

БЛОК 1. ВАРИАНТ 22**Внимательно прочтите текст:**

You're sitting in eight lanes of bumper-to-bumper traffic. You're more than ready to get home, but you notice, to your great dismay, that all of the other lanes seem to be moving. You change lanes. But once you do, the cars in your new lane come to a dead halt. At a standstill, you notice every lane on the highway (including the one you just left) is moving – except yours.

Welcome to the aggravating world of Murphy's Law. This idiom says that whatever can go wrong will go wrong. And it may just be right. This isn't because of some mysterious power the law possesses. In reality, it's us who give Murphy's Law relevance. When life goes well, little is made of it. After all, we expect that things should work out in our favor. But when things go badly, we look for reasons.

Think about walking. How many times have you reached a destination and thought, "Wow, I walk really well"? But when you trip over a curb and skin your knee, it's a pretty good bet you'll wonder why this had to happen to you.

So why is Murphy's Law such a sound universal concept? Perhaps the best explanation for our attraction to Murphy's Law is an underlying sense of fatalism.

Fatalism is the idea that we're all powerless to the whims of fate. This notion says that the things that happen to us are unavoidable, for example, that skinned knee. It's the idea that there's some kind of universal law at work that takes a certain glee at toying with us.

Fatalism contradicts another concept – free will. This is the idea that humans possess free will and that all of our choices, along with the consequences that come with those choices, are our own.

Perhaps our connection to Murphy's Law is the result of the collision between free will and fatalism. On the one hand, Murphy's Law reveals to us our own undeniable stupidity. If given a chance to do something wrong, we'll do so around half of the time. But that comes from our own choices. On the other hand, Murphy's Law also reveals to us our lack of control, as in the case of always seeming to be stuck in the slowest lane of traffic.

Murphy's Law doesn't prove anything. It doesn't even explain anything. It simply states a maxim: things will go wrong. But we forget that there are other forces at work when we consider Murphy's Law. Allegedly, it was the author Rudyard Kipling who said that no matter how many times you drop a slice of bread, it always seems to land on the floor butter-side down. Kipling, the author of "The Jungle Book," among others, was making an observation that most of us can relate to: Life is hard, almost to a laughable degree.

But with a buttered slice of bread, you must take into account the fact that one side is heavier than another. This means that on the way to the ground, the heavy side will flip toward the ground thanks to gravity, but it will not flip all the way around back to the top for the same reason. It is, after all, heavier than the side without the butter. So Kipling was right – a piece of buttered bread will always land butter-side down.

Ответьте письменно на следующие вопросы:

1. Why do people tend to pay more attention to unhappy coincidences?
2. How is Murphy's Law related to the concept of fatalism?
3. What does the example with buttered bread prove?

Выразите свое мнение на английском языке (150-200 слов) на тему:

Optimism and Pessimism: For and Against.

БЛОК 2. ВАРИАНТ 3

Выберите один правильный вариант из предложенных в скобках:

Student Ndali Traore likes to get up early so he has a relaxed start to the day. “I hate **1 (leaving, to leave from, leave away from)** jobs till the last minute, and I always try to do those I like least first,” he says. “These days I always listen to music while I am working,” he adds, “whereas **2 (-, a, the)** couple of years ago I found it **3 (annoys, annoyed, annoying)** – it always seemed to spoil my concentration.” When he has some free time, he goes to the cinema, or **4 (off, out, away)** with friends. “If something’s **5 (bothers, bothered, bothering)** me,” he says, “I often find that just talking to them about it **6 (helpful, helping, helps)**. Particularly if you can make a joke about it, because it always seems a lot less serious when you do that.” If he’s on his own, he has a special way of dealing **7 (on, with, about)** stress: “I try to relive occasions when I was really **8 (relaxed, relaxing, relax)**, such as spending the day **9 (besides, by, nearby)** a beautiful lake in **10 (-, the, a)** sunshine. That often works,” he says.

Из представленных в беспорядке предложений восстановите исходный текст. Обратите внимание на логическую и смысловую связь предложений.

A friend in need

3. 0 George had stolen some money, but the police had caught him and he had been put to prison. Now his trial was about to begin, and he felt sure that he would be found guilty and sent to prison.
3. ___ 1. George said that he would quite understand if Jim was not able to do anything for him, and thanked him warmly for agreeing to help.
3. ___ 2. At last, however, Jim visited him in prison, and George thanked him warmly and asked him how he had managed to persuade the other members of the jury to soften the punishment.
3. ___ 3. It took them five hours, but in the end they found George guilty, with a strong recommendation to soften the punishment.
3. ___ 4. He said to him: "Jim, I know that the jury will find me guilty of having stolen the money."
3. ___ 5. The trial went on, and at last the time came for the jury to decide whether George was guilty or not.
3. ___ 6. Then he discovered that an old friend of his was one of the members of the jury at his trial. Of course, he did not tell anybody, but he managed to see his friend secretly one day.
3. ___ 7. Of course, George was very pleased, but he did not have a chance to see Jim for some time after the trial.
3. ___ 8. Well, George," answered Jim, "I shall certainly try to do what I can for you as an old friend, but of course I cannot promise anything. The other eleven people of the jury look terribly strong-minded to me."
3. ___ 9. "But I should be grateful to you for the rest of my life if you could persuade the other members of the jury to soften the punishment."
3. ___ 10. "I cannot hope to be found not guilty of taking it – that would be too much to expect."
3. 11 "Well, George, as I thought, those eleven men were very difficult to persuade, but I managed it in the end by tiring them out. You know those fools had all wanted to find you not guilty," Jim answered.