



True Stories

5

Student's Book and eBook

Sandra Heyer

CONTENTS

Introduction	v
Acknowledgments	vii
From the Author	ix
UNIT 1	
Longevity	1
A TRUE STORY IN THE NEWS	
<i>La Dolce Vita</i> (The Sweet Life)	2
NEWS AND VIEWS	
<i>The Longevity Code</i>	9
UNIT 2	
Finding Work That Is Right for You	17
A TRUE STORY IN THE NEWS	
The Chef	18
NEWS AND VIEWS	
Becoming Yourself	25
UNIT 3	
Geeks	33
A TRUE STORY IN THE NEWS	
Two Yahoos	34
NEWS AND VIEWS	
From <i>Geeks</i>	41
UNIT 4	
Finding the Right Person to Marry	51
A TRUE STORY IN THE NEWS	
The Real Ronaldo	52
NEWS AND VIEWS	
Who Wants to Marry a Soul Mate?	59

continued ►

CONTENTS (continued)

UNIT 5	Intuition	69
	A TRUE STORY IN THE NEWS	
	A Sixth Sense	70
	NEWS AND VIEWS	
	When Not to Use Your Head	77
UNIT 6	Neighborhood Feuds	85
	A TRUE STORY IN THE NEWS	
	Family Feud	86
	NEWS AND VIEWS	
	Neighborhood Feuds	93
UNIT 7	The Stock Market	101
	A TRUE STORY IN THE NEWS	
	A Smart Investor	102
	NEWS AND VIEWS	
	How to Build a Nest Egg	109
UNIT 8	Helping One Another	115
	A TRUE STORY IN THE NEWS	
	Chosen	116
	NEWS AND VIEWS	
	Helping Behavior	123
	 Key to Guessed Answers	 131
	Credits	134

UNIT 1

Longevity

The theme of this unit is longevity—a long life. How long is “a long life”? How old is “old”? Are you old when you turn 50...or 60...or 75...or 80?

A Think about this question. Write a number on the line. Then read your number aloud and listen as your classmates read their numbers aloud.

In your opinion, at what age does a person become “old”? _____

B Discuss the answers to these questions with your classmates.

1. Why did you write the number you did? Why do you think someone becomes old at that age?
2. Do your classmates agree on what is old? That is, did most people write numbers that are close to one another? If there is a big difference between the lowest number and the highest number, what could explain the difference?
3. Can you notice any patterns in the numbers people chose? For example, did older classmates write higher numbers than younger classmates? Did classmates from the same part of the world write numbers that are close to one another?

In this unit, you will read about some people who are very old. First, you will read about a village in Italy where people often live to be 90, and even older. Then you will read a doctor's advice on how *you* can have a long, sweet life.

A TRUE STORY IN THE NEWS



PRE-READING

The man in the photo is very old. Yet he still enjoys working in the fields—and he rides his bike to work! That would surprise some people, but not someone who lives in Campodimele, Italy. Campodimele is a village in Italy where most people stay healthy and busy well into their 90s.

A With your classmates, make a list of possible reasons people stay healthy and live long in Campodimele.

B Read the story to find out what researchers concluded.

La Dolce Vita (The Sweet Life)

- 1 When he was 34 years old, Gerardo Pecchia left his village in Italy to work in the United States. He worked in the United States for 40 years; then, at the age of 74, he retired and returned to Campodimele, his native village.
- 2 Campodimele was as beautiful as Gerardo remembered it. The tiny town is on a mountain-top 75 miles (120 kilometers) south of Rome, surrounded by olive trees. A medieval wall encircles the village, and narrow stone streets wind between its quaint old houses. In the center of the town there is a picturesque *piazza*—a town square—where people gather to chat in the shade of a 300-year old elm tree. Even the weather in Campodimele is beautiful: At 2,100 feet (650 meters) above sea level, the town catches fresh sea breezes that keep the temperatures moderate—not too hot and not too cold.
- 3 Gerardo was happy to be back in Campodimele among family and old friends. He was happy, too, that he had enough money to enjoy his retirement. During his 40 years in the United States, he had paid into the Social Security fund, so he received a small pension. Each time he cashed a check, he exchanged his U.S. dollars for Italian lira, and he had enough lira to live a simple but comfortable life.
- 4 Gerardo lived contentedly in Campodimele for 25 years; then, when he was 99 years old, he had a serious problem—not with his health, as could be expected at that age—but with the U.S. government. Officials at the U.S. Embassy in Rome noticed that a 99-year-old man named Gerardo Pecchia was cashing Social Security checks in Campodimele. They had a hard time believing that Gerardo Pecchia could still be alive. Perhaps he had died, they thought, and a son or nephew with the same name was illegally cashing the checks. Embassy officials wrote Mr. Pecchia, asking for proof that he was alive. Gerardo traveled to Rome and went to the embassy in person. “I am Gerardo Pecchia,” he told the officials there. “As you can see, I am still alive.”
- 5 Gerardo Pecchia was not just alive—he was alive and well. He was still taking care of his garden, still doing his own shopping, still taking the bus to visit his son. Anywhere else in the world, people would be amazed to see a 99-year-old man with such vitality. In Campodimele, however, it is not a surprising sight. In the tiny town of 890 people, 48 are over the age of 90, and most of them, like Gerardo, are healthy and busy. They chop wood, milk cows, and hunt; they take care of gardens and olive trees. One 94-year-old man is often seen riding his bright blue moped on the mountainous roads around Campodimele.
- 6 When Gerardo retired in Campodimele, he retired in one of the healthiest places on earth. It is rare for anybody in Campodimele to die before reaching the age of 85, and people remain healthy and active well into their 90s. In 1985, the World Health Organization sent a team of medical researchers to Campodimele. Their task was to determine why people there lived such long and healthy lives. The researchers discovered that the blood pressure of elderly Campodimeleans was exceptionally low. It was not unusual for a 90-year-old man to have the same blood pressure level as his 20-year-old great-grandson. Cholesterol levels were low, too—around 100, less than half the usual level in most Western nations. These findings fascinated the researchers. If Campodimeleans can have such low blood pressure and cholesterol levels, why can't we all? What is their secret? Is it diet? Is it lifestyle? Or is it simply good genes?
- 7 Some residents of Campodimele credit the water they drink for their longevity and health. For centuries the village has been known for its mineral water, which people collect from several fountains in the town. People claim the minerals in the water prevent hardening of the arteries. Other residents credit the food they eat for their good health. The people of Campodimele eat a traditional Mediterranean diet, which consists mainly of fresh vegetables, pasta, wild mushrooms, olive oil, shallots, and a moderate amount of red wine. They eat very

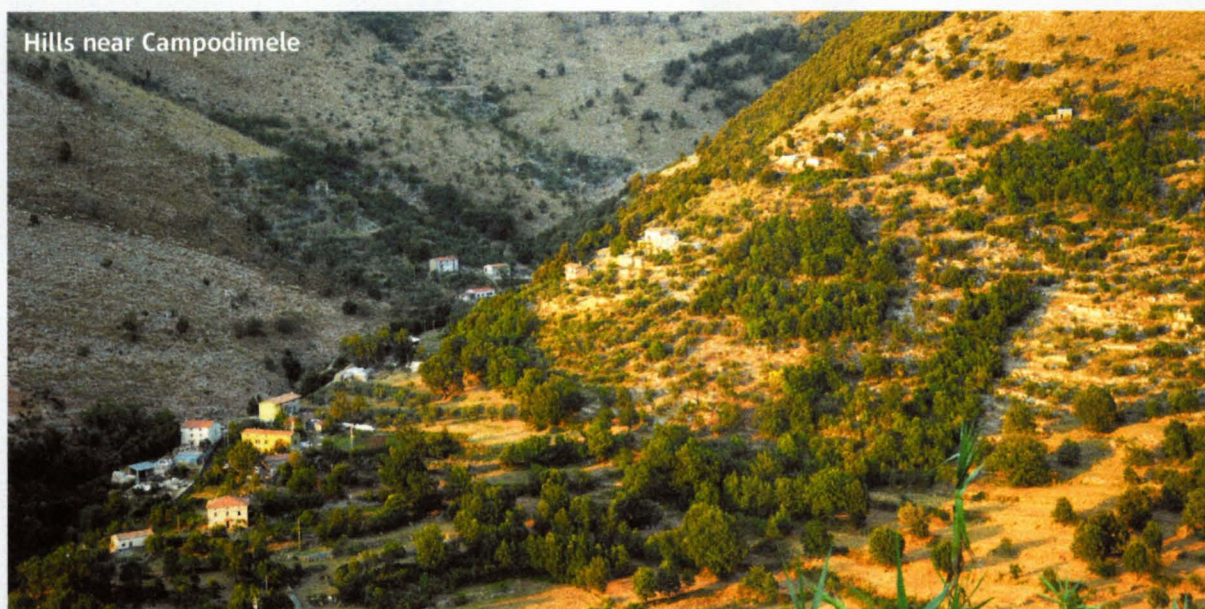
continued ►

little meat, salt, or butter, and very few people in the village are heavy coffee drinkers, unlike other Italians. A typical lunch in Campodimele might be homemade bread grilled with olive oil and tomatoes; spaghetti with carrots, onions, and tomatoes; and perhaps some seafood, snails fried in olive oil, or local beans called *cicerchie*.

- 8 The researchers wondered if the lifestyle in Campodimele could be having a positive effect on residents' health, so they observed people as they went about their daily lives. The researchers concluded that the lifestyle did have a positive effect. In Campodimele, most people follow a traditional rural timetable: They get up at sunrise, go to bed at 8 p.m., and eat at the same time every day. They also get plenty of exercise. Because the streets are so narrow, walking is the usual way to get around Campodimele. Nearly everyone works daily in gardens or takes care of chickens or other small animals. Many of Campodimele's inhabitants are farmers, and they keep fit walking up and down the steep hillside that separates the village from their plots of land. In addition, the lifestyle seems, at least on the surface, to be free of stress. There is no crime in Campodimele, and there is no traffic because cars are not allowed in the center of the village. Perhaps most important, elderly people are not separated from younger people; they do not live in retirement homes, but instead are well integrated with the rest of the

population. In Campodimele, it is not unusual to see four generations gather to chat under the elm tree in the piazza. Dr. Pietro Cugini, who led the research, noted: "The elderly person is never alone, but has a life synchronized with that of others, as in one big family."

- 9 In addition to examining the water, diet, and lifestyle in Campodimele, the researchers tried to determine if the longevity of Campodimeleans, who have been members of only a few families for centuries, has a genetic cause. Dr. Cugini believes that genes do play a role. Many inhabitants have a special enzyme that reduces blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Moreover, a study of Campodimeleans who left the village for Toronto, Canada, in the 1960s showed that they, too, lived long and healthy lives—an indication that Campodimeleans carry a gene for longevity. Still, Dr. Cugini does not think that good genes alone guarantee longevity. "You also need a well-structured lifestyle," he warns. At the end of the four-year study, he concluded that the villagers' health and longevity are based 30 percent on genetics and 70 percent on environment.
- 10 The old people in Campodimele seemed puzzled by all the laboratory tests and record-keeping. Pasquale Pannozzi, 83, wondered, "I don't know why they are spending all this time in Campodimele. The answer is easy: This is a perfect spot. No stress. Who would want to die?"



Hills near Campodimele

GETTING THE BIG PICTURE

Why do the people of Campodimele have unusually long and healthy lives? Circle the letter of your answer.

- a. They have a healthy diet, a healthy lifestyle, and good genes. The fact that Campodimele is beautiful—"a perfect spot"—probably helps, too.
- b. Fresh sea breezes keep the air clean. Although the town is only 75 miles from Rome, there is no pollution.
- c. Doctors from the World Health Organization have been living in Campodimele since 1985, studying the people. Campodimeleans have the best medical care in the world.

BUILDING VOCABULARY

RECALLING NEW WORDS

The words below are from the story. Complete each sentence with the correct word or words.

amazed	pension	retire	wind (verb)
had a hard time	proof	rural	
native village	puzzled	vitality	

1. Gerardo Pecchia was born in a small town in Italy, but he went to the United States when he was 34. Forty years later, he returned to his native village.
2. Most people stop working when they are 65, but Gerardo didn't _____ until he was 74.
3. Gerardo paid taxes when he worked in the United States, so when he retired, he received a little money every month from the U.S. government. His _____ was small, but he had enough money to live comfortably.
4. It was difficult for the embassy officials to believe that a 99-year-old man was still cashing Social Security checks. They _____ believing that Mr. Pecchia was still alive.
5. Embassy officials wanted Mr. Pecchia to show them that he was still living: They wanted to see papers or other information. They wanted _____ that he was alive.
6. Gerardo had a lot of energy: He was taking care of his garden, doing his own shopping, and taking the bus to visit his son. Like many old people in Campodimele, he had great _____.
7. In Campodimele, people are not surprised when they see 90-year-olds hunting and chopping wood. In other places in the world, however, people would be so surprised, they would find it hard to believe. They would be _____ to see it.

8. Campodimele sits on the top of a mountain, so its streets cannot be straight. They go around the mountain and _____ between the houses.
9. Many of the people in Campodimele are farmers, and almost everyone has a garden or small animals. Campodimele is in a _____ part of Italy.
10. The old people in Campodimele didn't understand why the researchers wanted to study them. They were _____ by all the laboratory tests and record-keeping.

USING CONTEXT CLUES

Sometimes you can find the meaning of a word or phrase from the context clues—the surrounding words and sentences. Before looking up a word in a dictionary, check for context clues.

In each sentence, circle the word or words that have the same meaning as the words in *italics*. The first one is done for you.

1. In the center of the town, there is a *piazza*—a town square—where people gather.
2. Campodimele has *moderate temperatures*—not too hot and not too cold.
3. Gerardo was happy and satisfied because his life was good in Campodimele. He was *contented* there.
4. A typical lunch in Campodimele might be homemade bread; spaghetti with carrots, onions, and tomatoes; and perhaps some seafood, snails fried in olive oil, or local beans called *cicerchie*.
5. In Italy, there are people who drink a lot of coffee, but the people in Campodimele are not *heavy coffee drinkers*.
6. The researchers wondered if the lifestyle in Campodimele could be having a positive effect on *residents'* health, so they observed the people living there as they went about their daily lives.
7. Elderly people are not separated from younger people; they are well *integrated* with the rest of the population.
8. Researchers wondered if genes have an influence on Campodimeleans' longevity. They discovered that genes do *play a role*.