

Skills

Skimming

- 2 Quickly read the text below and underline the words associated with *celebrity* and the *media*.

In the past, a person had to do something exceptional to be known as a famous figure: climb a mountain, row single-handedly around the world or fight bravely in a war. But nowadays it is quite easy for a very ordinary person to become a superstar. We only need to upload a remarkable video to the Internet, take part in a reality TV show, or make a controversial comment on a social media website for our names to be instantly recognized worldwide.

- 5** Another technique for identifying the main topic of a text is to read the first sentence of each paragraph. This is usually the topic sentence and summarizes the main points of the paragraph.

Read the following passage and choose the best title for it from the list below.

- a Famous People in the Media
- b The Press and Politics: an unhappy relationship
- c Media and Celebrities: boundaries versus benefits
- d The Dangers of Social Media
- e Media and the Law

- A** Celebrities and the media have a distinctly 'love-hate' relationship and, whilst they recognize their mutual dependency, striking a balance between their respective interests is an on-going challenge for both groups.
- B** In the worlds of sport, entertainment and politics, celebrities depend on the press, social media, photographers and radio and television to raise their public profile, and afford them the visibility essential to success in their highly competitive professions. For example, top-class sports celebrities rely on income from commercial sponsorship to pay for expensive coaching, fitness and training facilities. In the entertainment business, glamorous award ceremonies and opening nights of much-anticipated films not only provide the cast with what is undoubtedly an enjoyable and well-deserved celebration of their success, but also an opportunity for valuable exposure to their fans as well as to influential figures in their own industry.
- C** At the same time, sales revenues from advertising and audience ratings are boosted by stories about famous figures, which range from casual gossip to carefully researched information, depending on their purpose and target audience.
- D** The conflict between these apparently compatible interests lies in deciding how much access the media should have to the daily lives of the famous and the amount of privacy any individual should be entitled to.
- E** This clash has been intensified in the first two decades of the 21st century by recent developments in communications and digital science. There can be little doubt that the dramatic expansion of online social media has made it possible to spread rumours, true or false, instantly across the globe. This has significantly increased the power of the press to enhance or damage the reputation of any public figure. Due to advances in high-tech photographic equipment, it has become easier than ever for photojournalists to intrude on the private lives of well-known personalities without their knowledge or agreement. This has led, on many occasions, to legal battles between the media and celebrities to determine whether newspapers should be entitled to publish images of high-profile personalities taken when they are not appearing in public. Another example of how the press has used dubious methods to obtain information about famous personalities is *phone hacking*, or listening in to private phone calls, which has also resulted in a number of court cases.
- F** In court, a judge may decide what the press is allowed to publish about well-known figures by taking 'public interest' into account. In this case, 'public interest' does not simply mean the number of people who would like to know more about the private lives of high-profile personalities, but how much society, as a whole, would benefit from this information.

7 Read the passage again and match each of the following headings with a paragraph.

Headings

- i The reputation of famous politicians
- ii The commercial advantages of reporting on celebrities
- iii The legal position
- iv Privacy and digital technology
- v All publicity is good publicity
- vi Conflicting demands of the press and famous figures
- vii Celebrities benefit from publicity
- viii Fame versus privacy

Paragraphs

- A vi
- B _____
- C _____
- D _____
- E _____
- F _____

Reading Passage 1

You should spend 20 minutes on questions 1–14, which are based on Reading Passage 1.

Social Media Privacy: A Contradiction in Terms?

This article is by Naomi Troni, global CMO of Euro RSCG Worldwide.

- A** Never in the course of human interaction have so many shared so much about themselves with so many others — and with so little apparent concern for their privacy. Was it really just a generation ago that people kept all but their most basic information under virtual lock and key? Today, we happily share our date and place of birth, name of our first pet, mother's maiden name, favourite movie or book, favourite colour, first school teacher — and myriad other snippets of information required by online services as part of their security procedures.
- B** The basic premise behind this information-sharing is nothing new. Consumers have long handed over a little personal information in exchange for services such as banking and finance, utilities and healthcare. The big difference now is that the information is digitized and accessible online — and we're handing it out to virtually anyone who asks, regardless of how briefly the business has been in existence. Of even greater concern to many is the amount and variety of information being gathered about us *without* our explicit permission. Whereas retailers and others used to tweeze out information gleaned through loyalty cards, prize draws and catalogue mailing lists, now these old standbys have been massively augmented by customers researching and purchasing online, leaving in their wake a digital trail of cookie crumbs detailing their needs, tastes and desires.
- C** And then there's social media. If this isn't the Holy Grail* for marketers, it's difficult to imagine what would be. In this thoroughly 21st century communications channel, old notions of privacy simply do not apply; sharing personal information, experiences and opinions is the whole point of the service. And, wonder of wonders, consumers don't only provide it willingly — they provide it for free! Sure, some people take the precaution of limiting access to their Facebook or Google+ pages, but even these people typically are eager to share their thoughts via comment sections on news sites, reviews on retail sites and in branded clubs and forums.
- D** With all the time we spend online and all the forums we frequent, it's no wonder most of us have grown accustomed to doling out little snippets of personal information with barely a second thought. It helps that we rarely are asked to hand over a whole stack of personal information in one massive data transfer; that would be too much trouble and might provoke too much anxiety. Rather, we routinely hand it out a bit at a time.
- E** Anybody over the age of 30 likely will remember that in the early days of mainstream Internet, 10 to 15 years ago, consumers were wary about handing over private information. A 2001 UCLA report, for instance, found high levels of consumer concern over online privacy in general and credit card security in particular.

- F** Since then hundreds of millions of people have come online and become regular users of commerce sites and social media. Early concerns about online privacy have been sidelined by the desire for more speed, more convenience, more choice and more great deals. Familiarity has bred complacency and even foolhardiness; we've all heard about people uploading pretty much everything, including the most intimate words and images.
- G** Now, after a decade of consumers feeling increasingly free-and-easy with their personal information online, we are seeing signs of a new wariness setting in. In a Euro RSCG global survey conducted among 7,213 adults in 19 countries, we found that 55% of respondents are worried that 'technology is robbing us of our privacy'; the figure was above 60% in a number of countries, including the United States and China. Similarly, 61% overall agreed 'People share too much about their personal thoughts and experiences online; we need to go back to being more private.'
- H** And it's not just snooping companies and hackers that consumers fear. Nearly half the sample (47%) — and a majority of millennials* — worry that friends or family will share inappropriate personal information about them online. Around one-third overall already regret posting personal information about themselves.

* **Holy Grail** – a desired ambition or goal (in Christian tradition, the cup used by Jesus at the Last Supper with his followers)

* **Millennials** – people born between 1982 and 2000

Questions 1–5

Reading Passage 1 has eight sections, A–H. Choose the correct heading for sections **B**, **C**, **D**, **F** and **G** from the list of headings below.

Write the correct number **i–viii** by question numbers 1–5.

- i** A reverse in trends
- ii** Blogging
- iii** Digital technology: a threat to privacy
- iv** Privacy versus ease
- v** Online social networks and consumer information
- vi** Little by little
- vii** Phone hacking and privacy
- viii** Attitudes at the turn of the century

Example: Paragraph E viii

- 1** Paragraph B
- 2** Paragraph C
- 3** Paragraph D
- 4** Paragraph F
- 5** Paragraph G

Skills

Scanning for information

When you scan a text for specific information you do not need to read every word or line from left to right. Once you have decided what kind of information you want, you can let your eye move around the text and search for the features that are characteristic of that particular information. For example, you would look for *capital letters* for names of people and places, *symbols* and *numbers* for percentages, statistics and dates. Technical terms may be in *italics* or inverted commas ('...').

Computer Technology in the Workplace

- A** Although the earliest computers were developed in the United States during the first decades of the twentieth century, it was not until the beginning of the 1970s that computers (known as 'mainframe' computers) were used in industry and business. At this stage, however, computers were so large they needed a room of their own, and were not practical in the workplace.
- B** Nevertheless, soon afterwards, rapidly evolving technology produced smaller, more practical, desktop computers, which were developed commercially between the late 1970s and the mid-1980s. Despite this, it was only in the late 1980s that personal computers (PCs) became standard equipment in the workplace.
- C** Subsequently, and especially during the first 10 years of the 21st century, the concept of the workplace has been revolutionized. By creating *virtual environments*, technology has freed businesses from the restrictions of time and place. Thanks to sophisticated communication software, colleagues in countries as distant as Australia and the UK can talk to each other through their PCs, laptops, tablets and mobile phones, meeting almost as if they were in the same room and no longer limited to their physical location.

- 4** Answer the questions with information from the reading passage. Practise letting your eye skip over the text to search for particular words, numbers or groups of letters. For example, to find out when the events in the passage took place, focus on dates and verb tenses.

- 1 How many times are the 1980s mentioned in the passage?
- 2 How many references are there to time in the passage?
- 3 How many times does the word 'were' appear in the passage?
- 4 In which paragraph does the verb change to the present tense?
- 5 Why does the writer use 'were' again in paragraph C?

- 5** Scan the text again and complete the timeline with the letters A–E for each of the events in the list below. The first one has been done for you.

- A mainframe computers utilized in commerce and manufacturing
- B offices adopt widespread use of desktops
- C online conferencing has broken down geographical barriers
- D PCs widely available on the market
- E initial developments in computer technology

<u>E</u>				
1900–1960	1970–1975	1976–1985	1986–1989	present

- 6** Scan the text again and underline examples of other types of information from the list below.

place names ■ periods of time ■ technical terms