

"I had to leave or I'd be dead..."

Going further

1. Do you think that Jobe made the right decision in leaving London ?

*It seems to me that Jobe did the right thing / made the right decision in leaving London for Manchester, as life in the streets of London had turned into / become a nightmare... He spent his time robbing and mugging people there... The only law he knew then was gang law... His best friend was shot dead in front of him... **If he hadn't left** London, he **would** probably **have died** / **be dead**... But now he needs to be careful about the friends he makes in Manchester, because history tends to repeat itself... But I do think that Jobe has learnt his lesson well... His life in London taught him a lesson that he will probably never forget... Life is too short and precious to waste it...*

2. Imagine a day in Jobe's life before he moved to Manchester.

*A day in Jobe's life must be full of violent, unpleasant moments... As soon as he wakes up, Jobe must find himself in a desperate / an aggressive mood... For him, life on the streets of London is a war, and he cannot imagine living a single day **without** committing the violent acts that have made him – and the gang he belongs to – the terrors of the town / neighbourhood... From street robbery to mugging, from drug dealing to violent acts of terror and manslaughter, Jobe's day is a long series of delinquent acts... He may not even realize that day in, day out, he is involved in such unlawful activities... At the end of the day, once the gang has split up, he probably finds himself alone in the streets wondering what the next day will bring...*

For questions 4 and 5, also take a look at the answer to the questions on the cartoon.

4. What makes some teenagers want to take on gang life in the first place ?

Street gangs have always existed... They are not a sign of the times... Teenagers are the ideal and likely victims as they are tricked into joining these gangs by joblessness / unemployment, weakness of character, lack of education / illiteracy and ignorance... They think that if they join a gang, all their problems will disappear overnight... They think that in gangs, they will find the love they don't have at home... They think that gangs will offer them respect, consideration, a way to express themselves and to gain the others' respect, friendship, solidarity and mutual help... Being in a gang is like being in a family that will never judge you... What's more, when joining a gang, teenagers often want to prove to themselves that they can achieve something by themselves, that they are capable of anything as long as they have someone to trust them... Some teenagers join a street gang simply to start over / from scratch...

5. What should be done to prevent teenagers from joining street gangs ?

*Factors related to the development of street gangs include dropping out of school, unemployment, family disorganization... To my mind / In my opinion, it is the family's role to **prevent teenagers from joining** street gangs... Indeed, if teenagers felt that they were loved and considered within their own families, many of them would never thought of joining a gang... The government also has a role to play to **prevent young people from joining** gangs... For example they should pass tougher anti-gang laws in order and put in jail those who are responsible for recruiting these teenagers... Schools should provide the best education possible to fight illiteracy which is one of the factors leading teenagers to take on gang life in the first place... Another solution would be for ex-gang members like Jobe to fight the good fight by trying to persuade young gang members to go straight... With the increase in gangs, violent crime has risen dramatically in recent years... It is time to develop educational and recreational programmes to give young people alternatives to gangs... Such programmes may bear fruit in time ... It is still possible to curb gang-related violence and prevent future teenage victims from making the wrong decision /a decision that will ruin their lives... It is a fight that can be won provided everyone makes an effort...*

And if you want to read the whole article, it is here:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/crime/article/0,,789241,00.html>

(thanks to D. LE JOUAN for the information !)

And to know more about gangs, go here:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gangs>

and there:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gangs_in_England