

Review Test

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1 Work in pairs and discuss the questions.

- 1 What makes it easy or difficult to meet people where you live?
- 2 What would be the best way for someone who is new in town to meet people and make friends?
- 3 Have you heard of speed dating? What would it be like in a professional situation?

Online dating: the way to find Mr or Mrs Right?

Staff Reporter

In Autumn 1965, Peter Lake filled out a survey that changed the course of his life. He signed up to Operation Match, a computer dating service. 'It was such a good deal you couldn't turn it down,' Lake says. 'For three dollars they would guarantee to match you with at least three compatible people or they would give you your money back.' But there was more to Lake's decision than the fact that it made good economic sense. Although he had met lots of girls during his first semester at college, he just hadn't clicked with any of them. He mailed the survey back and was matched with a dozen women. With the exception of one who lived too far away, he met all of them. The eleventh was a student at Wellesley College. She and I talked on the phone and then we met for coffee and I just fell in love with her right there and then. We started dating immediately and married a year later.' Computer dating was simple way back then.

Fast forward almost fifty years and it has graduated from paper-based surveys directed at lonely students to become a multi-billion dollar global industry, generating income from both subscriptions and advertising. While many dating sites allow their subscribers to freely roam through lists of potential mates, niche services promise to match you with that special someone. The punch card technology that united Peter Lake with his future wife has been replaced by patented online personality tests, devised by psychologists and anthropologists. One site, for example, uses a questionnaire with more than 400 items - cut back to 100 if you're using the mobile app - supposedly designed to match clients with the man or woman of their dreams. But can they?

The dating service claim that their product is backed up by rigorous research into the characteristics of couples in committed, long-term relationships and that they have managed to identify the shared personality characteristics and values that best predict successful matches. Not everyone is sold on the science, however. In a recent issue of a major psychology journal, psychologists sought to pour cold water on the scientific claims of this and other similar sites, noting that none have ever subjected their algorithms - their secret sauce that matches couples - to peer scrutiny.

In fact, a 'selection bias' - a statistical bias that occurs when your sample population is different from the norm - may be at work. People using matching sites are, after all, different from the average Joe or Jill. For starters, they're likely to have a higher disposable income and, given that they sit



through a 400-question survey, more highly motivated than the average dater. In my opinion, the claimed success of matching sites may have more to do with narrowing the pool of eligible daters than psychological tests or computer science.

Associate Professor of Psychology Paul Eastwick says that another problem is that the sites claim to do much more than weed out Mr or Ms Wrong. 'They promise to find you someone who is especially compatible with you - your soul mate. That's a very different promise that they cannot fulfil,' says Eastwick. He argues, for example, that there may be a placebo effect at work. Just as placebos work because of the aura of authority around the person prescribing the 'drug', rather than its inherent medicinal value, so online matching services may work because the couple believe their coupling has been validated by relationship experts using complex computer science.

But can the digital Cupids guarantee living happily ever after? Peter Lake and his wife, two of computer matching's first success stories, divorced after eleven years of marriage. Lake has returned to computer dating but the barrier to finding true love has turned out to be more geographical than technological. 'I met a really nice dentist but she lived too far away,' says Lake. 'Eventually, I realised unless they live down the street, I'm really not interested.' He has abandoned algorithm-assisted online dating in favour of online chat rooms and forums. 'Now, if I want to meet somebody, I just go online, find them and chat them up.' Matching software, it seems, is no match for a good chat up line.

Listening Practice

- 2**  **07** You will hear three different extracts. For questions 1–6, choose the answer (A, B or C) which fits best according to what you hear. There are two questions for each extract.

Extract 1

You hear two friends discussing a book about introverts.

- 1 How did the book make the man feel?
- A unsure what makes him an introvert
 - B positive about his personality
 - C relieved that his behaviour is normal
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- 2 The speakers agree that the book
- A contained too much detailed research.
 - B was written in an academic style.
 - C presented an unbalanced argument.

Extract 2

You hear two friends discussing online friendships.

- 3 What do the speakers agree about the way people use social networking sites?
- A Too much personal information is provided.
 - B People aren't honest enough.
 - C There is very little privacy.
- 4 What is the man's attitude to his online friendships?
- A He is irritated by online friends' lack of sensitivity.
 - B He is concerned that he still maintains online relationships.
 - C He is worried about losing online friendships.

Extract 3

You hear part of a discussion with two people who decided to stay offline for a month.

- 5 How did the woman feel after the first week offline?
- A content to be able to focus on other things
 - B disturbed by the isolation
 - C used to the lack of contact
- 6 Why would the man recommend the experience?
- A It changed his attitude to online friendships.
 - B It made him realise that he was addicted to the Internet.
 - C It helped him to have self-discipline.
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Vocabulary review:

Read and complete using the following Fixed Phrases:

Not for love nor money – bring into line with – lay sb low – by and large – improved by leaps and bounds – make light of – be lost on sb – draw the line -

- 1) My British accent has _____ these months.
- 2) The irony of the situation _____ on Audrey.
- 3) _____ I think the emphasis should be on training new people.
- 4) The car accident _____ him _____ for a couple of months.
- 5) I'll do whatever you ask me to do, but I _____ if you ask me to lie for you.
- 6) The CEO was persuaded to _____ the latest European standards.
- 7) My husband used to _____ the fact that we didn't want to spend time together.
- 8) _____ would I try snorkelling.

Writing task:

You **must** answer this question. Write your answer in **140–190 words** in an appropriate style.

People are using a lot of online language translation apps. Do the benefits of this outweigh the disadvantages?

Use of English:

- 1** Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between three and six words, including the word given.

1 Whatever she wears, she always manages to look amazing. **MATTER**

It she wears, she always manages to look amazing.

2 However hard I try, I always seem to forget Charlie's birthday. **DIFFERENCE**

It hard I try, I always seem to forget Charlie's birthday.

3 I made sure to take my umbrella as I had heard it was going to rain. **HAVING**

I made sure to take my umbrella to rain.

4 I bought you some of those Belgian chocolates because I know how much you like them. **HOW**

Knowing, I bought you some of those Belgian chocolates.

5 She seems to take offence whatever you say. **REGARDLESS**

She seems to take offence you say.

6 I always make sure I have a good relationship with my neighbours irrespective of where I happen to be living. **WHEREVER**

I always make sure I have a good relationship with my neighbours to be living.

7 Whatever we have for supper will be fine with me. **MIND**

I have for supper.

8 You can come around whenever you like. **WOULD**

Any time is fine with us.

Once you've finished, you should send your answers to this email address: apuntesimport@gmail.com

What do you want to do?



Check my answers



Email my answers to my teacher