READING

READ THE ARTICLE ABOUT THE SPREAD OF FAKE NEWS. FIVE SENTENCES HAVE BEEN REMOVED. WHICH SENTENCE (A–F) FITS EACH GAP (1–5)? THERE IS ONE EXTRA SENTENCE WHICH YOU DO NOT NEED TO USE.

Why fake is faster

In 2018, a study published by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology revealed that fake news travels faster and reaches more people than genuine news. The research team had decided to do the study in the early 2000s when many people were beginning to use social media as their main source of news. The official study started in 2006. During the study, the team followed the spread of 126,000 stories shared by three million people on social media over a period of eleven years. Each of the stories was carefully checked to determine whether it contained fake or genuine news.

When the results of the study were published in the journal, *Science*, they showed several shocking facts. (----1----) In fact, real news stories were rarely shared further than 1,000 people, while the most popular fake news stories could reach up to 100,000. Secondly, the results showed that real news stories took around six times longer to reach readers than fake ones. Of the types of fake news available online, the most common subject matter was politics. Other fast-spreading topics included celebrity news, urban legends, science, terrorism, and natural disasters.

The research also corrects a common media myth. (----2----) However, the findings of the study suggest that it is in fact humans that are most likely to share fake news. The researchers had analysed the accounts they identified as bots and found that although they did spread fake news, they also shared true news at the same rate. This means they were not responsible for the speed and spread of fake news.

But why are people more likely to share fake news? (----3----) In this age of social media, we are exposed to news 24/7 so we tend to almost switch off and stop listening to it unless it is really shocking or unexpected. There is a position of power associated with being the person who shares news that others have not heard before. It could be that people who post fake news want that power – regardless of whether the news they are spreading is true or not. The excitement attached to posting fake news and watching it go viral could be addictive.

(----4----) It is human nature to share news and gossip about each other. The best gossip is full of dramatic detail. It has to be surprising at the very least, even shocking. Once people start sharing that fake news on social media, the last thing they, or their readers, are worried about is whether it is accurate or not.

While fake news may be a source of entertainment for some, real news is genuinely important to society. According to journalists, a problem which is caused by fake news is that people don't believe anything anymore. So, what can genuine news agencies do about fake news? Traditionally, newspapers competed to be the first to publish a good story. (----5----) They say that journalists should not try to compete with the speed of social media as it is a battle they can't win. The priority now must be to remain honest and make sure the content of their story is 100% accurate before they publish it.

A There is a widespread belief that automated 'bots' are responsible for spreading most of the fake news on social media.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

B Psychologists have also compared the rapid spread of fake news with the more traditional habit of gossiping.

C One theory is that it could be because fake news tends to be more attractive to readers and is therefore more likely to get a reaction from people.

D But now media experts say it is more important than ever to publish news which is correct and accurate

E When they looked at news content on several popular social media sites, they realized that a large proportion of the so-called 'news' stories seemed to be based on rumours, were incorrect, or had key facts missing.

F Firstly, they found that people were 70% more likely to share or re-post false news stories than true ones

VOCABULARY

TICK (✓) A, B, OR C TO COMPLETE THE SENTENCES.

1 I wish my flatmates wouldn't _____ all the time!
A discuss   B argue   C deny

2 I've used the gym twice and it _____ really good.
A seems   B looks   C notices

3 Try not to _____ during the lesson – it's rude!

A yawn   B kneel   C wink

4 What time should we _____ the next train to arrive?
A wait   B notice   C expect

5 According to research, a healthy lifestyle can _____ some illnesses.
A prevent   B avoid   C expect

6 I'm not very fit or flexible. I certainly can't touch my _____.
 A toes   B elbow   C wrist

7 You need to _____ this steak for a while – it's pretty tough.
A scratch   B chew   C shake

8 I couldn't stop _____ at that woman's hat – it was so bizarre!
A pointing   B waving   C staring

9 _____ smashed windows in the town centre last night.
A Vandals   B Witnesses   C Murderers

10 If you want to be a _____, you have to be well-dressed and comfortable on TV.
A photographer   B newsreader   C commentator

11 _____ threaten to release information that someone wants to keep secret.
A Hijackers   B Terrorists   C Blackmailers

12 _____ take people by force, and often ask for money to release them.

A Smugglers   B Kidnappers   C Burglars

13 Both of the men were _____ and walked out of the court free.

A investigated   B arrested   C acquitted

14 The judge _____ each member of the gang to six years in prison.

A sentenced   B committed   C punished

15 _____ attack people in the street and steal their money.

A Terrorists   B Vandals   C Muggers

VERBS
TICK (✓) A, B, OR C TO COMPLETE THE SENTENCES.

1. I think we're lost! I _____ my satnav with me.

   A should bring ☐   B should brought ☐   C should have brought ☐

2. You _____ seen Helen. She was standing right next to you at the party!

   A must have ☐   B can't have ☐   C couldn't have ☐

3. They _____ have got lost. I gave them very clear directions.

   A might ☐   B mustn't ☐   C can't ☐

4. I suggest _____ a break before we discuss the next point.

   A to have ☐   B having ☐   C you having ☐

5. My boss has refused _____ me have the day off for my birthday.

   A letting ☐   B to let ☐   C let ☐

6. Stephen admitted _____ the money.

   A that he had stolen ☐   B to steal ☐   C to stealing ☐

7. It _____ that the hijacked plane is now heading for Venezuela.

   A is believing ☐   B is believed ☐   C believes ☐

8. £2m worth of jewellery _____ from a city jewellers last night.

   A is being stolen ☐   B was stolen ☐   C has been stolen ☐

9. The local bank _____ twice this year.

   A has been robbed ☐   B is robbed ☐   C has robbed ☐

10. They won't allow the film _____ by anyone until its official release date.

   A be seen ☐   B being seen ☐   C to be seen ☐

REPHRASE. COMPLETE THE SECOND SENTENCE SO THAT IT MEANS THE SAME AS THE FIRST. USE THE GIVEN WORD.

1. I don't like it when people treat me like that. **(BEING)**

   I don't like _____ like that.

2. People believed that someone murdered Jenkins. **(WAS)**

   It _____ murdered.

3. Your hair needs cutting. **(HAVE)**

   You need to _____ cut.

4. The police were following the suspects. **(WERE)**

   The suspects _____ police.

5. My mother hired someone to paint her house last month. **(PAINTED)**

   My mother _____ last month.

6. A mechanic is going to repair my car tomorrow. **(GOING)**

   I am _____ tomorrow.

LISTENING

LISTEN TO FIVE PEOPLE TALKING ABOUT DIFFERENT SITUATIONS THEY HAVE BEEN IN. CHOOSE FROM THE LIST (A–F) WHAT IS HAPPENING IN EACH SITUATION. USE THE LETTERS ONLY ONCE. THERE IS ONE EXTRA LETTER WHICH YOU DO NOT NEED TO USE.

A warning someone about something
B denying something
C refusing to do something
D reminding someone of something
E advising someone
F avoiding something

Speaker 1:

Speaker 2:

Speaker 3:

Speaker 4:

Speaker 5:

WRITING

WRITE AN ESSAY ON THE FOLLOWING TOPIC:

'Nowadays there is too much fake news.'

Write 140–180 words. Include the following information:
- explain what type of fake news is most commonly available for you to read
- say why you think this type of false news exists and what the consequences of it are
- give your opinion on whether action should be taken to prevent the spread of fake news.