Unit 12 · Describing Appearances

STUDY NOTES

The unit in one line

- **describe how people look**: **look** + adjective, **look like** + noun, **be like** (character)
- why people differ (hair, skin, height), a poem (*Wonderful World*); the **present simple**; the three sounds of **-s**; a friend and a typical day to write

Getting started

- describe a person in order: **height and build → hair and face → clothes**
  - *The man on the right is **big and heavily built**, with broad shoulders. His head is almost shaved. He is wearing a maroon T-shirt.*
- **song**: questions about two children (tall or short? eyes? long hair? glasses?)
  - the boy: **short black hair and brown eyes**
  - the girl: **short, with a small nose**
- strictly those are **looks**; *What is he like?* usually asks about **character**

Reading I: Differences between People

- before you read: **Rajesh Hamal**, a film actor: **188 cm** (more than six feet), **78 kg**, black hair, brown eyes, an **oval** face
- the text:
  - people differ from **conception**; eye and skin color and hair **texture** come from the **genes** we **inherit** from our parents
  - **hair**: a baby's first hair falls out (**ginger → fair** a few months later); fine or thick, straight or curly; thinner with age; some go gray or white before forty
  - **skin**: darker where ancestors lived near the **equator** (sunny), paler far from it; darker in the **sun**
  - **growing**: girls start their growth spurt earlier (**puberty**), so many are taller at 11–12; later boys **shoot up**
  - **the mind**: a footballer or runner needs **stamina** and practice
  - **food**: too little exercise and too much sugary food → overweight; the joke: some look at a cream cake and put on a kilo
- **melanin** = the brown pigment in dark skin, protects from the sun's UV; pale skin makes vitamin D in weak sun
- choose: a baby's **hair** changes; pale skin browns by **exposure to the sun**; girls grow at **puberty**; eat too much, no exercise → **fat and overweight**
- words for **hair**: ginger, fair, fine, thick, straight, curly, dark, gray, white; **skin**: paler; **eyes**: brown (the card)

Key words

conception: the moment a baby begins (an egg fertilized).
texture: the way something feels.
inherited: passed on from your parents.
ginger: orange-red (hair).
fair: light in color (hair, skin).
puberty: when a child's body becomes an adult's.
shoot up: grow taller fast.
stamina: the strength to keep going.
middle-aged: about 40 to 60.
hooked (nose): curving out like a hook.
oval (face): shaped like an egg.

Pronunciation: the -s endings

/s/	/z/	/ɪz/ (an extra syllable)
after p, t, k, f	after b, d, g, l, m, n, r, vowels	after s, z, sh, ch, j
results, amounts	falls, others, turns, girls, bones, boys	differences, changes, processes

- finger on the throat: the last sound buzzes → /z/

Grammar I: look, look like, be like

- **look** + an **adjective**: *You **look happy**. He **looks tall**.*
- **look like** + a **noun**: *He **looks like his father**. That house **looks like a palace**.*
- **look like** + a sentence: *It **looks like** it's going to rain.*

Question	Asks about	Answer
What does she look like?	appearance	*She's tall, with long curly hair.*
What is she like?	character	*She's kind and a bit shy.*
Who does she look like?	looks the same as	*She looks like her mother.*
Who is she like?	the same character	*Like her father, very determined.*
What does she like?	what she enjoys	*Dancing and science fiction.*
How is she?	health, feelings now	*She's better: she left hospital yesterday.*

- *He's like me* = similar to me
- **look or look like**: *looks like* a princess · *looks like* her mother · *look* stressed · *look* smart · *looks* healthy · *looks like* a palace · *look* cheerful
- **the verb**: Peter **looks** worried · What **is** she **like**? · You **look like** an actress · Who **is** she **like**? · She **doesn't look** happy · They **like** dancing · What does your brother **look like**? · What **are** they **like**? · They **look** angry

Listening: Tom's new friends

- Tom tells his dad about two friends
- **Patrick**:
  - hair short, **black**, straight, like Tom's (not brown: **false**)
  - a little taller than Tom
  - funny, always telling jokes: the **talkative** one

- **Marcel**:
  - **a lot shorter** than Patrick
  - brown hair, a round face, glasses: **looks like Harry Potter**
  - talks about **video games** with Tom at lunch
- Tom and Dad are going to **play a game** (Tom's new video game)

Speaking

Feature	Words
general	beautiful, pretty, cute, handsome, attractive
age	young, middle-aged, old
build	thin, slim
height	short, medium-height, tall
eyes	blue, brown, small
face	round, oval, square
nose	straight, hooked, long, small
mouth, ears	large, small

- **pretty, beautiful**: mostly girls and women; **handsome**: men; **attractive**: anyone; **cute**: babies, small children, pets
- polite words: **slim** (not *thin*), **heavily built / well built** (not *fat*), **elderly** (not *old*)
- describe a friend: *She is **medium-height** and **slim**, with an **oval face**, big brown eyes and long straight hair. Who is she?*

Writing I: describing a friend

1. **who** the person is, how you know them
2. **appearance**: height and build → face, hair, eyes → clothes
3. **personality**, with an example
4. **why you like** them

- present simple (*She **has** long hair. He **wears** glasses.*); *look* for impressions (*He **looks** serious, but he is funny.*)

Reading II: Wonderful World (a poem)

- by **William Brighty Rands** (1823–1882), English, poems for children; the speaker talks to the **World** as a person
- **verse 1**: the World is great, wide, beautiful, **wonderful**; water curls round it, grass on its breast: **dressed** in beautiful clothes
- **verse 2**: the wonderful air; the wind **shakes the tree**, walks on the water, **whirls the mills**, **talks to itself** on the hilltops
- **verse 3**: how far does the Earth go? wheat fields, rivers, cities, gardens, cliffs, **isles**, people, for thousands of **miles**
- **verse 4**: the World is so big and he so small, he trembles; while praying, a quiet voice
- **the whisper**: he is **more than the Earth**, though only a dot, because **he can love and think**, and the Earth cannot
- **repetition** (*wonderful*), **rhyming pairs**, **personification** (the World wears clothes, the wind walks and talks)
- rhymes:
  - breast – **dressed**
  - me – **tree**
  - mills – **hills**
  - go – **flow**
  - isles – **miles**
  - small – **all**
  - today – **say**

Grammar II: the present simple

Use	Example
habits	*She **earns** a good salary every month.*
facts always true	*The sun **rises** in the east. Cows **feed** on grass.*
states	*She **lives** with her parents. Momila **wants** to be a singer.*
timetables	*The plane **arrives** at 6:30 p.m. every day. The term **begins** on Monday.*
the future after *when, unless, if, before, after*	*I'll phone you when he **comes** back.*

- he / she / it / one person → **-s**: *she lives, it rises*
- questions: **do / does** + plain verb: *What time **does** the film **start**? Why **does** he **play** football? How often **do** you **study** English?*
- answers: **arrives** · **comes** · **start** (*we*: no -s) · **rises** · **begins**

Writing II: my typical day

- present simple, in time order: *first, then, after that, at seven o'clock, finally*
- frequency words: *always, usually, sometimes*
- *I usually **get up** at half past five. School **starts** at ten. When I **get** home, I **feed** our goats.*
- **project:** a wall of faces: new words (*bald, freckles, dimples, wrinkles, plump, broad-shouldered*), a drawing and a sentence for each

Extra bit: The Stag and Its Reflection

- a stag sees himself in a pool: **proud of his antlers**, **ashamed of his thin legs**
- a lion comes; his legs carry him away, but his antlers catch in the bushes; the lion catches him
- **lesson:** what is useful is worth more than what is beautiful; don't judge by looks
- antlers are bone, fall off every year and grow again

COMMON MISTAKES

✗ You look like happy.
✓ You **look** happy.

✗ She look like very happy today.
✓ She **looks** very happy today.

✗ What does your father looks like?
✓ What does your father **look** like?

✗ I will call you when I will reach home.
✓ … when I **reach** home.

✗ What time does the bus leaves?
✓ What time does the bus **leave**?