



Read the text, then choose the best correct item for questions 1-7.

The History of Newspapers

Newspapers can be traced back to 16th century Venice. In 1566, handwritten news sheets - called 'avisi' or 'gazette' - filled with information on wars and politics in Europe were distributed weekly in Venice. Similar news sheets soon started to appear in other European countries. By 1615 Germany and Austria were publishing weeklies. And in 1621, the first news sheet appeared in England.

At first, these news sheets only printed news which came from outside the country in which they were printed. Discussion of local or national issues was avoided. Europe's governments did not tolerate anything negative being said about them as it could lead to national unrest.

Such censorship slowed the development of newspapers. Nevertheless, a belief in the importance of a 'free press' slowly began to take hold in Europe. England was among the first countries to escape government control of the press. This occurred during the reign of King Charles I in the 17th century, when, during a period of breakdown in the king's authority, people began to publish what they wanted. Eventually, the press had the right to criticise government and voice other ideas freely. In the middle of the 18th century, Sweden became the first country to make press freedom a part of its law.

In the 19th century, the newspaper industry was transformed by the invention of the telegraph. The telegraph was a communication system that allowed messages to be sent over long distances in a matter of minutes. It wasn't long before newspapers became society's primary means of spreading and receiving information. In 1880, the first photographs appeared in newspapers and, by the end of the century, all the basic technical tools for the modern newspaper were in place.

The story of newspapers in the 20th century was one of adaptation to changing consumer and media markets. The invention of radio, TV, and later the Internet, repeatedly drove newspapers to re-invent themselves. Also, during the 20th century, mass-market advertising increased profitability for newspapers. This attracted large, publicly-owned corporations who began buying newspapers from the descendants of company founders.

Over the years, people have periodically predicted the extinction of newspapers. In fact, every time a new media has come into being, dire predictions have been made for existing forms (e.g. television was supposed to have replaced radio, radio was supposed to have replaced newspapers). Yet history has repeatedly shown that new media do not replace existing media. Instead, what happens is that media consumption grows, which creates the necessary space (or the new media to become a part of the media landscape).

According to the World Association of Newspapers (WAN), each day more than 1,5 billion people around the world read a newspaper. The WAN has also estimated the total annual worth of the global newspaper industry and put it at just under 180 billion USD. Such statistics suggest the newspaper industry is healthier than at any other time in its history. Indeed, if the industry proves itself as capable of adapting to change as it has done in the past, it is unlikely that newspapers will be disappearing from newsstands anytime soon.



1. In paragraph 1, we learn that _____

1. news travelled slowly in Europe.
2. daily editions of newspapers were a later development.
3. newspapers get their name from 16th century news sheets.
4. Europe was at war in 1566.

2. The first news sheets _____

1. discussed foreign issues.
2. were checked by authorities.
3. avoided all controversial topics.
4. were distributed internationally.

3. In paragraph 3, we learn that _____

1. England was the first to believe in a free press.
2. criticising governments was the original purpose of a free press.
3. Sweden's "press freedom" law followed England's.
4. King Charles opposed a free press.

4. In the 19th century, _____

1. the newspaper industry invented the telegraph.
2. information in newspapers became more technical.
3. the role of newspapers became more important.
4. photos signalled the start of the modern newspaper era.

5. In the 20th century, newspapers _____

1. began to pass to public hands.
2. lost many readers to TV.
3. used ads to attract investors.
4. invented mass-market advertising.

6. The extinction of newspapers _____

1. was originally predicted by the media itself.
2. would probably have occurred if radio had been more popular.
3. is a prediction unsupported by past evidence.
4. would allow for more media to become part of the media landscape.

7. The WAN _____

1. makes billions of dollars a year.
2. promotes change within the newspaper industry.
3. is able to rapidly adapt to change.
4. monitors newspaper sales.

