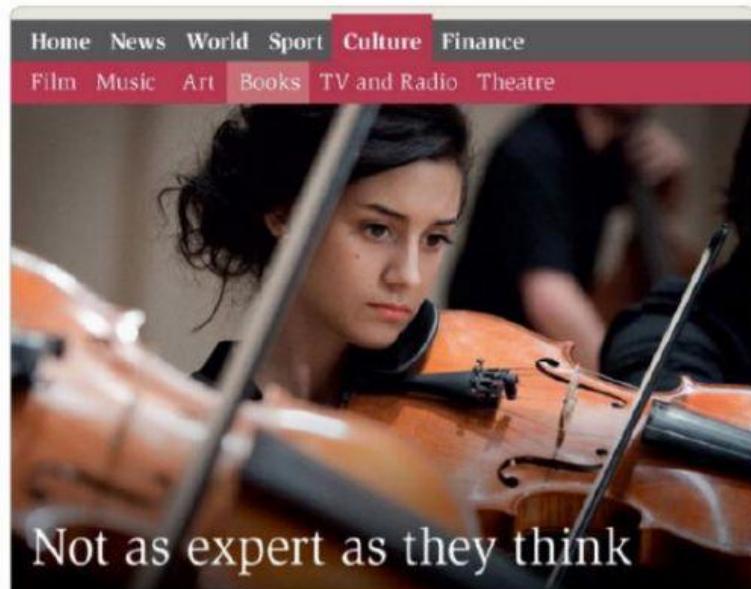


# ‘EXPERT: A MAN WHO MAKES THREE CORRECT GUESSES CONSECUTIVELY.’

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Not as expert as they think

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2a Read the sentences. What does the underlined word in each sentence refer to?

- 1 We all read the article, but none of us liked it.
- 2 We all had to study science up to the age of sixteen at school, and so do students at secondary school nowadays.
- 3 He may be the most famous scientist of all time, but Albert Einstein only got his first scientific job when he was twenty-nine.

1 In his book *Blink*, the Canadian author Malcolm Gladwell tells a wonderful story. It shows, he says, that even if they are very experienced and intelligent, experts can be wrong. It's about music, but it's true for all kinds of other situations.

2 Before the 1980s, when they wanted to find and employ a new musician, orchestras used a very simple system. A group of three 'judges' from the orchestra would sit in a room. One musician after another would come in and play their instrument in front of them, and then the judges would choose the best. Under this system, most of the musicians who were chosen were men. Naturally, since the judges were all experts, nobody thought much of this: they must be able to tell a good musician from a bad one. Men were probably simply better musicians.

Read paragraph 2 of the article and decide what the underlined words refer to. Check your answers with a partner.

they (line 1) \_\_\_\_\_

them (line 5) \_\_\_\_\_

the best (line 6) \_\_\_\_\_

this (line 8) \_\_\_\_\_

one (line 9) \_\_\_\_\_

3 But then, for a number of reasons, in the 1980s, orchestras started putting up screens in the rooms where these auditions took place, so the judges couldn't see if the musicians were men or women. Amazingly, orchestras started hiring many more women. In fact,

1 \_\_\_\_\_ hired *more* women than men, which suggested that women were better musicians!

4 The conclusion was that the judges were deciding not on what they could hear, but what they could see. Their judgement probably changed according to whether

2 \_\_\_\_\_ were seeing a man or a woman. Personally, I find 3 \_\_\_\_\_ very worrying – the idea that even experts are strongly influenced in this way. Gladwell even jokes that when 4 \_\_\_\_\_ looks around his classes at the best colleges in the USA, he thinks that every student has been chosen because 5 \_\_\_\_\_ is the *prettiest*, not the best.

Work in small groups and discuss the questions.

- 1 Why did orchestras start hiring more women?
- 2 What do you think people judge other people on?
- 3 What do you notice when you first meet people?

Look at the sentence from the article on page 20. Underline the word which gives the writer's opinion.

'Amazingly, orchestras started hiring many more women.'

What does the writer feel about orchestras hiring women like this?

#### VOCABULARY FOCUS comment adverbs

- Some adverbs tell us the view or opinion of the speaker, e.g. *curiously, luckily, remarkably, sadly, surprisingly, unfortunately*
- Comment adverbs usually go at the beginning of sentences. *Surprisingly, orchestras started hiring many more women.*
- Sometimes comment adverbs can go in the middle of a sentence. *Orchestras, curiously, started hiring women left, right and centre.*

How does the choice of comment adverb affect the meaning of these sentences?

- 1 *Interestingly / Fortunately*, I know lots of people who want to work on television.
- 2 I got to the bus stop about five minutes after the bus was due, but *luckily / remarkably* all the buses were running late.
- 3 *Remarkably / Sadly*, none of the students passed the final exam.
- 4 *Personally / Curiously*, I find learning new things easy.

**TASK** Work with a partner. Choose a situation or think of one of your own when things went wrong or something unexpected happened.

- a meal in a restaurant
- missing a train/plane
- thinking you recognize someone you know but actually don't know