

## READING



1. Read the article and choose an appropriate heading for each paragraph. There is an extra heading which you do not need to use.

- a Hope for Pessimists
- b The Advantages of Pessimism
- c What Do You See?
- d The Health Benefits of Positive Thinking
- e Why Optimists Are Healthier



### Optimism and Health Benefits

1 Look at the picture. Is the glass half full, or half empty? A person's answer to this question is a simple way of understanding his/her general view of the world. Optimists (those who see the glass as half full) have a happy outlook on life. They tend to believe that positive events in their life happen as a result of their own actions, and that good things are likely to take place in the future. Pessimists (who see the glass as half empty) tend to believe the opposite.

2 Most people would agree that it's better to think positively than to take a negative view of life. Well, new research seems to confirm this theory. A recent study has shown that pessimism can lead to depression, which can also cause poor physical health. Overall, optimists have a 55% lower risk of early death than pessimists. Both men and women are more likely to live longer if they have a happier outlook on life.

3 But why are optimists healthier than pessimists? We can explain this phenomenon if we look at the differences in both personalities. Optimists are generally better at dealing with difficult situations than pessimists. They also have more friends. Their personality provides them with the strength to change their lifestyles. For example, they may decide to quit smoking or go on a diet, which makes them healthier. They have strong ambitions for the future, which helps them pursue their goals. On the other hand, pessimists often feel it's hopeless to try to change an unhealthy lifestyle. In addition, their negative outlook on life can cause medical problems such as stress and high blood pressure.

4 Can pessimists do anything to avoid these health risks? Yes! Research has proved that if you change your way of thinking, you can become healthier and happier. It was once believed that your personality characteristics are unchangeable, but researchers have proven that change is possible. Not only can you become more optimistic and happier, but this will also benefit your physical health. Learning how to become optimistic should be a goal for all of us, especially if it can improve our wellbeing.

2. Read the article again. Decide if the statements below are true (T) or false (F).

- 1 Optimists tend to have a positive outlook on life. ....
- 2 They are more likely to die early than pessimists. ....
- 3 Pessimism can affect both your physical and mental health. ....
- 4 Optimists don't have many desires for the future. ....
- 5 Optimism can help people to make lifestyle changes. ....
- 6 It's impossible to change your outlook on life. ....

