

Text 2

Read the text. Answer the questions on your mark sheet.

Did you hear about....?	
Research has shown that two-thirds of human conversation is taken up not with discussion of the political or cultural problems of the day, nor with lively discussions of the latest film we have just watched or books we have just finished reading, but plain and simple gossip.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35
Language is one of our greatest treasures. What do we do with it? We love to gossip (to talk about other people). We love to gossip about who's doing what, with whom, and whether it is a good or a bad thing. We chatter about how to deal with difficult social situations involving our family, friends and colleagues.	
So why are we so interested in gossiping about one another? Are we just natural time-wasters? Do we prefer to talk about nothing in particular to avoid facing up to the really serious issues in our lives? In fact, according to Professor Robin Dunbar, gossiping is an important human activity.	
Dunbar does not believe in the traditional view that language was developed by men in primitive societies in order to co-ordinate their hunting activities more effectively or to make it easier to exchange stories about their ancestors and the supernatural. Instead he suggests that language evolved among women. He developed his theory by studying the behaviour of monkeys. By spending time together, monkeys form partnerships with other individuals who they can rely on for support in difficult times such as conflict within the group or an attack on them by another group.	
Humans are descended from primates such as monkeys and Dunbar thinks that long ago we did much the same as monkeys. Grouping together made sense because the bigger the group, the greater the protection it provided.	
....., the bigger the group, the greater the stress of living so close to other people. Spending time together provided a source of and helped to ease tensions and calm everybody down.	
Over time, language developed naturally from these groupings, according to Professor Dunbar. Through language, humans were able to connect with others and exchange information, which was important for survival.	

11. **The text is about:**

- a. Monkeys' use of language.
- b. The reasons we love to gossip.
- c. Our habit of wasting time.

12. **According to Dunbar, human language was developed**

- a. By hunters.
- b. By women.
- c. By monkeys.

13. **Why do monkeys form partnerships?**

- a. To be able to attack other monkeys.
- b. To be able to find food.
- c. To be able to rely on each other.

14. **According to the text, what do we gossip about?**

- a. Other people.
- b. Books we have read.
- c. The political situation.

15. **What has Dunbar based his evidence on?**

- a. His study of monkeys.
- b. His study of language.
- c. His study of primitive societies.

16. **Which word means "staying alive"?**

- a. Supernatural.
- b. Conflict.
- c. Survival.

17. **The word that best fills the gap in line 30 is:**

- a. Relaxation.
- b. Worry.
- c. Food.

18. **Which line has a spelling error?**

- a. Line 8.
- b. Line 20.
- c. Line 30.

19. **In the text, which word means the same as "gossip"?**

- a. Language.
- b. Exchange.
- c. Chatter.

20. **Which word or words best fit the gap on line 29?**

- a. On the other hand.
- b. In addition.
- c. Although.

 **LIVEWORKSHEETS**