



GRAMMAR

B) Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

- 1 Social media (say / change) the world.
- 2 It (think / have) many positive effects.
- 3 It (also / know / cause) some issues in the past.
- 4 Users (believe / focus) too much on what others are doing.
- 5 Such actions (think / result) in feelings of envy.
- 6 Using social media (estimate / occupy) millions of hours of our time yesterday.

C) Make passive sentences from the prompts.

- 1 the birth order of siblings / say / influence / us as children
.....
- 2 it / now / think / parents' expectations / be / the cause
.....
- 3 it / believe / most parents / assign / a role to their children according to their birth order
.....
- 4 middle children / generally / think / be / the negotiators
.....
- 5 for centuries, older children / expect / take / the role of leader
.....



READING COMPREHENSION

A) Read the article. Choose from the paragraphs (A–G) the one which fits each gap (8–13). There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use.

A The findings indicate that some of the more traditional stereotypical stereotypes are starting to soft en. The image of the burger-loving crowds, singing the US National Anthem with their hands on their hearts at the baseball match is no longer so strong. In its place, we have an image of a more open-minded, friendlier nation, with a lot of creativity and a fun, friendly sense of humour.

B For this reason, those who were in contact with the USA thought of New York as the principal city, and indeed, as it remains the biggest city in the country, some might argue it still is today.

C What they represented was an image that most people have of the country, one that I think we foreigners have always associated with the USA: the glowing neon colours, the famous green space in an urban setting, the monumental statue often draped in the stars and stripes. But it's an image that I would argue is possibly a false representation of the country as a whole.

D Back in the 18th century, there were far fewer than the fifty states we know today. The USA was a collection of some thirteen states located on the 'eastern' side of the country. At this time, New York was in fact, the capital, for a short while.

E But are we using this information to over-generalise? There is an additional challenge to the world's international image of the USA, and that is whether your stereotypes are American or perhaps more regional. In fact, if you've been to New York and Louisiana, Texas or Los Angeles, you'll see how very different the lifestyle, the landscape and the people can be.

F Therefore, how would you feel if the world was unfairly stereotyping you with characteristics that you don't think you really have? Would you want to show other people what people from your country were really like?

G So maybe if, as this seems to indicate, Americans can't see themselves clearly, can we foreigners be forgiven for putting them all in the same pot? The USA is, after all, a diverse country, with a huge population. Of course, it's easier for us to have one stereotype and apply it to all Americans.

Stereotypes of the United States of America

When I was at school, all the English lessons happened in the same classroom. On the wall by my desk, we always used to have posters of the United States, which I was fascinated by. There were photos of the Statue of Liberty, Central Park, Times Square at night, the US flag and other typically American things. They had a simple but powerful appeal.

8

Of course, the Statue of Liberty and the rest are all really iconic. They're internationally recognised symbols of the United States. But, I would argue that these photos are more stereotypical pictures of the city of New York than representations of the entire USA, and we foreigners have tended to confuse one for the other. The reason for this confusion comes from the short but complex history of the country.

9

But battles, wars, financial and political interests and logistical issues meant that a capital city built more centrally to those states made sense. That city was Washington DC. However, despite the creation of a new capital, New York remained the largest city in the country, as it does to this day.

10

So what are the stereotypes we associate with the Americans today and are they fair? Certainly, the world has a stereotype of a nation of loud, fast-food-loving patriots. Homer Simpson is pretty close to the stereotype, you might argue. But stereotypes evolve, and there is research to suggest that the world is now starting to see these cartoon characters a little differently with every generation.

11

This change may be a result of increased opportunities to travel, to meet real people from the USA, and a result of the ability to make friends and stay in touch with people through social media.

12

Each state and even city has its own stereotypes of other American cities and states, from the southern view of New Yorkers as being rude and distant, to the coastal residents believing those in the middle of the country to be simpler or less educated. Of course, none of these stereotypes that Americans have of each other holds up to reality.

13

To sum up, next time you're looking at a poster promoting the English language or the United States, have a think. Are those images of New York or the whole country? Are they just old-fashioned stereotypes, or are they characteristics that you find charming and want to see more of? There's only one way to truly know a country, and that's to see for yourself!