

UNIT 7

Less Is More



A small house in the countryside of Iceland



THINK AND DISCUSS

- 1** Read the unit title. What do you think “less is more” means?
- 2** Look at the photo. Would you like to live in this house? Why, or why not?

PART 1

More Choice, More Happiness?

Listening

Listen for Rhetorical Questions

Speaking

Use Signposts to Organize Ideas

Pronunciation

Intonation in Yes/No and Choice Questions

PART 2

TED TALKS

Graham Hill

Less stuff, more happiness

Note Taking

Record Information in a List

PUT IT TOGETHER

Communicate

Give a Group Presentation


Presentation Skill

Connect the Ending to the Beginning

BEFORE YOU LISTEN

A COMMUNICATE Work in a small group. Discuss these questions.


1. Look at the photo. Do you like eating at a place that has many choices on the menu? Why, or why not?
2. Do you think that having more choices is always a good thing? Why, or why not?

B  **2.17 COLLABORATE** You are going to listen to a lecture about ideas from a book called *The Paradox of Choice*. A *paradox* is a statement that seems impossible or untrue because it says two opposite things. An example is the title of this unit, *Less Is More*. Listen to segment 1 of the lecture. Then with your group, discuss the meaning of the book title.



Customers have a lot of choices at Cafe Sopra in Sydney, Australia.

VOCABULARY

C  **2.18** Read and listen to the sentences with words from the lecture. Guess the meanings of the words in bold. Then write each word next to its definition.

- a. Social media can **impact** the success of a business. If many people give positive reviews to a product, others are likely to want to buy it.
- b. Scientific **research** suggests that people become unhappy if they have too many choices.
- c. If you are **aware of** your behavior, you may be able to change it.
- d. There are just three **options** at this restaurant: fried chicken, grilled fish, or a veggie burger.
- e. **Psychologists** are studying how people react to different kinds of advertisements.
- f. Thank you so much! I really **appreciate** all of the help you have given us on this project.
- g. Our sales figures have been increasing every month. They are strong **evidence** of the product's popularity.
- h. Are you **satisfied** with your new apartment? Is it big enough?
- i. An accountant must be a **perfectionist**. Mistakes are not allowed.
- j. There are so many choices on the menu! It's so **overwhelming** that I cannot decide.

- 1. _____ (adj) causing confusion because something is so great in number or effect
- 2. _____ (n) a person who tries to do things without fault or error
- 3. _____ (adj) happy with something
- 4. _____ (n) choices
- 5. _____ (v) be thankful for
- 6. _____ (n) information or objects that support the truth
- 7. _____ (v) have an effect or influence on something
- 8. _____ (adj) conscious; having knowledge
- 9. _____ (n) people who study the mind and behavior
- 10. _____ (n) the detailed study of something

D COMMUNICATE Work with a partner. Discuss the questions.


1. Are you a **perfectionist**? Explain why, or why not.
2. Does having a lot of **options impact** your ability to make a decision? Explain why, or why not.
3. Are some kinds of situations **overwhelming** for you? Explain your answer.
4. Are you **satisfied** with the size of your apartment or house? Explain why, or why not.

LISTEN

E  **2.19**  **1.30** **LISTEN FOR MAIN IDEAS** Read the statements. Then listen to the lecture. Check [✓] the two statements that are true.

1. ☐ People generally believe that more choices are not good.
2. ☐ *The Paradox of Choice* suggests that more choices actually make people less happy.
3. ☐ People in societies with a lot of wealth and freedom are happier today than they were in 1945.
4. ☐ Schwartz thinks that people with a certain kind of personality have a harder time making decisions.
5. ☐ *Maximizer* personality types are usually happier than *Satisficer* personality types.



F  **2.20 LISTEN FOR DETAILS** Listen to the first two segments of the lecture. Choose the best word or phrase to complete each statement.

Segment 1

1. The lecture is about how a greater number of choices can have a negative impact on _____.
a. happiness **b.** success **c.** confusion
2. Yuichi didn't buy an electric toothbrush online because _____.
a. there were none that he liked
b. there were too many choices
c. he couldn't understand the Web site
3. The book *The Paradox of Choice* by Barry Schwartz says that people think they want _____ choices.
a. fewer **b.** more **c.** better

Segment 2

4. The professor tells the students which _____ has difficulty with decisions.
a. choice
b. personality type
c. number
5. A *satisficer* _____ about things like his or her hair or clothes.
a. often worries
b. doesn't care
c. does not worry much
6. Schwartz says that the *maximizer* has _____ time than a *satisficer* dealing with a lot of choices.
a. an easier
b. a better
c. a harder
7. *Satisficers* have _____ chance of becoming depressed than *maximizers*.
a. a lesser
b. a greater
c. the same

LISTENING SKILL Listen for Rhetorical Questions

Sometimes speakers ask a question but do not expect an answer. Often, they even answer the question themselves. This is a **rhetorical question**. Speakers ask rhetorical questions to:

1. signal a central idea, sometimes an idea that they hope listeners will agree with.

Can money buy happiness?


2. signal that an explanation or more details will follow.

So, what does this mean? First, . . .

3. engage their listeners and make them feel as if they are interacting with the speaker.

Have you heard about this?

Listen for rhetorical questions to help you understand what the speaker thinks is important and to follow his or her argument.

G  **2.21** Work with a partner. Read the questions from the lecture. Then listen to each excerpt and write *R* if the question is rhetorical.

1. _____ “So, are you saying that people are less happy overall because they have more choices?”
2. _____ “What do they mean?”
3. _____ “Does anyone here have trouble making a decision when, say, you are at a restaurant or in a store?”

H THINK CRITICALLY Analyze. Work with a small group. Discuss why you think the professor used each rhetorical question in exercise G. Was it reason 1, 2, or 3 from the Listening Skill box?

A: *I don't think “What do they mean?” is a signal about a central idea.*

B: *Yes, I agree.*

AFTER YOU LISTEN

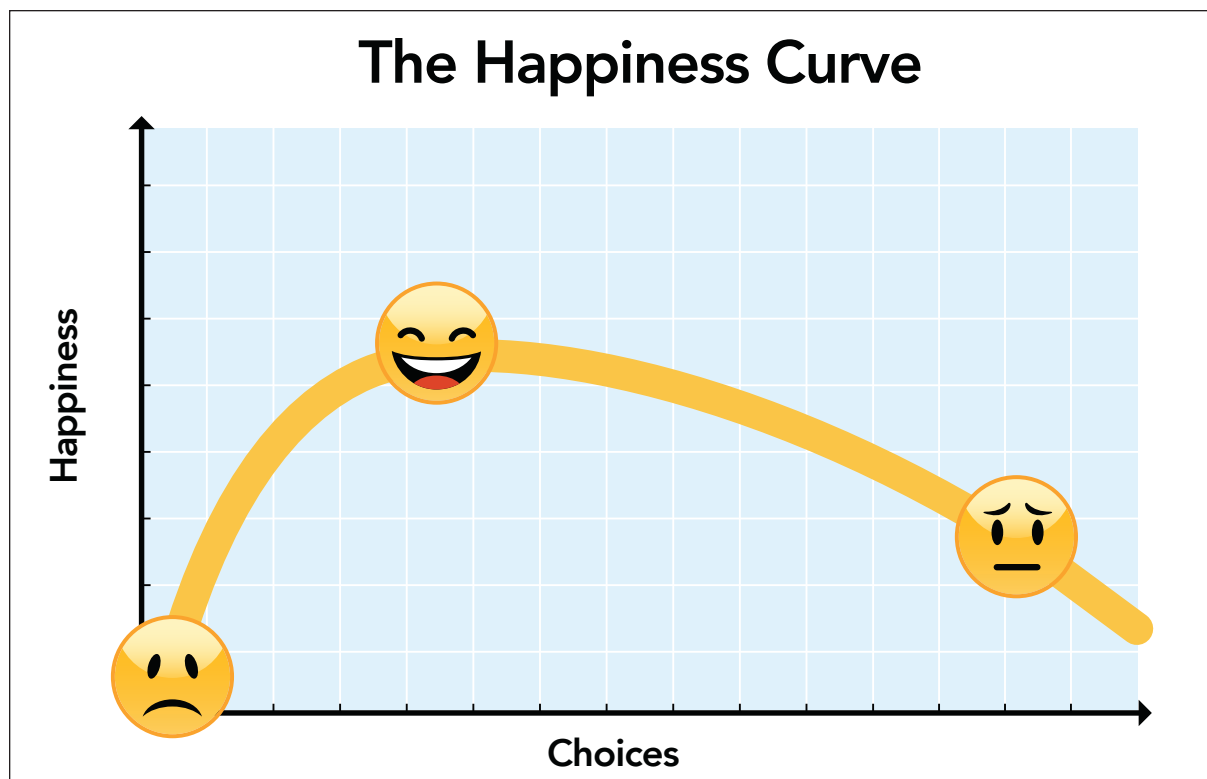
I THINK CRITICALLY Apply. Work with a partner. Answer the questions. Use the information from the lecture to support your answer.

1. Name two more occupations that you feel would be ideal for each personality type.
2. Which type of personality, a *maximizer* or a *satisficer*, would
 - a. probably have a messier home?
 - b. be a better leader of an organization?
 - c. you want as a parent?
3. Do you think you are more of a *maximizer* or more of a *satisficer*? Explain why.

A: *I think I'm more of a maximizer.*
B: *Me, too. I always hate having to make choices.*

J THINK CRITICALLY Interpret a Graph. Work with a partner and discuss these questions.

1. According to the graph, does happiness increase quickly or slowly with a few more choices? Why do you think that is? Does it decrease quickly or slowly with a lot of choices?
2. How are the first and third faces similar? How are they different?
3. Do the ideas in The Happiness Curve support the ideas in *The Paradox of Choice* from the lecture? Explain your answer.



SPEAKING

SPEAKING SKILL Use Signposts to Organize Ideas


When speakers want to make several points, they often use *signposts*, or signal words or phrases, to introduce each new point. Using signposts can help you organize your ideas and make it easier for listeners to follow your presentation.

*Too many choices create problems for people. **First**, . . .*

*You can help improve this situation in a few easy ways. **First of all**, . . .*

Here are some common signposts:

- First . . . Second . . . Third . . .*
- First of all . . . Secondly . . . Finally . . .*
- Next . . . Last . . .*

K  **2.22** Listen to segment 3 of the lecture. The professor talks about steps you can take if you are a maximizer. Complete the steps.

SIGNPOST	POINT
1. First,	just _____.
2. Second,	understand that this quality can _____ _____.
3. Last,	do something to _____ _____.

- L** Work with a partner. What sort of job do you want in the future? Explain your answer to your partner using signposts.

A: *I want to be a doctor.*

B: *Really? Why?*

A: *Lot of reasons. First of all, it's a good, long-term career. Second,...*

PRONUNCIATION SKILL Intonation in Yes/No and Choice Questions

Intonation is the way the voice rises and falls when speaking. It is the “music” of language. In *yes/no* questions, the speaker expects a *yes* or *no* answer. In *yes/no* questions, the intonation usually rises at the end. Listen to the examples:

2.23


_____ ↗
Would you like coffee?

_____ ↗
Are you happier with more choices?

Some questions offer choices. These have a different intonation pattern. Intonation rises on all of the choices except the last one. It falls on the last one:

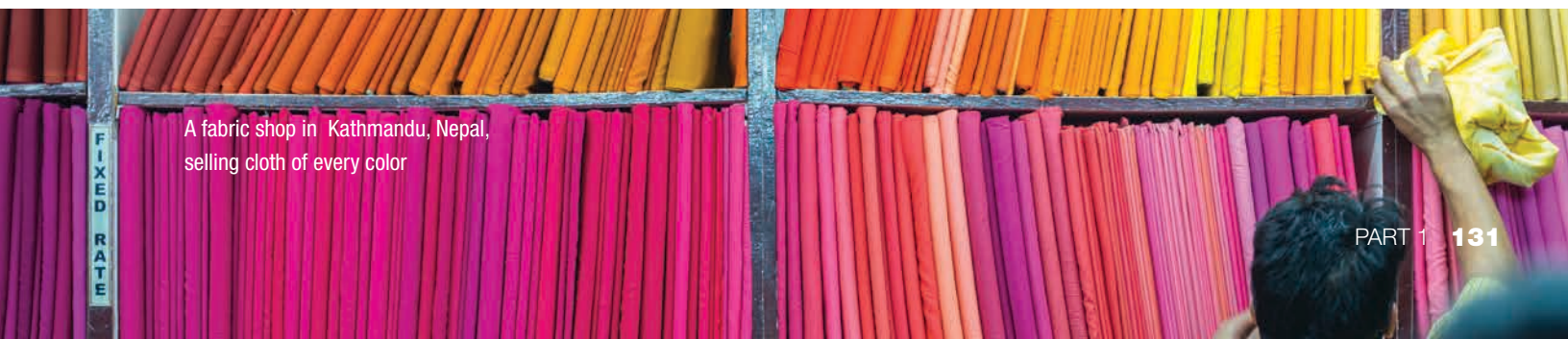
2.24

_____ ↘
Would you like coffee or tea?

- M**  **2.25** Listen to the excerpts below. As you listen, draw an arrow at the end of each question to indicate a rising or falling intonation.

1. “*Luz, do you have a question?*”
2. “*Aren’t more choices always better?*”
3. “*Would you prefer this menu or this one?*”
4. “*Yuichi, do you think more choices are better?*”
5. “*So, did you buy one?*”

- N** Work with a partner. Take turns saying the questions in exercise M. Use the correct intonation.



- Take the quiz. Choose your answer to each question. Then calculate the points to determine your personality.

QUIZ

Are You a *Maximizer* or a *Satisficer*?

- | | | | |
|---|---|-----|----|
| 1 | I often change TV channels looking for something better to watch. | Yes | No |
| 2 | I often find it difficult deciding which movie to watch. | Yes | No |
| 3 | I often find it difficult choosing gifts for my friends. | Yes | No |
| 4 | It is difficult for me to find clothes that I like. | Yes | No |
| 5 | I need to write several drafts of an email before sending it. | Yes | No |
| 6 | I often think about different ways of living my life. | Yes | No |
| 7 | I take a long time doing my homework because I want it to be perfect. | Yes | No |
| 8 | I am afraid to speak English because I'm not sure of the grammar. | Yes | No |

KEY: Yes = 2 points

No = 1 point

PERSONALITY TYPE	POINTS
Extreme <i>Satisficer</i>	6 points
<i>Satisficer</i>	7–9
A little of both	10–12
<i>Maximizer</i>	13–15
Extreme <i>Maximizer</i>	16 points

P THINK CRITICALLY Interpret Results. Work in small groups. Discuss these questions.

- Find out about other people in your group. Ask your classmates if they are *maximizers* or *satisficers*. Use correct intonation.
- Do you think the quiz was accurate? Give some examples to explain your answer.

A man, Graham Hill, is sitting on a large cardboard box on a TED stage. He is wearing a dark suit jacket over a button-down shirt and jeans. Behind him is a large red TED logo. To his right are two large, brown, ribbed ceramic vases. A quote is overlaid on the right side of the image. The background is a purple curtain.

PART 2 TED TALKS

Less stuff,
more happiness

“I’m here to suggest . . .
that less might actually
equal more.”

BEFORE YOU WATCH

- A** Read the title and information about the TED speaker. *Edit* usually means improving a piece of writing by fixing problems it may have. What do you think it might mean to *edit* your life?

GRAHAM HILL Writer and designer


Graham Hill is an entrepreneur who studied architecture and design. In 2004, he founded TreeHugger.com, a Web site that promotes a lifestyle that is good for people as well as the planet. He’s currently the CEO of LifeEdited, a project that shows people how to live well with less.

Graham Hill’s idea worth spreading is that we can still be happy with fewer things, as long as we are able to “edit” our lives in smart, practical ways.

- B** Read the following statements. Write *A* if you *agree* or *D* if you *disagree*. Then discuss your answers with a partner.

1. _____ It is a good idea to completely stop buying things.
2. _____ Having less space makes life more difficult.
3. _____ We don’t really need most of the things that we own.

VOCABULARY

C  **2.26** The sentences below will help you learn words in the TED Talk. Read and listen to the sentences. Guess the meanings of the words in bold. Then complete each question with the correct word. Use the correct form of the word.

- a. This appliance saves space because it **combines** the functions of a microwave and traditional oven.
 - b. Only pack what you will need during the trip. Don't include any **extraneous** items.
 - c. To make more space in my room, I'm going to **digitize** my CDs and photos.
 - d. I got a loan for my large and expensive house. I lost my job, so now I'm worried about repaying this **debt**.
 - e. My closet is so full. I have too much **stuff**.
 - f. This space is **multifunctional**. I use it as a garage and a music studio.
 - g. The **majority** of Americans—about 60 percent—own their own homes.
 - h. **Coincidentally**, I got a job offer on the same day that I found my apartment.
 - i. If you live in a small apartment, you have to think about space **efficiency**.
 - j. My new apartment does not have a lot of **storage** space, so I left a lot of my books at my parents' house
-
- 1. When you listen to a lecture, are you sometimes overwhelmed by all of the _____ information?
 - 2. Many people in the United States have a lot of _____ from buying houses, cars, or from college loans. Is this true in your country?
 - 3. If you _____ all of your expenses (e.g., rent, food, etc.), do they equal more than your income? How could you reduce your expenses?
 - 4. Do you have any _____ furniture in your home? Describe their different uses.
 - 5. Does your home have enough closets and other _____ space for all of your things? What do you do if there is no more space?
 - 6. Mario is going to _____ his photos. This will save a lot of space in his small apartment. What can you put on your computer or online to save space?
 - 7. Have you and a friend ever _____ bought the same thing or worn the same thing on the same day?


8. A dishwasher that fits inside a drawer saves a lot of space. What other products can improve space _____ in a kitchen?
9. Do the _____ of people in your city live in apartments or houses? Has this changed in the last 30 years?
10. How much _____ do you have in your bag?
Can you find things easily?

D COMMUNICATE Work in small groups. Take turns answering the questions in exercise C.

A: *What's your answer to question 1?*

B: *Well, I try to keep good notes in class so I don't get overwhelmed.*

WATCH

E  **1.31 WATCH FOR MAIN IDEAS** Read the statements. Then watch the edited TED Talk by Graham Hill. Write *A* if you think Hill would *agree* or *D* if you think he would *disagree* with each statement. Then discuss your answers with a partner.

1. _____ It is a good idea to stop buying things.
2. _____ Having less space makes life more difficult.
3. _____ We don't really need most of the things that we own.

F THINK CRITICALLY Reflect. Work with a partner. Tell your partner whether you still agree with the same statements in exercise B on page 133. Did your ideas change? Explain why, or why not.

learnmore 1 in 10 Americans has off-site personal storage. Total personal storage space in the U.S. is 2.3 billion square feet—about three times the size of Manhattan in New York.



WORDS IN THE TALK

environmental footprint (n): the effect that a person, business, or activity has on the health of the planet
flat line (v): to remain the same; not increase

NOTE-TAKING SKILL Record Information in a List

When you take notes, it sometimes helps to record information in a list format. Listen for cues that a speaker is going to list information. Here are some cues to listen for:

Rhetorical questions

Where does this lead?

Numbers


Three challenges/solutions/approaches are . . .

Signposts

First, you can increase efficiency.

Secondly, you can edit your stuff.

In your notes, use a heading and numbers, letters, or bullets to show the information clearly.

G  **1.32 WATCH FOR DETAILS** Watch each segment of Hill's talk again and complete the notes. More than one answer may be correct.

Segment 1

Too much stuff leads to three problems

1. lots of _____
2. a huge _____
3. _____ levels flat-lined

Segment 2

Less stuff and less space =

1. a smaller _____
2. a great way to _____
3. _____ in your life

Segment 3

Three approaches to live "little"

1. you have to _____ ruthlessly
2. we want _____ efficiency
3. we want _____ and housewares

H ▶ **1.33 EXPAND YOUR VOCABULARY** Watch the excerpts from the TED Talk. Guess the meanings of the phrases in the box.

let it go
I bet (that)

vast majority
take a second

by all means
make room for

I WATCH MORE Go to TED.com to watch the full TED Talk by Graham Hill.

AFTER YOU WATCH

J THINK CRITICALLY Infer. Work with a small group. Discuss these questions.

- Hill says, “*We’ve got to clear the arteries of our lives.*” The word *artery* is usually used in a very different context. Explain how it is usually used and why Hill uses it here.
- Hill suggests, “*Less stuff and less space are going to equal a smaller footprint.*” How could changes in lifestyle and behavior lead to a smaller environmental footprint?

K COMMUNICATE Work with a partner. Discuss your answers to these questions.

A: *One way I’d edit my life is to clear out my closet.*

B: *I hear you! I have way too many clothes that I never wear.*

- What might be your answer to the question “What’s in your box?”
- What is one way you might “edit” your life?
- Think about Hill’s small apartment. Would you be able to “edit” your life in the same way that he did? Why, or why not?



A “tiny house” in Richmond, Virginia

L THINK CRITICALLY Interpret an Infographic. Work with a partner. Look at the infographic below. Discuss these questions.

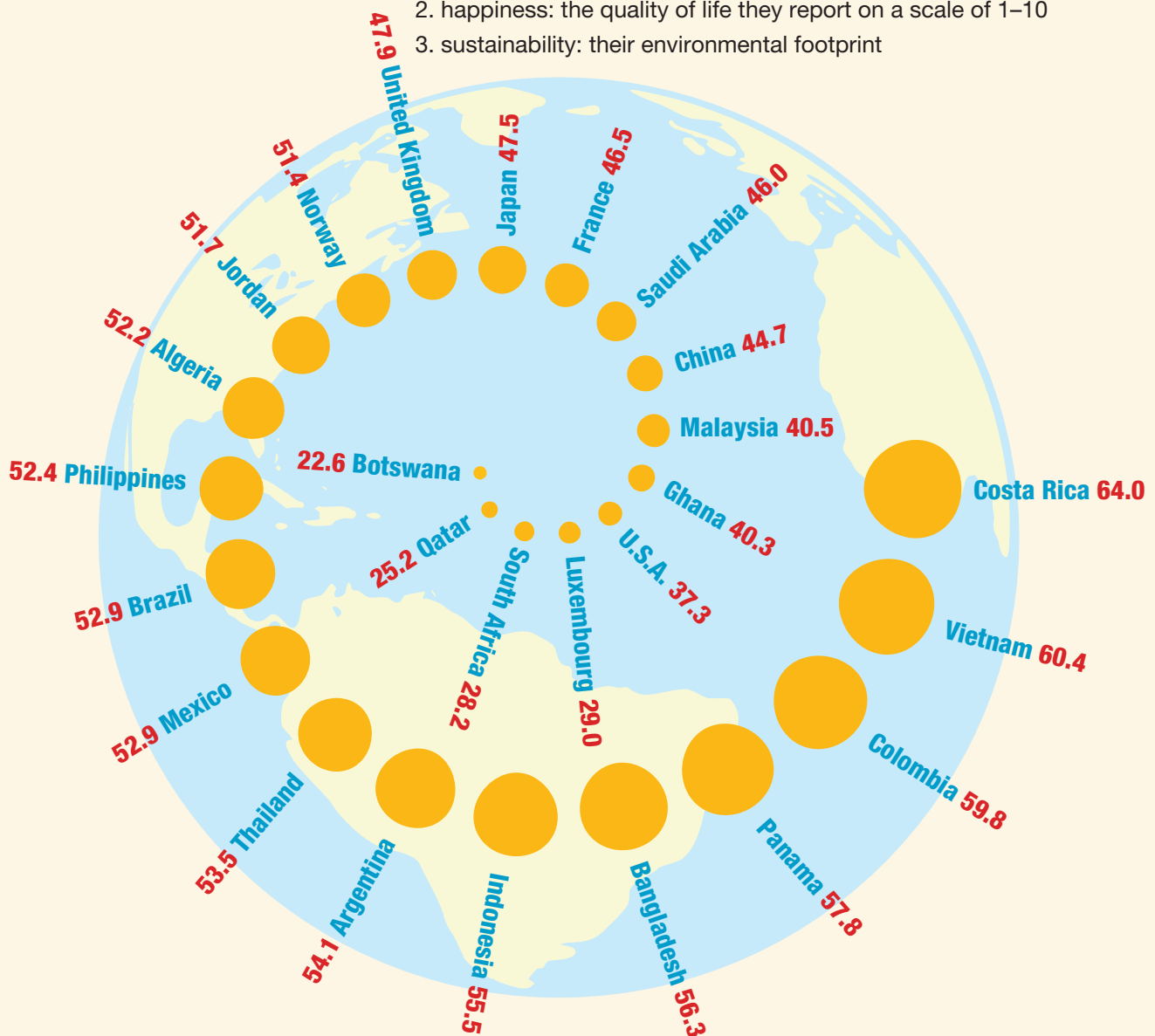
1. Which country has the highest HPI? Which country has the lowest HPI?
2. What do you think people consider when they rate their quality of life?
3. Do any of the HPI results surprise you? Explain your answer.
4. In what ways do you think the HPI relates to the idea of *less is more*?

A Happy Planet?

The Happy Planet Index (HPI) measures the degree to which people in each country live long, happy, sustainable lives.

It is a combination of three measures:

1. longevity: the average age they are likely to live
2. happiness: the quality of life they report on a scale of 1–10
3. sustainability: their environmental footprint



Source: <http://www.happyplanetindex.org/data/#sthash.el13C1Jq.dpuf>

Put It Together

A THINK CRITICALLY Synthesize. Work in small groups to complete the chart with information from the lecture in Part 1 and Hill's TED Talk in Part 2.

	PART 1 LECTURE	PART 2 TED TALK
1. What ideas do the lecture and the TED Talk have in common?	too many <u>choices</u> don't increase _____	too much _____ doesn't increase _____
2. What kinds of problems does this cause?		

B THINK CRITICALLY Reflect. Work with a partner. How do you think having “too much stuff” relates to having “too many choices”?

COMMUNICATE

ASSIGNMENT: Give a Group Presentation

You are going to give a group presentation about the topic “less is more.” Your presentation will address the question: Is having lots of choices or a lot of stuff always a good thing? Review the ideas in Parts 1 and 2 and the listening and speaking skills as you prepare your presentation.

PREPARE

PRESENTATION SKILL Connect the Ending to the Beginning

Speakers sometimes end a presentation by referring back to something they said at the beginning. Creating these “bookends” gives a clear structure to your presentation. It can also emphasize an important idea in an interesting way. Try one of these techniques to help you connect your presentation’s beginning and ending.

- Ask a question at the beginning of the talk and answer it at the end.
- Start a story at the beginning of a talk and finish it at the end.
- Repeat a theme at the beginning and end of a talk.

Hill begins his presentation by talking about the box on the stage and returns to the box at the end of his presentation. Watch it again.

▶ **1.34** “What’s in the box? It doesn’t really matter. I know I don’t need it. What’s in yours?”

- C** Work in small groups. Choose one of the topics below, or think of other ideas. Then answer the questions below about your topic.

☐ It is very easy to get credit (borrow money).

☐ Your idea: _____

☐ There are so many classes and majors to choose from.

☐ Your idea: _____

☐ Big stores and online sites make it possible to buy a lot of stuff for less money.

☐ Your idea: _____

QUESTIONS	YOUR NOTES
1. What are the benefits of this?	
2. Why is this a problem? What impact does it have?	
3. What are some possible solutions?	

- D COLLABORATE** Include the following parts in your presentation. Decide who will present each part.

- **Introduction:** What is the first “bookend?” Will you
 - begin a story
 - ask a question
 - make a bold statement (e.g., Money cannot buy happiness.)



- **Your topic:** Briefly describe your topic.
- **Impact:** Explain the benefits and problems that this situation causes. Consider using signposts to organize your ideas.
- **Solutions:** Give possible solutions.
- **Conclusion:** What will your second bookend be?

E Read the rubric on page 183 before you present. Notice how your presentation will be evaluated. Keep these categories in mind as you present and watch your classmates' presentations.

PRESENT

F Give your presentation to a small group. Watch your classmates' presentations. After you watch each one, provide feedback using the rubric as a guide. Add notes or any other feedback you want to share.

G THINK CRITICALLY Evaluate. As a class, discuss what each presenter did well and what might make each presentation even stronger. Decide which two things you did well and which two areas need improvement.

REFLECT

Reflect on what you have learned. Check [✓] your progress.



I can

- ☐ listen for rhetorical questions.
- ☐ use signposts to organize my ideas.
- ☐ use intonation in *yes/no* and choice questions.
- ☐ record information in a list.
- ☐ connect the ending to the beginning in a presentation.

I understand the meaning of these words and can use them.

Circle those you know. Underline those you need to work on.

appreciate AWL	debt	extraneous	option AWL	research AWL
aware of AWL	digitize	impact AWL	overwhelming	satisfied
coincidentally	efficiency	majority AWL	perfectionist	storage
combine	evidence AWL	multifunctional	psychologist AWL	stuff