

ESB C2 Level 3 Reading (Part One)

Read the following text about the origin of newspapers. For questions 21 – 27, choose the correct answer A, B, C or D.

The Origin of Newspapers

Today, we consume so much of our news in digital format that it is perfectly understandable to assume that the printed paper must be doomed. Nevertheless, print sales continue to account for a huge slice of news publishers' revenue. In the last two years, print circulation has dropped by only a tiny fraction in global terms. And in some regions, sales are even up.

Newspapers have constituted such a regular part of our lives for so long that our dailies and weeklies look set to abide. The world's first officially recorded newspapers go back to the early seventeenth century in Germany. These publications bore little resemblance to publications today, however, generally consisting of around 3,000 words, some much shorter, and typically printed on two pages.

The first printed newspapers are believed to have evolved out of handwritten bulletins that were provided to prominent public figures, statesmen and merchants. They had no eye-catching headlines, and certainly no images, with content being made up almost entirely of news from foreign climes and factual reports on military events or diplomatic affairs. Given their dryness, it is unsurprising that many papers folded quite soon after they first came out. The new medium did not attract a sufficiently broad readership to prove profitable, and starting a newspaper was costly and fraught with risk. One exception does stand out, however, this being the newspaper business of the Netherlands, where a financially viable printed press was quick to thrive.

Historians who have been looking into this have concluded that this difference was essentially due to one thing: the use of newspaper advertising. Dutch news publishers were the first to see the commercial potential of publicity. The first adverts were targeted at those in the book trade with paid-for announcements of upcoming new titles. Apparently unconcerned with building a loyal readership, newspapers also carried adverts of rival publications. In the cut-throat business of publishing today, this only tends to happen when papers are produced by the same company. But in those heady early days of success, there were more than enough customers to go around.

The success of advertising in the book trade soon enticed others to pay for what were known as 'insertions'. Learning from the Dutch experience, newspapers all over Europe abounded with inserts from shops plying their wares and respectable enterprises like banks and solicitors offering services. From costly half- and quarter-page advertising spreads, papers also began to carry smaller and cheaper personal notices, in which tutors would tout for new pupils and concerned citizens would announce rewards for the recovery of stolen property or plead for the return of a lost pet.

This is essentially how news began to move away from its original focus on big events of public significance into the marginalia of local areas and into the realms of what we now know as human interest stories. Thanks to advertising, what began as dreary

political bulletins became the vibrant mix of domestic issues, local information and gossip we see in newspapers today. What is more, publicity is what keeps most of our current dailies and weeklies financially viable. Adverts may be an unwelcome distraction for some, but they have a fascinating history and ultimately are keeping our printed press alive.

21. According to the information in the text,

- A. online news has made newspapers obsolete.
- B. printed newspapers had obscure beginnings.
- C. demand for news in print is in steady decline.
- D. fears for the future of printed news are logical.

22. The word 'resemblance' in paragraph two could best be replaced with

- A. similarity.
- B. popularity.
- C. compatibility.
- D. homogeneity.

23. The text states that early newspapers

- A. were written by important politicians and traders.
- B. developed to share military information efficiently.
- C. provided details on the weather in other countries.
- D. were signed by hand before being given to officials.

24. According to the text, the first newspapers

- A. needed expensive printing machinery.
- B. struggled to become fully established.
- C. were folded in order to keep them dry.
- D. focused mostly on news in one place.

25. The writer suggests that the very first Dutch adverts

- A. increased the rivalry existing among book publishers.
- B. encouraged newspapers to compete for more readers.
- C. were based on business techniques that remain in use.
- D. focused on the promotion of other printed publications.

26. For the writer, human interest stories

- A. should not replace news of public events.
- B. help make modern newspapers profitable.
- C. have a valid role to play in today's papers.
- D. are harmful when based wholly on gossip.

27. In the final paragraph, the writer implies that adverts are

- A. a necessary evil.
- B. of little social value.
- C. unnecessarily distracting.
- D. overused in today's papers.

Remember to transfer your answers to the optical mark form.

ESB C2 Level 3 Reading (Part Two)

Read the following text about hyper-short films.

For questions 28 – 35, choose the correct answer A, B, C or D.

Hyper-Short Films

The origin of the term 'movie' is a rather mundane abbreviation of the old-fashioned moniker 'moving pictures', this being what films were originally called when they were first marvelled at by theatre audiences in the early 1900s. Today, of course, we are just as likely to watch a film alone on a train or during a flight as together with others in a cinema. Now, over one hundred years later, alongside referring to films themselves, the word 'movie' serendipitously describes the way we consume our media, streaming or downloading things that we can enjoy on the move.

Modern denotations of the word 'movie' point to far-reaching changes in the way today's films can be designed. When consuming media on the go, we tend to watch in chunks of time that suit our busy lives. Our appetite has therefore increased for visual stories that can be delivered in bite-sized, intelligible pieces. Standard-length art house films and blockbusters continue to be enjoyed at the cinema or from the comfort of our living rooms. But, seizing the creative opportunities thrown up by our new viewing mobility, renowned directors and budding cinematographers alike are now producing amazing short and hyper-short movies that some see as an art form in their own right.

One hyper-short formula is the so-called six-second movie. Initial resistance to this artistic feat has dissipated, as has uncertainty regarding the ability to express something lasting and significant in such a small timeframe. Filmmakers deploy their six seconds in a plethora of clever ways. One common technique is not to conceive of the six seconds as a **finite** time period, but as a section of repeated sequences in an infinite loop. Unlike traditional formats with a clear beginning, middle and end, in hyper-short films these are indistinguishable and the narrative is circular. Viewers can start and stop watching at any point in the sequence, and may watch a loop several times before deciding to move on.

Critics of hyper-short movies do, of course, remain. They hold that the duration of such artefacts cannot possibly encompass the breadth of artistry witnessed over a full-length feature film. This seems at first to be a logical assumption. Yet if we level the same accusation against other art forms, such as painting or poetry, it is soon revealed as unfounded. After all, we do not question the artistry of an oil painting based on the dimensions of the canvas. And short poems of a few lines are often prized just as much as novels containing hundreds of pages.

The creators of short and hyper-short films encounter many of the same creative challenges as all filmmakers, but with restricted time boundaries and often minimal resources. Rather than finding this frustrating, 'shorts' enthusiasts proclaim that these very constraints are what enable filmmakers to create something special and unique. In recognition of this, short films have a separate category with their own award at most film festivals and international competitions. The famous American Sundance Festival, for example, awards a highly coveted prize for films of 49 minutes and under. However, only a tiny proportion of showcased shorts have running times of under ten minutes, indicating that hyper-short films may have a long way to go to reach the critical acclaim they deserve.

28. **According to the text, the word 'movie'**
A. was coined by early film directors.
B. today refers to the act of watching.
C. originated in an unremarkable way.
D. is no longer suitable to refer to films.

29. **The writer points out that**
A. filmmakers are exploiting viewers' changing habits.
B. popular films attract more viewers if they are short.
C. film audiences have declined due to our hectic lives.
D. the best short films are made by well-known directors.

30. **The writer suggests that six-second movies**
A. are made precisely to appeal to intellectuals.
B. show how artistic challenges can be overcome.
C. may be put together to create longer sequences.
D. were the first artistic hyper-short films to be made.

31. **The word 'finite' in paragraph three could best be replaced with**
A. strict.
B. frozen.
C. limited.
D. reduced.

32. **For the writer, critics of hyper-short movies are**
A. misjudged.
B. mistrusted.
C. misquoted.
D. misguided.

33. **The writer suggests that poetry and painting should be**
A. subjected to the same criticisms aimed at film.
B. appraised on quantity as well as quality.
C. considered as artistically superior to short films.
D. judged in ways that apply equally to short films.

34. **According to the text,**
A. constraints can be a positive source of creativity.
B. festivals do not realise the potential of short films.
C. the budget for short films can be surprisingly high.
D. festivals do not allow hyper-short films to compete.

35. **An alternative title for this text could be**
A. A Review of Six-Minute Movies.
B. Short and Sweet Film Success.
C. How Much Shorter Will Films Get?
D. Making a Hyper-Short that Works.

Remember to transfer your answers to the optical mark form.