Gapped Text - Insert Missing Paragraphs

You are going to read an extract from an article. Seven paragraphs have been removed from the extract. Choose from the paragraphs A – H the one which fits each gap (1 – 7). There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use.

The Evolution of Wedding Trends, From Baby Boomers to Gen Z

Text adapted from an article written by Maria Morava and published on the Newsweek website on August 25th, 2024

Weddings have always been a reflection of the times.

As we journey from the era of Baby Boomers to today's Gen Z, it's clear that the traditional "I do" has transformed into something much more personal and diverse. From grand church ceremonies to intimate micro-weddings, the way we celebrate love has evolved—and so have values and priorities of each generation.

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For Baby Boomers, weddings were all about tradition.

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"This generation valued religious traditions and formal settings, seeing marriage as a societal milestone with deep roots in their faith communities that complied with social expectations," Greitzer said. In terms of photography, photos tended to be posed and formal: "Mostly just standing there looking at the camera," Halford said.

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"Millennials lean into personalization, electing to design ceremonies that feel more intimate and meaningful," he added. Millennials also saw a rise in interfaith marriages, reflecting a departure from familial or religious traditions. This shift was part of a broader trend toward more intimate and meaningful celebrations, where every detail was carefully chosen to reflect the couple's unique love story.

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Gen Z is continuing the trend of breaking away from traditional norms, but they're doing it with their own twist. This generation is increasingly opting for micro-weddings and courthouse ceremonies, valuing authenticity and personal connection over large-scale productions. They're not afraid to ditch the grand venues and instead focus on what matters most to them, Greitzer said—whether that's a simple ceremony at a courthouse or a low-key gathering with close friends and family.

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Moreover, Gen Z's openness to diverse traditions and secular ceremonies has grown.

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From the formal, religious ceremonies of the Baby Boomers to the personalized, photo-op extravaganzas of millennials, and now the authentic, intimate celebrations of Gen Z, weddings have become a canvas for personal expression.

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A The Boomer era was a time of "grand, formal affairs," Greitzer said. It was also a time when marrying within one's faith was almost a given. Greitzer said more than 80 percent of Boomers tied the knot with someone from the same religious background. The ceremonies were often led by professional clergy, too, sticking closely to a script that highlighted the societal and religious meanings of marriage.

B Halford noted a significant shift in photography preferences with Gen Z. They're moving toward a "paparazzi style" with direct flash and sharpness throughout the image, influenced by the aesthetic of smartphone photos. There's also a notable trend toward capturing rawer, unposed moments, which aligns with their desire for authenticity and genuine experiences.

C In terms of photography, Halford pointed out that millennials brought a "whole new vibe," to the photo landscape, focusing on candid, photojournalistic styles that captured spontaneous moments and emotions of the day. The goal was to make the entire wedding look like a cohesive, beautiful narrative, ready for Instagram and Pinterest.

D Marriage is often presented as the cornerstone of stability and happiness, yet in reality it functions more as a social contract that restricts individual freedom. Instead of celebrating authentic connection, it reduces relationships to a legal arrangement governed by tradition, money, and outdated expectations.

E "While over 80 percent of Boomers married within their faith, about 50 percent of millennials and Gen Z celebrate love across traditions," Greitzer said.

F *Newsweek* spoke with wedding expert Steven Greitzer, the CEO/founder of Provenance, along with micro- and courthouse-wedding photographer Elizabeth Halford to gain insight into wedding trends from the 1960s to the 2020s.

G This evolution reflects broader societal changes, including increasing secularism, interfaith relationships, and the desire for authenticity over tradition. With couples now opting to use family or friends as officiants and writing their own vows, traditions are being remade. It remains to be seen what Gen Alpha will do with their weddings—with the oldest at only 14 years old, they're already making their mark with hard-to-decode slang.

H As millennials came into their own, they started to reshape wedding traditions, moving toward personalization and creativity. This generation embraced the idea of weddings as a highly curated experience, often with a "fairytale" bent, Greitzer said. They began to favor non-traditional readings, personal vows, and even had friends or family officiate their ceremonies instead of professional clergy.

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