

UNIT 3

GRAMMAR

Complete the text with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

It (1) (often / say) that celebrities act as good role models for young people. However, in recent years, with the rise of pictures that can easily (2) (alter) digitally, our obsession with celebrities is thought (3) (have) a negative effect on how we view ourselves. Now, it (4) (widely / believe) that children, especially, have a distorted view of what is 'normal' or 'beautiful'.

When you were younger, (5) (you / influence) by media images of slim, attractive models and celebrities? Well, recently, it (6) (claim) by a number of researchers that children today (7) (increasingly / affect) by what they see in magazines, films or on TV.

These claims are based on a survey that (8) (conduct) last month involving children aged three to ten.

Unrealistic media images (9) (think) to have been putting pressure on young people for a long time and unless steps (10) (take) soon, they will continue (11) (affect).

This issue (12) (consider) by many nowadays to be a widespread social problem.

The survey results showed that in the years before the research was conducted, an alarming number of young people (13) (pressure) by images of perfect celebrities into crash dieting, resulting in both physical and mental health problems.

It (14) (fear) that when slim, beautiful, people are portrayed as being 'normal', it becomes more likely that young people (15) (will / push) into taking extreme measures to looking the same.

VOCABULARY

Task 1

Complete the sentences with the correct words. The first letter of each word is given.

- 16 I'm not really a fan of these super-famous, h.....-profile football players.
- 17 I really feel that sports stars should act as r..... models, and be people for teenagers to look up to.
- 18 I think we're both speaking with o..... voice when we say that the money raised by the fashion show should go to charity.
- 19 I should s..... the record straight – I have never been paid to promote designer clothes.
- 20 I'll take your criticism on b..... and perhaps change some of the details.
- 21 He says he's only interested in helping people, but I suspect he has a hidden a.....
- 22 The most popular magazine articles are usually ones with a human-i..... story.
- 23 The picture of my parents smiling when I accepted the school prize will stick in my m..... forever.
- 24 You fooled me before, but there's no way I'm going to f..... for that trick again.
- 25 The video went v..... as soon as it was posted, getting over a million hits in just 24 hours.

Task 2

Choose the correct words to complete the sentences.

- 26 News items with **sensational** / **viral** headlines attract more readers because they lead us to believe the stories are really dramatic.
- 27 Stories that promise new **propaganda** / **revelations** about celebrities' private lives are very popular.
- 28 Some newspapers believe that it's quite **editorial** / **legitimate** to follow celebrities and wait outside their houses for a good story.
- 29 The article about the actor's new film role was supposed to be **subjective** / **exclusive**, but in fact it was on every website!
- 30 I prefer reading news that's **biased** / **objective**, so that I can make up my own mind about what's happening.

USE OF ENGLISH

Task 1

Read the article and decide which answer (A, B, C or D) best fits each gap.

Did you know that what you think you like and don't like is often the result of false beliefs? As humans, we tend to be easily **(31)** when it comes to liking or disliking something, and we're happy to have our existing beliefs confirmed. But once these beliefs became fixed, we often lose our ability to be **(32)** and we don't like to have our ideas challenged. Generally speaking, human beings are not good at taking a **(33)** view of things. **(34)** instance, we unconsciously start to listen for and select information that matches our beliefs and **(35)** a blind eye to information that doesn't, rejecting it out of hand. We don't always like to **(36)** new information that doesn't match up with what we already believe.

As a result, we often don't even **(37)** the reasons behind an opposing point of view. Instead, we look for evidence that confirms what we had already thought, and which conforms to our own point of view. We're more likely to give **(38)** to information that matches the beliefs we already have. In other words, we are **(39)** towards certain information. It can come as a shock when information we trusted (because of our deeply held beliefs) is actually **(40)** to be untrue.

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|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 31 A approved | B influenced | C appealed | D powered |
| 32 A exclusive | B evident | C objective | D dominant |
| 33 A sensational | B legitimate | C balanced | D significant |
| 34 A For | B By | C Of | D On |
| 35 A close | B shut | C turn | D move |
| 36 A open | B accept | C profile | D glimpse |
| 37 A consider | B think | C believe | D suppose |
| 38 A attraction | B significance | C meaning | D feature |
| 39 A approved | B regarded | C reassured | D biased |
| 40 A portrayed | B analysed | C exposed | D impressed |

Task 2

Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence using the word given. Do not change the word given. Use between three and six words.

- 41** People say that Shakespeare wrote the best plays in Europe.

SAID

It the best playwright in Europe.

- 42** The company didn't make a profit last year, according to news sources.

REPORTED

The company a profit last year.

- 43** Most people believe that the story is untrue.

BELIEVED

The story a lie.

- 44** People think that people used to live on the island.

ONCE

People on the island.

- 45** We know that no life exists on the moon.

KNOWN

Life exist on the moon.

READING

Task 1

Read the article. Choose from the paragraphs (A–G) the one which fits each gap (8–13). There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use.

- A** It's undoubtedly the case that as a result of these first contacts, large numbers of countries that you visit around the world, especially those that were taken over, will be thinking of 'England' when they are really referring to the United Kingdom.
- B** It is now accepted for example, that the Scots do not all wear skirts or learn how to play the bagpipes at school. In fact the different nationalities tend to have developed more positive stereotypes of each other, such as the idea that the Welsh have wonderful singing voices and the Scots cook amazing fish dishes.
- C** Another stereotype is that British food is bad, or unhealthy. While it is arguably true that British cuisine doesn't rate as highly as French or Italian cooking, there are plenty of places where you can find very high-quality food in the UK. Not only that, but in most British cities, you can experience a range of foods from all around the world.
- D** Pictures of these things decorate the walls of many English-language classrooms across the world and have a powerful appeal. Perhaps some schools hope that students will be inspired by them to learn English and travel to the UK to see them for real.
- E** To answer this, we need to look back at how the UK developed. Originally there were the nations of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. England incorporated Wales into The Kingdom of England in the 16th century, followed by England and Scotland uniting in the 17th century, and in the 18th century Great Britain uniting with Northern Ireland. But at the same time, Great Britain was building its empire abroad, and everything was controlled from London, the capital of England.
- F** The results indicate that the British (and not only the English) are actually quite friendly people with a lot of creativity and a dry sense of humour. Today, they are seen to be better cooks than had been previously assumed, and live on an island that gets a fair share of sunshine.
- G** Despite that, many feel that these stereotypes are unfair. How would you feel if the world was unfairly stereotyping you with characteristics that you don't think you actually have? This attitude seems to be becoming more common, especially as people interact more with those from other cultures.

UNIT 3: SKILLS TEST A

British stereotypes

When you think of the UK, what images come to mind? Are they of Big Ben, the Houses of Parliament, black taxis and Buckingham Palace? Or perhaps they're of people drinking cups of tea. You may even think of cute little villages and red phone boxes.

8

However, what we need to ask ourselves is how representative these images really are of the UK. Although they are certainly what I grew up with when learning English, I would now argue that they give an impression which is possibly misleading. For a start, these are mostly images of London, not the whole country. So why is it that these stereotypes of the UK exist?

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For this reason, those who were in contact with these early Empire builders learned the name of this powerful city, and rather than using the geographically or politically accurate name, of the United Kingdom, it was the name of England that stuck.

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Not only is it unfair to apply English stereotypes to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, it is also wrong to imply that the English themselves are all polite people who drink tea all the time, and who all constantly apologise and stand in queues in rainy, cold weather. It is good to learn that according to recent surveys this perception is slowly changing.

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This new attitude has probably come about through increased travelling to the UK and of course, the internet has brought about better communications, encouraging international friendships and exchange of information. Popular culture has also played its part and UK films and TV have brought real British places and people to foreign screens.

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Another reason for this change in perception is that foreign visitors to London and other major cities will find themselves encountering people from many different cultures. Because of its links with other countries and the exchange of workforce encouraged by the European Union, the UK has become multi-cultural.

You can also be sure that if you travel to Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland you will find distinct differences in culture, climate and behaviour, and a definite pride in this difference. The nationals would feel insulted to be stereotyped in the same way as the 'English'. There are indeed stereotypes that the nations of the United Kingdom have of each other, which are usually unflattering. However, because of the reasons stated above, these attitudes are also gradually changing.

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In conclusion, we should remember that when we see advertisements or posters promoting a particular stereotype of the United Kingdom, whether it's in an English-language classroom or on a travel website, we need to think: Are these true and characteristic of the whole UK as opposed to one city or country? The only real way to find out about a country is to visit it and make up your own mind.