

When the Buncefield Oil Storage Depot near North London blew up, the BBC received more than 6,500 e-mails and tweets from the general public that contained shots and video footage of the fire. The first arrived at 6:19 a.m. just minutes after the explosion occurred. This was a long time before the police, ambulances and fire engines arrived, and of course the journalists, too.



Reporting like this shows that we now have a new role in society. As amateurs, we can publish information when and where we like. We can send our images to the press or publish them ourselves on some of the 150 million blogs that now exist. The information that we provide may be better and quicker than that of our professional colleagues. We can supplement and compare what we get from conventional media sources with other voices, telling different stories.

One of the most famous examples of this was the Egyptian uprising in 2011. Bloggers, tweeters, amateur photographers and eyewitnesses provided unique news coverage of the event. The videos traveled around the world. The clips were not professional, but they produced more vivid and immediate broadcasts and breaking news.

That doesn't mean the end of conventional journalism, as Jimmy Wales, the founder of Wikipedia said, "Everybody makes jokes, but we still need professional comedians." That's true, we can't replace news media, but we can offer a fresh alternative that they can't ignore. We can collaborate and write the news together. Now, they have to listen to our side of the story.

Read the article again. Which sentence gives the best summary of the article?

- 1 Citizen journalism can now substitute for traditional news media.
- 2 Citizen journalists have a new and important role in society.
- 3 Citizen journalism provides the best news in today's world.

Choose the correct answer to complete the sentences.

- 1 The amateur images of the Buncefield explosion were important because they were...
 - a) the best images the press had.
 - b) the first ones that arrived.
 - c) shocking and unexpected.
- 2 The author suggests that citizen journalists...
 - a) don't realize their potential.
 - b) have many possibilities to publish their work.
 - c) have to compete with the professionals.
- 3 The amateur footage from the Egyptian uprising was powerful because...
 - a) everything seemed more real and spontaneous.
 - b) there weren't any other images available.
 - c) everybody in the world watched it.
- 4 Citizen journalism is...
 - a) not changing the way news is reported.
 - b) replacing old ways of presenting information.
 - c) all about collaborating with others.