**Track 65**

**A:** Are you ok? You've seemed a bit down lately.

**B:** I guess I have been. I just feel so self-conscious all the time. I never used to feel like that.

**A:** What do you think it is?

**B:** Well, my skin to begin with. No matter what I do I can't get rid of these blemishes.

**A:** Hey, my skin isn't the greatest either. We all go through rough times like that. Listen, I've got some stuff that I use when it’s bad. I'd be happy to give it to you.

**B:** Thanks.

**A:** And is that it? It seems like there's more going on.

**B:** Well, honestly, I feel so moody all the time. One minute I'm fine and the next I'm feeling awful. I'm having trouble sleeping too. I just can't get to sleep. I feel like my mind is racing.

**A:** That's totally understandable. My mom says it's our age. Our bodies are going through so many changes. She says we all have raging hormones. You'll grow out of it soon enough. I bet that's what's going on with your skin too.

**B:** You think so?

**A:** I know so. It's all part of growing up. Listen -- feel free to talk to me anytime you're feeling down. I've been there and it always helps to talk to someone.

**B:** Thanks! You're a good friend.

**A:** Hey, I know you'd be there for me if I needed help.

**B:** I would!

**A:** Well good. I'll bring you that stuff tomorrow. And in the meantime, go easy on yourself. You're great, and what you're experiencing is completely normal.

**Track 66**

At nine, a girl in Kenya might already know that her parents are likely to arrange her marriage. At nine, a boy in India might think that his male pals will judge him by how tough he acts on the street. At nine, youngsters from China to Canada and from Kenya to Brazil describe big dreams for future careers – but the boys don't generally see their gender as an obstacle, while the girls, all too frequently, do.

On the verge of change, in that last period of childhood before adolescence, nine-year-olds don't think of demographic statistics or global averages. But when they talk about their lives, it's clear: Children at this age are unquestionably taking account of their own possibilities – and the limits gender places on them. ‘Nine-year-olds can be impressively articulate and wise,’ says Theresa Betancourt, associate professor of child health and human rights at Harvard University. They face increased peer pressure and responsibility, she says, but unlike adolescents, not the need to conform or be cautious about what they say.

When asked about the best and worst things about being a boy or girl, Yiqi Wang in Beijing, China, explains that the best thing about being a girl is that ‘we're more calm and reliable than boys.’ For Juliana Meirelles in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, she answers, ‘we can go in the elevator first.’ Israeli Lev Hershberg says that if he were a girl ‘he wouldn't like computers.’ And fellow Israeli Shimon Perel says if he were a girl, he could play skipping games. Eriah Big Crow, an Oglala Lakota Native American from South Dakota says in a whisper that there's nothing that she can't do because boys and girls are ‘exactly the same.’

After the age of 10, however, Claudia Cappa from UNICEF, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, says, ‘Things change completely in adolescence.’ She says there are ‘striking’ gender gaps in access to secondary education and exposure to early marriage. ‘This is when you stop being a child. You become a female or a male,’ she says. Some of the answers given by adolescent children across the globe give the impression of a miniature adult, not a child. The hope mentioned most often by children in many different countries was summed up by Avery Jackson of Kansas City in the US. If the world were hers to change, she said, there would be ‘no bullying. Because that's just bad.’

**Track 67**

The Amazing Inventions of Three Teenage Heroes

Jack Andraka was only fifteen years old when he developed a groundbreaking way to detect pancreatic cancer. Two years earlier, a close family friend had died from the disease, an experience that motivated Jack to research the illness. Jack was alarmed to learn that the survival rate for that type of cancer was less than 2%. This was mainly due to the fact that the screening test was expensive and highly inaccurate. Jack thought there had to be a better way.

After intense research, Jack realized that a protein called mesothelin multiplies in the blood in the early stages of the disease. With the help of a professor at Johns Hopkins University, Jack developed a small paper sensor that could identify the protein, and therefore determine when the cancer was present. Whereas the previously used technique cost $800, Jack’s test cost just three cents.

Marita Cheng was interested in engineering from childhood. She believed that science and math were powerful tools that could make the world a better place. Her mother worked as a cleaner in a hotel, and one of Marita’s ideas was to build a robot that could help do household chores. In Marita’s mind, there would be no limits to what she could invent once she became an engineer. Consequently, after high school she decided to study mechatronics and computer science at the University of Melbourne.

In Marita’s class of 50 students, only five were women. Marita was very surprised by this until she realized that in Australia as a whole, fewer than 10% of engineers were women. Marita didn’t think that made sense. How could society be sure it was developing the best technology if the skills of half of the population weren’t represented? To solve this problem, Marita decided to run a series of workshops in local schools. Marita thought that if young girls were introduced to science and technology in a fun way, when they grew up, they would be more likely to study engineering. The project, Robogals, was a success. Within a year, more than 2,000 girls had participated in the program. Since then, Robogals has expanded to more than ten countries.

In the South African community where Thato Kgatlhanye grew up, it was common for children to carry their books to school in plastic bags. Many children had to walk long distances from rural villages and the bags were very uncomfortable. When Thato was eighteen years old, she had the idea to start an innovative company that would change this situation. As a result of her creativity, the company simultaneously solved two other problems.

Thato’s idea was to weave plastic bags into a textile and sew the material into sturdy backpacks. Fitted with two straps, the bags would be comfortable to carry. Had she stopped there, Thato would already have succeeded in making a difference to many children. However, she also equipped the bags with solar technology. Special panels charge up as students walk to and from school, and can then serve as lights in homes without electricity. Furthermore, Thato fitted the bags with reflective strips. As many children walk to school along busy roads, traffic accidents can be a problem. The strips increase visibility and make children’s journeys to school much safer. Since 2013, Thato’s company has produced more than 10,000 backpacks.

**Track 68**

Sarah-Jayne Blakemore, The Mysterious Workings of the Adolescent Brain

Fifteen years ago, it was widely assumed that the vast majority of brain development takes place in the first few years of life. Back then, 15 years ago, we didn't have the ability to look inside the living human brain and track development across the lifespan. In the past decade or so, mainly due to advances in brain imaging technology such as magnetic resonance imaging, or MRI, neuroscientists have started to look inside the living human brain of all ages, and to track changes in brain structure and brain function, so we use structural MRI if you'd like to take a snapshot, a photograph, at really high resolution of the inside of the living human brain, and we can ask questions like, how much gray matter does the brain contain, and how does that change with age? And we also use functional MRI, called fMRI, to take a video, a movie, of brain activity when participants are taking part in some kind of task like thinking or feeling or perceiving something.

So many labs around the world are involved in this kind of research, and we now have a really rich and detailed picture of how the living human brain develops, and this picture has radically changed the way we think about human brain development by revealing that it's not all over in early childhood, and instead, the brain continues to develop right throughout adolescence and into the '20s and '30s.

One of the brain regions that changes most dramatically during adolescence is called prefrontal cortex. So this, uh this is a model of the human brain, and this is prefrontal cortex, right at the front. Prefrontal cortex is an interesting brain area. It's proportionally much bigger in humans than in any other species, and it's involved in a whole range of high level cognitive functions, things like decision-making, planning, planning what you're going to do tomorrow or next week or next year, inhibiting inappropriate behavior, so stopping yourself saying something really rude or doing something really stupid. It's also involved in social interaction, understanding other people, and self-awareness.

So MRI studies looking at the development of this region have shown that it really undergoes dramatic development during the period of adolescence.

**Track 69**

1. Sandra told me she felt let down by her classmates, so I asked her if she’d like a hand with anything.

2. I heard about your argument with Ciara. You look upset, which is totally understandable.

3. At least you were only 20 minutes late. Try to look on the bright side – it could have been much worse!

4. I was pretty irritated, but I cheered up after my conversation with Jennie. She was really sympathetic, and said she’d help me with whatever I needed.

**Track 70**

1. What a pain! That’s happened to me before.

2. I could help you study, if you’d like.

3. Still, at least it’s over. You’ve done your best, and now you don’t have to worry about it anymore.

4. How annoying! Is that why you were late?

5. Look on the bright side. If it rains, you can go to the movies instead.

**Track 71**

Speaking Exam 1

**A:** What are your hobbies and interests?

**B:** I have a few different hobbies. I’m on my school’s volleyball team, I’m a member of the chess club, and I also do a lot of hiking.

**A:** How did you get involved in hiking?

**B:** Well, when I was a child I used to go walking with my aunt and uncle. As I grew older, I realized how much I liked it, and I started going with friends. I try to go at least once a month, sometimes twice.

**A:** In the future, what other activities would you like to be involved in?

**B:** To be honest, I’m pretty busy, so I don’t know if it’ll be possible in the near future… but sometimes I think I’d like to take up rugby. It just seems like such an exciting sport.

Speaking Exam 2

**A:** Describe your daily routine.

**B:** I normally wake up about 6:30 am and go for a run. I’m on the football team, so I have to keep fit. When I get back I have breakfast and head to school. I have lessons all day and then football practice in the afternoon. In the evenings I do homework and spend time with my family. By 9 o’clock or so I’m exhausted!

**A:** Has your routine always been the same?

**B:** Not exactly. It’s only the past few years that I’ve been playing football seriously. Before that I used to have more free time.

**A:** What’s the most difficult aspect of your routine?

**B:** I’d definitely have to say those first five minutes after my alarm goes off. I’m not a morning person at all. But getting out of bed at that time is worth it. I love being up before anyone else and running through the streets when there’s almost no-one around.

Speaking Exam 3

**A:** Where do you live?

**B:** I live in a small town just outside of Busan. I was born there, and I’ve never lived anywhere else.

**A:** Do you like living there?

**B:** I suppose so. I mean, it’s not perfect, but I’ve never thought seriously about living anywhere else. My family is there, as well as all my friends.

**A:** How has living there influenced you?

**B:** I think it’s influenced my personality quite a lot. I’m a very friendly person, and that’s what our town is known for. Everyone knows each other, and helps each other out when they need something. Sometimes I’m surprised when I meet people from different places and they aren’t like that.

**Track 72**

1. You must have been so frustrated.

2. Is there anything I can do to help?

3. It might not be as bad as you think.

4. I'm not surprised you felt let down.

5. Would you like me to say something to him?

6. That's totally understandable.