite      |

## PHRASE MATCH:

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. becoming more and more popular       | a. among young people      |
| 2. teenagers use some form              | b. of alternative medicine |
| 3. a variety                            | c. of remedies             |
| 4. considered to be part of             | d. conventional medicine   |
| 5. one in                               | e. three adults            |
| 6. head or                              | f. chest colds             |
| 7. The most common treatments were      | g. massages                |
| 8. children were five times more likely | h. to use these remedies   |
| 9. surprised at the report's            | i. findings                |
| 10. pretty                              | j. amazing                 |

## GAP FILL:

### U.S. teens taking to alternative medicines

Alternative medicine is becoming more and more **popular** among young people in the USA. This is according to a new report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its **recently** released study **reveals** that nearly twelve per cent of children and teenagers use some **form** of alternative medicine or herbal supplements. The researchers report that under-seventeens are using a **variety** of remedies that include natural medicines, meditation, acupuncture and other treatments "that are not generally **considered** to be part of conventional medicine". This is the first time for the center to measure alternative medicine **use** in children and teenagers. The study states one in three adults have used alternative **cures**.

The study says children most commonly **used** alternative medicine for back or neck pain, head or chest colds, anxiety or **stress**, muscular problems, hyperactivity, and attention deficit disorders. The most popular medicines **among** children were "non-vitamin, non-mineral, natural products" such as fish oil. The most common treatments were massages, meditation, acupuncture, and **yoga**. Researchers also found that children were five **times** more likely to use these remedies if a parent or other **relative** does. An alternative medicine expert, Richard Nahin, was surprised at the report's **findings**. He said children were very healthy and the fact that one in nine youngsters used alternative medicine was "**pretty** amazing".

## LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - d    2 - a    3 - c    4 - b    5 - b    6 - c    7 - a    8 - d    9 - d    10 - b    11 - a    12 - c