READING

Read the articles quickly and for each question write the correct text (A-D), the texts must be chosen more tan once.

A

FREE HUGS ARE TAKING OVER THE WORLD

A hug from a stranger can change your life – or at least it did for Juan Mann.

He had been living in London when he suddenly had to move back to his hometown of Sydney, Australia. But he felt like a tourist; he had no one to welcome him and no home to go to. Despite going out and talking to people, he found making friends hard because too many people seemed more interested in their mobile phones and the Internet than talking to him.

So one day, he took matters into his own hands. He made a giant sign and stood holding it in the busiest shopping area in the city. The sign said 'Free Hugs' on both sides. He only had to wait for 15 minutes before he got his first hug from an elderly lady. She explained that her dog had just died and the hug had made her feel better. Soon Mann was hugging all sorts of strangers every few seconds. Everyone seemed to feel better after hugging him and he returned day after day. Other people came with their own signs and joined him. The police tried to ban the movement, but over 10,000 people signed a petition supporting Mann and they backed down.

When Mann posted a video on YouTube of his story, he thought a few people might watch it. He had no idea his campaign was about to go viral. The video attracted over 70 million views and massive worldwide interest. Mann set up his website to help people start their own Free Hugs campaigns and since then, thousands of people have taken part in many different countries including India, Switzerland, Portugal and the UK.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

WHY YOU DON'T WANT TO HAVE **AN EMERGENCY IN A CROWD**

If you witnessed an emergency right in front of you, would you try to help? We might like to think so but psychologists believe that this is not always the case.

They believe that whether we help or not depends on the number of people around us and that the greater number of people present, the less likely we are to help.

Psychologists have been studying this behaviour since 1964, when a group of bystanders observing a serious crime did nothing, not even call the police.

This phenomenon is called the 'Bystander Effect' because in an emergency the presence of other people actually discourages an individual from taking action. Why? Firstly, when there is a group of people, no one person feels responsible. Everyone thinks someone else will take charge, especially if they are in a hurry. Secondly, people are reluctant to stand out from the crowd; if someone sees others failing to react to a situation, they see this as a sign that it isn't necessary to take action themselves. Nobody wants to be seen to be doing something different from others and so nobody does anything.

In contrast, when there are only one or two people, there is no pressure to behave like everyone else and nobody else to take responsibility, so people are much more likely to act. So how do you prevent the bystander effect if you are in trouble? Psychologists recommend making eye contact with someone in the crowd, asking that person specifically for help.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

C

HUMANS OF NEW YORK

Photos with a story

Most of us are fascinated by other people's lives. We like to know who they are and where they're from, and this was the inspiration for Brandon Stanton when he started the Humans of New York (HONY) project.

His dream initially was to create a comprehensive record of the city's inhabitants by taking people's photos and marking them on a map to show where he had photographed them. He started the project in 2010. After several months, he realised his project was turning into something more intriguing. Stanton had started chatting to the people he photographed. They told him an astonishing variety of things, from their plans for the day to their deepest secrets. He published these short stories and quotes along with the portraits and his photoblog Humans of New York was born.

Now HONY has over eight million followers worldwide on social media. People love the daily glimpses into the lives of strangers. Each person remains anonymous, but shares a special piece of their own unique history. The photos are remarkably varied and every HONY blogpost gets many comments, with people sharing their own stories, giving advice or or simply admiring Stanton's work.

D

TALKING TO STRANGERS MAKES US HAPPIER

What do you do when you travel on public transport by yourself? Do you get out your phone or do you talk to other passengers? Most people's fear of interacting with strangers means they sit silently on their journeys, but new research has shown that they might be happier if they didn't.

Researchers in Chicago have conducted an experiment with train commuters, with some participants asked to start a conversation with a stranger and others told not to talk. The participants who had talked to a stranger later rated their journey as most positive while those who had kept silent reported the most negative experience. Interestingly, participants' worst fear – being rejected by the stranger – proved totally unfounded as strangers were happy to engage in conversation and nobody was rejected. Even more surprisingly, the results were the same for both introverts and extroverts; both personality types were able to have a conversation.

In another experiment, participants talked to strangers in a waiting room. The participants and the people they talked to all reported feeling happier after chatting, and they also noted that the waiting time had passed more quickly.

These results show that we don't talk because we think breaking the ice is going to be awkward and people won't want to talk to us. In reality, however, there's nothing to fear and the conversations can have a positive effect on our lives.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Read the articles again. For each question write the correct text (A–D). The texts may be chosen more than once.

Show the articles

Which text describes a project, experiment or research that ...

1. proved that groups have an effect on individual behaviour? ☐
2. proves our assumptions about interacting with people we don't know are incorrect? ☐
3. had the same result for different personality types? ☐
4. shows that strangers can benefit from physical contact? ☐
5. required people to share information about their lives? ☐
6. describes a way of getting assistance in a difficult situation? ☐
7. involved participants setting up their own projects? ☐
8. showed that people really enjoy learning about other humans' experiences? ☐

LISTENING

Listen to an interview and choose the best summary

- ○ It's about why you should join social networking sites.
- ○ It's about different speciality sites.
- ○ It's about sites for people with annoying habits.

Listen and answer true (T), false (F) or not mention (NM)

1. Pinterest had millions of followers as soon as it started.	T	F	NM
2. Pinterest is now the third largest social networking site in the world.	T	F	NM
3. As a member of Trot On, you can share photos and videos and join speciality groups.	T	F	NM
4. Dogster has far more members than Catster.	T	F	NM
5. There are over a million users on the site REMcloud where people can share their dreams.	T	F	NM
6. It is free to use RedKaraoke to sing with people all over the world.	T	F	NM

LIVEWORKSHEETS