

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

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🔴 ADVANCED B1–C1

For confident learners who enjoy exploring ideas in greater depth. Examine motivation, habits, health and longevity, debate modern lifestyle choices, and develop critical thinking and writing skills.

- **PDF 9 – Reading & Analysis**
- **PDF 10 – Debate & Discussion**
- **PDF 11 – Writing & Reflection**

Topic: The Secret to a Better Year

Activity 1: Reading – The Secret to a Better Year Isn't a New Year's Resolution

Every January, millions of people promise themselves a fresh start. They will exercise regularly, eat better, save money, learn a language or finally organise their lives. The enthusiasm is real, but it often does not last.

One problem is that people sometimes confuse motivation with a lasting habit. Motivation can be powerful at the beginning, but it changes with our mood, energy and circumstances. A habit, on the other hand, becomes part of our normal routine through repetition.

A second problem is that resolutions are often too ambitious. Someone who has not exercised for years may decide to train every day. When the plan becomes uncomfortable, it is easy to stop altogether. A smaller goal, such as taking a regular walk, may be easier to maintain.

There is also a bigger reason to make positive changes. Health is not simply about appearance or reaching a particular number on a scale. Regular movement, balanced eating, sufficient sleep and strong social connections can all contribute to wellbeing over time.

Perhaps the best resolution is not to become a completely different person by February. It is to make a few sensible choices that you can continue throughout the year. And if you miss a day, you can simply begin again tomorrow. January does not have a monopoly on fresh starts.

Activity 2: Reading Comprehension

Answer in complete sentences.

1. Why does initial enthusiasm often disappear?
2. How does the passage distinguish motivation from habit?
3. Why might an ambitious exercise plan fail?
4. What does the writer say about the meaning of health?
5. What does the sentence "January does not have a monopoly on fresh starts" mean?

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Activity 3: Analyse the Writer's Argument

1. What is the main argument of the passage?
2. Identify two reasons why New Year's resolutions often fail.
3. Which example does the writer use to show the danger of unrealistic goals?
4. What evidence or examples could make the argument stronger?
5. Does the writer reject New Year's resolutions completely? Explain your answer.

Activity 4: Vocabulary in Context

Explain the meaning of these words as they are used in the passage.

1. Ambitious
2. Repetition
3. Circumstances
4. Wellbeing
5. Maintain
6. Monopoly

Activity 5: Personal Response

Write **100–130 words** in response to this statement:

"Long-term health is built through everyday choices, not dramatic promises."

Do you agree? Give reasons and examples.

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Suggested Answer Key

Activity 2:

1. Because motivation changes with mood, energy and circumstances.
2. Motivation is an initial desire or drive, while a habit becomes part of a routine through repetition.
3. It may be uncomfortable or too demanding to maintain.
4. Health includes movement, balanced eating, sleep and social connections, not just appearance or weight.
5. People can make a fresh start at any time of the year.

Activity 3:

1. Small, sustainable changes are more valuable than dramatic resolutions.
2. Motivation fades and goals can be unrealistic.
3. Someone who has not exercised for years decides to train every day.
4. Answers may include research, expert opinions or examples of gradual habit change.
5. No. The writer supports sensible, manageable resolutions.

Activity 4:

1. Requiring a lot of effort or aiming high.
2. Doing something repeatedly.
3. Conditions or situations that affect someone.
4. General health and happiness.
5. Continue or keep something going.
6. Exclusive control or ownership; here, the idea that January is the only time for a fresh start.

Activity 5: Answers will vary.

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