

TEEN SPIRIT: THE SECRET LIFE OF BRITAIN'S TEENAGE BOYS

Nasif Mugisha lives in South London. He is full of life, seems kind, likes to run, and looks a little scary in his cadet's uniform. Actually, Nas wants to join the Air Forces. He has wanted to be a pilot ever since he was four and first flew in a plane. At 15, he is already thinking ahead to a degree and career when all his friends talk of the pressure of exams. In the early evening, after Nas's mum, Sophia, has made some delicious noodles, Nas and his friends go to the park. Adults move out of the way, often giving them hostile looks. The boys feel **empowered**, but also **annoyed** at the adults' reaction.

At 7.30 am every Sunday, whether sunny or cold, Nas **stacks** his newspaper trolley with copies of the local paper. "It can be very depressing when the weather is bad, **delivering** all those papers through the wind and the rain. But at times it's really good." Two years ago when he started he was paid £20 for delivering the papers, now it's just £10 or £15 on a good day. "They don't call us newspaper boys any more," says Nas, "we're called walkers. I call myself a newspaper distribution expert."

Nas's mother was born in Uganda, his father in Rwanda. They divorced when he was three, and yet he considers himself fortunate—both parents remarried and now he's got two great sets of families. "My mum confides in me. When I was a child, certain things happened and mum would say, 'Ah, you're too young to know.' Now that I'm older, she tells me everything." Nas talks more formally than most of his friends; he uses full sentences and only a little **slang**. "There are expectations of how a teenage boy will talk and act—especially a black teenage boy," he says. And he adds, "African parents want you to do well and they always push you to speak properly."

Nas is more confident than he was at primary school. "It all changed when I joined the cadets." He learned practical skills such as map-reading and ironing. "At school, the older you get, the more fixed groups become," he says. Because he is so busy with extracurricular activities, Nas feels left out at times. "At school there is the **cool** group, and then lots of other groups. The cool kids are really the ones who never make progress at school. Many of them drink and take drugs. I'd say a third of them either smoke or drink." Nas says he doesn't drink or smoke at all. Why doesn't he? "First of all, I'm Muslim. But also, I don't see the point. I think if you're an interesting enough person you can be interesting at a party without alcohol."

On Monday evening Nas goes to Air Cadets; he has to take two buses and then walk. He is pleased because his group finished third out of 15 in last week's athletics competition. They put in so much time and effort that tonight, as a reward, they don't have to wear their uniform. Nas will give a map-reading lesson to the junior cadets, some of whom are actually older than him, and they are all extremely disciplined. The group is racially mixed, and yet the kids appear to be *colour blind*, as they line up orderly to salute the picture of the Queen. Nas appears to be more mature and prepared for adult life than earlier generations of teenagers. In a strange way, maybe society's demonisation of teen boys has made them grow up more quickly.

Text adapted from *The Guardian*

empowered: enardits, envalentits / enardecidos, envalentonados

annoyed: molest, enfadat / molesto, enfadado

to stack: apilar

to deliver: lliurar / entregar

slang: argot

cool: legal, enrotllat / legal, enrollado

Part 1: Reading comprehension

Choose the best answer according to the text. Only ONE answer is possible.

[0.5 points each correct answer. Wrong answers will be penalized by deducting 0.16 points. There is no penalty for unanswered questions.]

		Espai per al corrector/a		
		Correcta	Incorrecta	No contestada
1.	Nas wants to join the Air Forces...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/> in order to avoid the pressure of exams.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> because he doesn't want to do a degree.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> because he has always dreamt of becoming a pilot.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> because he will look cool in his uniform.			
2.	When Nas walks to the park with his friends...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/> they have mixed feelings seeing the adults' reactions to them.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> they understand why people seem to be afraid of them.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> they feel ashamed, as people walk away from them.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> they get hostile looks from everyone they come across.			
3.	According to the text, "a walker" is...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/> a person that delivers the paper to people's houses.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> someone who walks through wind and rain.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> someone generally called <i>a distribution expert</i> .			
	<input type="checkbox"/> someone who walks the streets on Sunday mornings.			
4.	Why does Nas feel his mother confides in him now? Because...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Nas has grown and can understand why she divorced.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> she has always liked to explain everything to him.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> their relationship has changed and she now explains things to him.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> she divorced and now she has remarried.			
5.	The main reason Nas does not speak much slang is that...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/> African parents encourage their children to use language correctly.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> he wants to be integrated in the cool group.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> African parents want their children to preserve their native language.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> he doesn't like learning foreign languages.			
6.	According to the text, what is Nas's opinion about the "cool group" at school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/> He disapproves of their drinking and thinks they take no interest in school.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> He thinks they do not behave correctly but he admires them.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> He would have liked to join them but he's left out at times.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> He dislikes them because he thinks they all drink and take drugs.			
7.	When the text argues that the kids are "colour blind," it is trying to make the point that...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/> the children in the group are all coloured people.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> there is no racist attitude to be detected among these children.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> they are against racially mixed groups.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> they do not distinguish colours appropriately.			
8.	On the whole, the text suggests that...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/> society's demonisation of present day teenagers responds to their reality.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Nas's generation has been unjustly demonized.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Nas is surprisingly reluctant to join the Air Forces for his age.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Nas's behaviour shows him to be an immature kid in comparison with other teenagers.			

Correctes Incorrectes No contestades

Recompte de les respostes

Nota de comprensió escrita