

Listen to four Lebanese people talking about their country.

**Optional activity:**

While you listen, decide which person or people said what. The order of the speakers is:

Nasrine (N); Georges (G); Hala (H) and Walid (W). **You may need to listen more than once.**

Which person or people	N/G/H/W?
1. ...prefers to talk about non-controversial aspects of life in Lebanon?	
2. ...doesn't feel that different backgrounds or beliefs cause difficulties?	
3. ...compares two different higher education systems?	
4. ...is uncertain about the future?	
5. ...has had changing circumstances since finishing studying?	
6. ...emphasises how similar the Lebanese are to other people?	
7. ...is sad about emigration patterns?	

Nasrine:

I don't like to talk about politics, it's the only thing people talk about here! That and football! There are lots of other things here. I have Christian and Muslim friends, friends who support all the different political parties, and...it's not a problem, not a problem at all. We rarely talk about politics, and if we do, we just, sort of, I don't know...joke about it. Really we like doing things most people do – skiing in the winter, going to the beach in the summer, going dancing or out to eat somewhere, or to the movies, at the weekends – and all these are things you can do in Lebanon.

Georges:

I got my degree from the university here a couple of years ago, and I was lucky, I walked straight into a job. I work in construction engineering – it was big business here...obviously, after the civil war there was a lot of work to do! And lots of investment came in, but over the last couple of years, things have slowed up a bit. I'm not sure if I'll stay here or not. I've got a good job, but the prospects aren't clear at the moment. It would probably be better to go somewhere else for a bit – the Gulf states perhaps, or Canada. I have an uncle there, in Canada, and, you know, he really likes it, makes more money than here.

Hala:

I work for a film festival in Beirut, I don't get much money for it, but I love doing it. I still live with my parents – most people do here, until they get married. I'm 28 now – and still not married! My mother kind of worries about me all the time, I guess, but it's not a problem.

I think it's important to stay here. The films we show at our festival, they're all by young Lebanese directors, and there's so much talent and creativity here! It's amazing. I think it's a real shame that so many people want to leave. If all the brains and talent goes away, nothing will ever change.

Walid:

I studied in the US, in New York. I was there for about six years, on and off. Now I'm back here in Lebanon, still studying! I'm doing a Masters in Business Administration now. The education is just as good here, and I'm with my family. Sure, life was easier over there in many ways, none of the tension that there still is here, but I love it here, it's my home country, the food's great, the weather's good – no cold winters! – and the people are very friendly here. It feels good to be here, you know what I mean? I'm not really sure what I'm going to do, if I should go back to the States or stay here. My father says that's why I'm still studying – so I won't have to make up my mind and get a job!

**Answer key:**

1. N; 2. N; 3. W; 4. G & W; 5. W; 6. N; 7. H.