

Reading

Strategy

When you do a gapped sentence task, read the missing sentences A–E, and decide what the main focus of each is. This will help you match the sentences with the ideas expressed in the sentences before and after the gaps in the text.

- 1 Read the Strategy and look at the sentences in exercise 2. Find the words that indicate the focus of each sentence.
- 2 Read the text. Four sentences have been removed. Match missing sentences A–E with gaps 1–4. There is one extra sentence.

Dying for a selfie

Most of us have taken a selfie at one time or another, be it a photo of ourselves in a beautiful place, during a performance by our favourite band, or on a memorable night out with friends. Even monarchs, prime ministers and presidents have been seen in the news grinning inanely at the screen of a smartphone.¹ In several cases, this action has had disastrous consequences.

Take, for example, the Spaniard who was killed by a bull while he was taking a selfie during the annual bull run in a village near his hometown.² Incidents such as these have led to the death toll from selfie-related incidents reaching double figures for the first time in 2015, overtaking the number of victims of shark attacks. Most of the cases involve people taking selfies while posing with animals, or falling from high places.

Despite the risks, social media is full of pictures featuring near misses that could have been fatal under other circumstances. Under the caption 'Most dangerous selfie ever', a woman posing at a stadium can be seen narrowly avoiding being hit in the head by a baseball approaching her.³ What is even more worrying, however, is that the woman herself dares others to better the shot, seemingly overlooking the fact that by doing so, she is endangering the lives of her 'friends' as well.

In response to the increasing threat posed by the selfie, the authorities have started to take action. National parks, such as the Waterton Canyon in Denver, Colorado, have closed their gates to visitors who have been getting too close to the bears to get them in the photo.⁴ But if instructions like these are really necessary, then perhaps it is about time we asked ourselves which is more important, a 'like' or a life?

- A Or the Singaporean tourist who died when he fell from cliffs on the coast of Bali.
- B The alternative to taking unnecessary risks is to use Photoshop to create outrageous pictures.
- C The Russian Interior Ministry has launched a public education campaign advising selfie-takers against balancing on dangerous surfaces or posing with their pets, among other things.
- D But today, more and more people are putting their lives at risk in an attempt to get the most shocking picture to share on social media.
- E Yet the photo has received thousands of 'likes', and the comments below it suggest that this behaviour is something to be admired.

Listening

Strategy

Remember the questions in this task may ask you to define the gist of the text, identify the intention of the speaker(s), determine the context of the text, or distinguish fact from opinion.

- 3 Read the Strategy and look at exercise 4. What are the questions asking you to do: define the gist, identify intention, determine context, or distinguish fact from opinion?

- 4 You will hear three texts twice. Choose the correct option, A, B, or C.

Text 1

- 1 Which of the following is stated in the talk as a fact and not an opinion?
 - A The police will only pay a visit if more than one complaint has been made.
 - B People should be quiet for eight hours every night.
 - C Neighbours must be warned about noisy birthday parties in advance.

Text 2

- 2 Where does the conversation take place?
 - A Outside a block of flats.
 - B In somebody's living room.
 - C Inside a lift.

Text 3

- 3 Why have the woman's neighbours complained about her hedge?
 - A It makes their houses extremely dark.
 - B It is two or three metres higher than it should be.
 - C It blocks the view from their windows.

Use of English

Strategy

When you answer each question, look at both what comes before and what comes after the gap. Check that the word you choose fits the sentence grammatically and that it makes sense.

- 5 Read the Strategy and look at the sentence below. Which is the correct option? Why are the other options wrong?

It's far more difficult to find a job now than it to be.

- a have
- b used
- c wants
- d was