

# MEMES

**Memes are becoming a growing part of our everyday life and popular culture, especially online. Many of us know memes as the pictures and photographs that go viral on social media sites. People use them to make jokes or social and political observations. However, biologist and author Richard Dawkins, the originator of the word 'meme', is unhappy with how the Internet has defined a meme as a "picture with words". Mr Dawkins coined the term 'meme' in his 1976 book 'The Selfish Gene'.**

**He said memes are ideas that spread from brain to brain and are replicated many times, much like genes. He told the BBC: "I'm not going to use the term Internet meme to refer to a picture with writing on it."**

**Memes have infused our culture to the extent that universities now offer degree courses on them. America's Northwestern University unveiled its Meme Studies course back in 2011. Britain's Sky News says memes have helped to make politics more accessible to young people.**

**One Twitter user told a Sky journalist that: "Memes helped people understand more complex ideas, and that having politics framed in a different way makes it more digestible." This was obvious with how memes became a key part of how people expressed their views during the 2016 U.S. presidential election. The vice.com website said: "Memes now have as much power, influence and reach as the propaganda posters of yesteryear."**



**1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).**

- 1. The article says memes are now an important part of popular culture. T / F**
- 2. The word 'meme' originated over 500 years ago. T / F**
- 3. The book 'The Selfish Gene' was written in 1967. T / F**
- 4. An author said memes spread pretty much like genes. T / F**
- 5. Northwestern Uni. will start teaching Meme Studies for the first time. T / F**
- 6. Sky News said memes make politics more difficult to understand. T / F**
- 7. Memes were an important way to express views in the 2016 US election. T / F**
- 8. Memes are as important now as propaganda posters were in the past. T / F**

**PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)**

- 1. a growing part of our**
- 2. popular**
- 3. go**
- 4. Dawkins coined**
- 5. ideas that spread from**
- 6. universities now offer degree**
- 7. memes have helped to make politics**
- 8. Memes helped people understand**
- 9. a key**
- 10.**
- 11. propaganda**
- 12. more accessible**
- 13. the term 'meme'**
- 14. part**
- 15. courses**
- 16. culture**
- 17. more complex ideas**
- 18. everyday life**
- 19. posters**
- 20. viral**
- 21. brain to brain**



# Reading Comprehension

- 1. Where are memes especially becoming a growing part of our life?**
- 2. What did the article say pictures and photos did on social media?**
- 3. What kind of observations did the article say people made?**
- 4. What is the name of Richard Dawkins' book that was published in 1976?**
- 5. What did Richard Dawkins compare ideas to?**
- 6. Which university did the article say offered a course in Meme Studies?**
- 7. What have memes made more accessible to young people?**
- 8. What does framing politics in a new way make it?**
- 9. What did memes become a key part of in 2016?**
- 10. When were the propaganda posters mentioned in the article from?**

## Choose the correct option

**Memes are becoming a growing / growth part of our everyday life and popular culture, special / especially online. Many of us know memes as the pictures and photographs that go / come viral on social media sites. People use them to make joke / jokes or social and political observations. However, biology / biologist and author Richard Dawkins, the originator of the word 'meme', is unhappy with how the Internet has defined a meme was / as a "picture with words". Mr Dawkins coined / coins the term 'meme' in his 1976 book 'The Selfish Gene'. He said memes are / be ideas that spread from brain to brain and are replicated much / many times, much like genes. He told the BBC: "I'm not going to use the term Internet meme to refer to a picture with written / writing on it."**

**Memes have defused / infused our culture to the extent that universities now offer / offering degree courses on them. America's Northwestern University unveiled its Meme Studies course past / back in 2011. Britain's Sky News says memes have helped to make politics / politician more accessible to young people. One Twitter user / used told a Sky journalist that: "Memes helped people understand more complex idea / ideas, and that having politics framed in a different way makes it more digestible / digest." This was obvious with how memes became a key / lock part of how people expressed their views while / during the 2016 U.S. presidential election. The vice.com website said: "Memes now have as much powerful / power, influence and reach as the propaganda posters of yesteryear."**

