

Long Time Friends

1. Discuss the following questions with your classmates.

1. Do you have a pen pal? If not, would you like to have one?
2. Who is it? Who would it be?
3. How do you keep in touch with your pen pal?

The Incredible Trans-Atlantic Friendship of Pen Pals

(adapted from Davies E. 2013. Retrieved from

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2268213/Trans-Atlantic-friendship-In-55-years-weve-run-things-say-penpals-written-religiously-month-1958.html>)

2. Read the text below. Decide whether the statements are true or false based on the text. Then share your answers with the class.



They didn't meet for 23 years, but that didn't stop a British and American woman forming one of the closest of friendships.

Penny Townsend, 65, from Rushenden, Kent, started writing to American Bonnie Hoffman, 67, in 1958 after the wartime pen pal of Penny's mother put them in contact.

They wrote letters for 23 years before their first face to face meeting in the U.S. in 1981. Their first letters were exchanged when they were both in primary school, aged 11 and 12.

Despite living almost 4,000 miles apart the pair quickly became friends and agreed to send one letter each a month.

As children they compared their teachers, favorite school subjects and hobbies, then in their teens they gossiped about boyfriends and pop star crushes.

In later years, Penny, who never married, has been able to share in Bonnie's stories of births, marriages, children and her grandchildren.

Incredibly the penfriends have kept their promise for 55 years - sending a whopping 2,000 letters in total. But the correspondents have now sent their final hand-penned notes to each other after agreeing to make the permanent switch to emails.

The women said they would miss putting pen to paper - but they plan to be in touch more regularly now.

Retired Penny, who used to work in potteries, said: 'When we were children we would write about school and what we were studying and then as we went into our teens we would talk about boyfriends and fashion.'

'Bonnie was always a Pat Boone fan, as I loved Cliff Richard. We have never in 55 years run out of things to talk about.'

'We were so much like each other in our ways. It was uncanny.'

We now both have computers which is great because you we can send each other letters more regularly and keep each other posted on more of the little things.

'It isn't really the same as getting the old letters but we can now stay in touch so much easier.'
'We now contact each other at least two times a week. The main thing which is great with e-mail is the pictures. I love seeing the children grow up.'

'The world has changed so much since we were little girls and we have to embrace new technology. There just isn't the need for letters like there used to be. 'It is amazing how much technology we have nowadays - we're even thinking about trying out Skype next.'

Their pen pal friendship was sparked in May 1958 when Penny's mother received a food ration from a Mrs. Knowlmiller in the US, at the end of the war.

Penny's mother wrote to thank her and they became penfriends, before helping their daughters find pals on opposite sides of the Atlantic.

Penny, then aged 11, was quickly paired up with family friend of Mrs. Knowlmiller, Bonnie. Penny was invited to mother-of-two Bonnie's wedding in Ohio in 1967 but was unable to fly out and meet her for the first time due to lack of funds.

But in August 1981 they finally managed to meet in person - cementing their incredible connection.

Penny, who has visited Bonnie eight times in 55 years, today added: 'When I visit I take over fruitcake because they don't have that over there and I would often send British recipes.'

Penny said that Bonnie sent her Hershey Bars, which were American chocolate bar which for a long time you couldn't get over there.

Note:

Pen pal is a person with whom one becomes friendly by exchanging letters, especially someone in a foreign country whom one has never met.

3. Circle T (True) for the correct statement and F (False) for the incorrect statement! Give your reason for each answer.

1. T F For almost a quarter century, Penny Townsend wrote letters to Bonnie Hoffman.
2. T F Penny Townsend is an American.
3. T F Penny talked almost everything to Hoffman, including her grandchildren.
4. T F Penny Townsend and Bonnie Hoffman had been friends for more than 5 decades.
5. T F When visiting Penny, Bonnie liked to bring her candy bars.
6. T F Penny and Bonnie finally managed to meet for the first time at Bonnie's Wedding ceremony in 1967.
7. T F They like writing emails because they can send pictures.
8. T F It was Penny's mother who firstly put them in contact.
9. T F Penny used to work with frail objects.
10. T F Bonny had more than one child.

4. Read the quotes below. Which one describes the friendship between Bonny and Penny?

"Don't walk in front of me; I may not follow. Don't walk behind me; I may not lead. Just walk beside me and be my friend."
- Albert Camus

"I would rather walk with a friend in the dark, than alone in the light."
— Helen Keller

"A friend to all is a friend to none."
— Aristotle

"Friends show their love in times of trouble, not in happiness."
— Euripides

"Some friends come into your life for a reason. Others only come for a season."
— Robby Hat

"A friend is someone with whom you dare to be yourself."
— Frank Crane

"A good friend knows all your best stories. A best friend has lived them with you."
— Unknown

Grammar and Vocabulary Explorations

5. Decide parts of speech of each underlined word in blank spaces (noun, verb, adjective, or adverb)

1. _____ Bonnie and Penny's first letters were exchanged when they were both in primary school, aged 11 and 12.
2. _____ After years of sending hand-written letters, they decided to make the permanent switch to emails.
3. _____ Penny used to work in potteries.
4. _____ At the end of the war, Penny's mother received a food ration from someone in the US.
5. _____ It was uncanny how Penny and Bonnie were so much like each other in their ways.
6. _____ Writing emails does not really the same as getting the old letters but it is easier to stay in touch.
7. _____ Penny's mother was thankful that Pennie and Bonnie could find pals on opposite sides of the Atlantic.
8. _____ Since Bonnie and Penny had computers, they could send each other letters more regularly.
9. _____ Despite living almost 4,000 miles apart, Bonny and Pennie quickly became friends and agreed to send one letter each a month.
10. _____ In August 1981, Bonnie and Penny finally managed to meet in person.

6. Find synonyms and antonyms for the following words.

No	Word	Synonym	Antonym
1	Exchanged	.....	-
2	Permanent	.....	.....
3	Pottery	.....	-
4	Ration	.....	-
5	Uncanny	.....
6	Old	-	.....
7	Opposite	.....	-
8	Regularly	.....	.....
9	Agreed	.....	.....
10	Managed	.....	.....

Note:

Short-Term Orientation	Long-Term Orientation
Most important events in life occurred in the past or take place now	Most important events in life will occur in the future
Personal steadiness and stability: a good person is always the same	A good person adapts to the circumstances
There are universal guidelines about what is good and evil	What is good and evil depends upon the circumstances
Traditions are sacrosanct	Traditions are adaptable to changed circumstances
Family life guided by imperatives	Family life guided by shared tasks
Supposed to be proud of one's country	Trying to learn from other countries
Service to others is an important goal	Thrift and perseverance are important goals
Social spending and consumption	Large savings quote, funds available for investment
Students attribute success and failure to luck	Students attribute success to effort and failure to lack of effort
Slow or no economic growth of poor countries	Fast economic growth of countries up till a level of prosperity

(retrieved from http://www.wikiwand.com/en/Hofstede's_cultural_dimensions_theory)