

Reading practice

Unit 5

Reading

7 Read the article about cheating and the Internet. Match the comments (1–6) with the people (A–D). You can choose the people more than once.

All your own work?

A Chrissie

I think cheating has always existed and always will. In my day – a long time ago! – some students used to cheat in tests at school by hiding notes in their books or writing things on their hands. If they wanted good marks for their homework, they copied their friend's work, or asked their parents to help them out. It was risky because if your teachers found out you had cheated they would fail you, so you wouldn't pass the exam at all – but some people thought it was worth the risk. I never cheated – I was too scared I'd get found out!

B Mark

I think people do still cheat at school or university but the whole thing has become a lot more high tech now. It seems that although the Internet has brought enormous benefits, like giving students access to unlimited information, it's also created a highly successful industry for helping students to cheat very effectively. There are two main ways that students can use the Internet to help them get better marks at school. Firstly, they can access information and simply copy whole chunks of articles or reports into their own homework assignments and pretend it's their own work. Secondly – and I think this is a more worrying development – there are now specialist websites that supply original essays on demand. This means that a student can actually send money to a website to provide an essay with a certain title. The website employs a qualified writer to write the essay but the teacher marking it doesn't know where the work has come from and believes the student has written it him or herself. Research has shown that some university students are prepared to pay up to £300 for a good essay. It's completely dishonest.

C Maddy

I'm a secondary school teacher and I know that teachers have been aware of the problem of students copying information from the Internet for a while now. Most of us use software to find work that's been copied from Internet sources. However, this only detects chunks that are copied exactly, not paragraphs that have been edited, or specially commissioned work. Teachers mostly rely on their knowledge of their students' abilities and the type of work they normally produce. They have to be alert to new types of phrasing or style that suddenly appear in a student's writing – this is often an indication that it's not all their own writing. Teachers can also scan the Internet for similar essay titles and check whether there are any that the student may have copied, but this is time-consuming and not very efficient. Another way to discourage copying is to give personalised essay titles such as, 'Compare the plot of ... with your own experiences.' This means each student has to give a personal answer. Despite all of these techniques though, I think it's inevitable that the lazier student will always try to find an easy way around hard work, whereas the more conscientious student will do his own. It's human nature.

D Hamish

I've read that experts say the way to eliminate cheating in schools is to start teaching students from as young as 11 years old the dangers of copying work. A lot of young people don't really think about the long term effects of not doing the work themselves – they just want to get the assignment finished as quickly as possible. Cheating is pointless because you don't learn anything from it. Homework assignments are supposed to help you remember and process what you have learned and present the information in a structured way. If you don't go through the process of planning, drafting and editing your work, you'll never learn to do this.

1 Cheating today is all about using advanced types of technology.	5 To stop cheating we need to train students very early on in their school careers.
2 The consequences of cheating in the past could be very serious.	6 Websites that supply essays for money are dishonest.
3 Students will always cheat – it's a fact of life.	
4 Teachers have three main ways of discouraging cheating.	

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8 Read the article again and choose the best answers, A, B, or C.

- 1 Techniques for cheating at schools in the past were
 - A different to those used now.
 - B the same as those used now.
 - C not permitted.
- 2 Students' access to the Internet has created
 - A more online exams.
 - B more ways of cheating.
 - C more e-marking systems.
- 3 Using the Internet students are able to
 - A hack other students' work.
 - B buy essays written by other people.
 - C see exam papers before an exam.
- 4 Research has shown that some university students
 - A are paid up to £300 to write good essays.
 - B are willing to pay up to £300 for a good essay.
 - C are prepared to buy good essay plans for up to £300.
- 5 Teachers who are familiar with their students' work
 - A are likely to give them better marks.
 - B don't check whether they have copied it.
 - C know if they have cheated from the writing style.
- 6 Cheating is pointless because
 - A you don't learn anything from it.
 - B it's not effective in exams.
 - C cheaters usually get caught.

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Total	/ 12
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