



## PART 1

A survey has shown that in Britain today many children spend a lot of their daily lives watching television. They watch TV before they go to school, when they return home, as they eat their dinner, and many more children watch TV in bed at night than read a book each day. The survey of five to sixteen year-olds shows that four out of every five children now have a TV set in their bedroom. The survey may make many people worried that childhood is now more about private space and inactive pastimes than about playing, socializing or the child's own imagination.

The survey interviewed 1,100 children in 60 schools around England, Scotland and Wales. It found that children aged 5 to 16 watch television for an average of two and a half hours a day and 10% say they watch more than four hours a day. The survey also asked if children watched television while eating dinner or in bed before going to sleep. It found that 58% of them watch TV during their evening meal, while 63% lie in bed watching TV. 66% of them watch TV before school, and 83% turn on the television after returning home.

Many children now do other things while they watch television, including social networking on the Internet, looking from their laptop to the TV screen and back again. Even if they are concentrating on the television, young people often do not watch just one programme. Boys in particular often switch from one channel to another to watch two programmes at the same time.

Children's use of the Internet is also increasing rapidly. This means British children spend an average of five hours in front of a screen every day, compared with four and a half hours only five years ago. Sadly, children do not read for pleasure as much as they did in the past. The survey shows that children are using the Internet more and more, especially younger children. This is mainly because of social networking sites like *Facebook*. The main reason children use the Internet is communication and socialising, then online games and finally studying. Sometimes they lie about their age to join a social networking site. Children as young as eight are now joining sites like these.

Kathy Evans is the director of *The Children's Society* which is studying modern childhood. She said that people are worried about the possible results of children's TV and Internet viewing habits. *The Children's Society* will publish a report next month on children and technology, but one thing is for sure, we are likely to see even more changes in the future.



## PART 2

In 2011, three men in California were taken to a hospital with strange symptoms. They felt dizzy, tired, and weak. They couldn't speak, and they had trouble breathing. The hospital doctors thought the men had been poisoned, but couldn't work out what was wrong with them. Then they found out the three men were all chefs, and they had just shared a dish of fugu.

Fugu, the Japanese name for the puffer fish, is one of the strangest fish in the ocean. The puffer fish gets its name from the way the fish protects itself from enemies. Whenever it is attacked, the fish blows up its body to over twice its normal size!

The reason the three men were taken to the hospital is because the puffer fish is also very poisonous. As a rule, if you eat a whole puffer fish, you will probably die. The three men became very ill, but they all survived.

The symptoms of fugu poisoning are a strange feeling around the mouth and throat, and difficulty breathing. You can't breathe and your body can't get any air. Your brain still works perfectly, however, so you know you are dying, but you can't speak or do anything about it.

Despite the danger of fugu poisoning, this strange, ugly, and very poisonous fish is actually a very expensive, and very popular, kind of food in Japan. Customers pay up to \$200 per person to eat a fugu meal. Because of the danger, fugu can only be prepared by chefs with a special license from the government. These chefs are trained to identify and remove the poisonous parts of the fish. Most people who die from eating fugu these days are people who have tried preparing the fish themselves for the first time. Fugu is said to be so delicious that it has even started to be imported into Hong Kong and the United States. Several tons of fugu are now exported from Japan every year.