

2.28 Lesson 7A, Exercises 4 and 5

Presenter Good morning and welcome to the programme *Current Affairs*, where we investigate the week's news headlines. Today's headline is about the news itself and whether teenagers are interested in it. The results of a news survey came out today in the US saying that 60% of teenagers pay little or no attention to daily news, and they particularly ignore war and politics. 28% of Americans aged twelve to seventeen say they pay no attention whatsoever to the daily news, and 32% say that they pay only casual attention to it. American teenagers rarely pick up a newspaper, and tend to get news information from TV and the Internet. But is this generally true for teenagers in Europe and other parts of the world? On the programme today, we have a panel of UK teenagers who will give us their views on the news ... Good morning! So, the question for our panel is: How much attention do you pay to the news and how do you find out what's going on in the world? Toby, would you be the first to give your view?

Toby Well, I think I'm reasonably well-informed about current affairs, but without really trying. My dad always has the news channel on in the mornings, and the headlines and breaking news are repeated in news flashes, so you kind of pick up on what's going on. There are always live broadcasts and correspondents reporting from somewhere in the world. I'll always ask my dad if I'm not sure about something, but the more you pay attention, the more you follow what's going on in the world.

Presenter And would you switch a news programme on yourself in the mornings?

Toby Well, actually, I would, yes. My dad has got me into the habit now, and I suppose that's a good thing.

Presenter And Becky, what about you?

Becky Well, it's different for me because I'm studying economics at school and our teacher is always asking us to follow the news, especially economic policy and world trade issues. So I have to.

Presenter How do you get your information?

Becky I look at news websites and news blogs, usually. I'm on my computer every day for other things like homework and Facebook, so it's the quickest and easiest thing to do. The online editions of the newspapers tend to be more up-to-date than the published ones, anyway.

Presenter And Mark, same question to you.

Mark I'm afraid I'm more like the 32% of teenagers in the USA that pay only casual attention to the news. I really don't have time and I'm not really into current affairs. I get up early for school and after going to school, doing homework, studying for exams and playing all the sport I do, there is very little time left for anything else. I rarely watch the TV at all or surf the Internet, anyway. So maybe I'm really like the 28% that pay no attention to it.

Presenter Sophie, is it the same for you?

Sophie Yes, probably. My parents get a newspaper most days during the week and the big Sunday editions at the weekend, so I'll glance at the headlines if I'm passing. But it usually isn't hard news that attracts my attention, more the human-interest stories and the

gossip columns, I'm afraid. I probably should be more interested in the news, but my life is busy with school, studying and friends, and I don't make time to really keep up with what's going on in the world outside.

Presenter Thank you, panel. And now we'd like to hear from you if you are aged between twelve and eighteen. You can contact the show on Twitter, by text or go to our website. Send us your views on the news.

2.29 Lesson 7C, Exercise 2

Twitter

Twitter can be described as part social networking site, part micro-blogging site. It allows users to say what they are doing, or what they are seeing or hearing, by posting messages on the Twitter website that their friends or 'followers' can see. The messages, called 'tweets', cannot exceed 140 characters in length, which is the defining characteristic of the service. Tweets are displayed on the user's profile page and on the home page of each of his or her followers. At first most people used Twitter to stay in touch with their friends and family; like other social networking sites, it was just a means of broadcasting where you are, what you are doing, what you are feeling and thinking. But it has since developed into a place where people share information, opinions and advice, and in that respect it resembles a blog. Whatever purpose it serves, it is incredibly popular and used by a huge number of influential people such as politicians, journalists and celebrities.

2.30 Lesson 7C, Exercises 4 and 5

Presenter I'm speaking to Maggie Harwood, a TV journalist based in London. How do you use Twitter, Maggie?

Maggie When I wake up, the first thing I do is log on to my Twitter account and see what's going on. If there's any breaking news, like an accident, a disaster, or the death of a celebrity, the first place you'll learn about it is on Twitter. I follow about 1,000 fellow journalists so there's usually something interesting there.

Presenter It sounds like an amazing way of communicating news.

Maggie Yes, it is – for sharing news, and sharing links. If I see an interesting article about something, I post the link on Twitter and everyone can see it. And you can also ask for news, post a message like 'Who knows about this or that?', and you'll get lots of replies.

Presenter What else do you like about it?

Maggie It teaches you to be really concise. You've only got 140 characters for each tweet; that's maybe 25 to 30 words. It won't let you overrun, so you learn to lose unnecessary words and only include the most important information.

Presenter It sounds like it's a great tool for journalists, but –

Maggie Yes, it is.

Presenter – are there any drawbacks to Twitter?

Maggie Yes, there are. The main issue is verification. How do you know what someone is tweeting is true?

Presenter How do you?

Maggie Well, ultimately, you don't. But you'll usually find that if it's an important news story, like an earthquake or a demonstration, lots of other people are tweeting the same kind of thing. You can also check who it is that's tweeting by looking at their 'bio' –

Presenter What's their 'bio'?

Maggie – biographical information about them. Are they journalists themselves? You can also check their past tweets. Are they serious or messing around, or – worse – spreading misinformation?

Presenter People do that, do they, spread false information?

Maggie Yes, it happens. And also you can reply to the tweet and ask for more information. So there are ways of building up a picture of the person and getting a good idea if they're reliable or not.

Presenter Any other disadvantages?

Maggie Yes, the word limit of 140 characters means it's difficult to analyse events properly or to give the context. Many events obviously can't be summed up in twenty or so words. But that isn't what Twitter is for.

Presenter So you believe the pros far outweigh the cons.

Maggie Yes, I do. Twitter has had an enormous impact on journalism. It's democratised the news.

Presenter What do you mean by that?

Maggie With Twitter, you get lots of different voices and perspectives, instead of all the information coming from one or two big news agencies. And it isn't edited or censored. So what you've got is lots of ordinary people reporting the news as they see it. And it's free!

2.31 Lesson 7D, Exercise 2

You've got mail!

With instant messaging and social networking, sending a message by post may not be something that you would automatically think of. However, until very recently, the post was the main means of communication and many people today still look forward to the postman's arrival every morning.

By contrast, in the 1800s, the knock of the postman was something to dread. At that time, the person receiving a letter had to pay for it. The cost was dependent upon the distance the letter had travelled and the number of pages it consisted of. Most ordinary people couldn't afford to receive a letter. So how had this situation come about?

In 1516, King Henry VIII set up the Royal Mail (for royal communications and reasons of national security). From there a demand arose for a public postal service due to an increase in literacy amongst the general population and for business requirements. By the mid-nineteenth century the British had to put up with a very complex, expensive postal service.

Roland Hill, a young enthusiastic Victorian man, wanted to reform it. His intention was to make postage accessible to all citizens by introducing much cheaper charges. Hill's new idea was to charge a universal single rate of postage. This would reduce at one stroke the complicated calculations necessary to organise payment of a letter, and make the post office efficient. He argued that his reforms would result in more people sending more letters, which in turn would lead to wider social benefits and increased profits.

Hill bombarded the Government with his ideas. At first they were not well received by anyone in a position of power, but eventually the Government agreed to set up an enquiry. During this enquiry ministers from all over the country reported what their constituents had told them. They said that ordinary people felt terribly burdened by high postage costs and told stories of poor people having to sell furniture to receive a letter from their loved ones. Ministers reported that post office fees had placed an intolerable burden on the working classes. People had to go away to find work, but could not afford to stay in touch with their families.

The debate dragged on for months, but finally Hill was given two years to reform the British Post Office. First, he needed to come up with a way of showing that the letter was pre-paid. He experimented with various kinds of envelopes, but settled on a type of 'stamp'. But what could he put on it that was instantly recognisable and difficult to forge? The answer was staring out at him from the coins in his hand – the head of the Queen, Victoria. On 1 May 1840, the world's first postage stamp was put on sale. At first no one wanted to lick a stamp – and the idea of licking the Queen seemed quite impolite – but the idea eventually caught on. To this day, British stamps are the only ones that do not bear the name of the country. Shortly after, another invention became necessary, as people now needed a letterbox at home. At first, many people objected to having a hole cut in their front door, but again this new idea soon became commonplace.

Overnight, the post office was revolutionised. People started writing more and more letters to each other, and the postman was no longer feared, but became a local hero. For the first time, Britain had a fair, cheap and efficient postal service and this had a profound impact on ordinary people's lives. Businesses flourished. Children wrote to parents, families to relatives across the world, lovers to each other. Valentine, Christmas and birthday cards were invented. Nowadays, we write far fewer letters than we used to, but the post office is still very busy – delivering goods ordered online!

2.32 Lesson 7E, Exercises 1 and 2

- Man** The economy is in a mess, isn't it?
- Woman** Well, it's true that the economy has not been performing well, but –
- Man** That's because you've failed to make the necessary cuts in public spending, isn't it?
- Woman** No, it isn't our fault. We didn't cause these problems. If you remember, the previous government left the nation's finances in a terrible mess, and we are doing our best to deal with it.
- Man** So, you aren't going to cut public spending?
- Woman** No, that would be very dangerous and deepen the crisis. We are going to cut taxes and create jobs. That will strengthen the economy and put us on the road to recovery.

2.33 Lesson 7E, Exercise 4

- 1 Please, please let me stay out late this evening.
- 2 I don't care what you say. I'm not coming home early!
- 3 Look, I definitely won't be home late this evening.
- 4 No, you're wrong. I didn't get home late last night.
- 5 OK, it's true I arrived home very late last night.
- 6 As I said before, I'm going to be home late this evening.

3.02 Grammar Builder 7.4, Exercise 2

1

Mum Charlotte, did you do this? Look, this glass is broken.

Charlotte Yes. Sorry, Mum. I did it while I was washing up.

2

Girl Simon, please lend me your iPod.

Simon I'm not sure. I might need it.

Girl Oh, please, please. Just this once. I'll take great care of it.

3

Boy Did you see that? I played brilliantly today. I scored five goals!

Girl Oh, listen to you. Anyone would think you were Lionel Messi.

4

Dad Well done, son. You played really well today.

Son Thanks, Dad. It was a good match.

5

Boy Let's go to the cinema this afternoon.

Girl Good idea. What's on?

Boy There's that new comedy with Ashton Kutcher.

6

Woman Here, have a biscuit with your coffee.

Man Thanks, but I won't. I need to watch my weight.

7

Boy Would you like to come to my party next Saturday?

Girl I'd love to. Thank you very much.

8

Man Let me help you with that bag. I can carry it for you.

Woman Thanks, but I can manage.

Man No, really. Let me. It's no trouble.

3.03 Lesson 7F, Exercise 6

Presenter Do you think young people should be allowed to stay out late?

Boy Um ... I haven't given that a great deal of thought before. I don't have any strong feelings about it, really. There'll be times when it's fine for teenagers to stay out late. Let me see ... for example, when they've been invited to a party at a friend's house, and the parents know where he or she is, and they're sure that they won't ... um, I'm not sure how to say it in English ... that they won't have problems or be in danger. Having said that, there are often times when it isn't sensible or right for teenagers to be out late. To my mind, it'd be silly to stay out very late when you have school the next day. But then again, I guess it's OK once in a while.

3.04 Get Ready for your Exam 7, Exercise 2

Event 1

See the latest in contemporary dance, inspired by visual art, being showcased at the Lyceum Theatre this weekend. The brilliant choreographer Michael Clark will present *Whose Zoo* – his exciting new production – and performances are free for those who apply in time. Admission is by ticket only, but can be acquired online or in person at the theatre. So do take advantage of this rare opportunity to witness an amazing dance premiere at no cost!

Event 2

When you hear the name Todd Barry, you know you are in for an evening of rare entertainment! This man has appeared on chat shows and stand up shows too numerous to mention. Take the opportunity to see him live tomorrow for one night only at the Caroline Theatre on Broadway. His quick wit, smart one-liners and acute observations of everyday life will have you rolling in the aisles! Book tickets in advance at carolines.com. Tickets cost \$27 for adults.

Event 3

Add a little drama and amusement to your life this weekend. Cutting-edge director Daniel Fish highlights the work of the novelist David Foster Wallace in *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again*. This highly entertaining dramatic piece gives the author's words to six actors in a different way every night. See it this weekend at the Chocolate Factory Theatre in Long Island at 8 p.m. Tickets cost an unbeatable \$15. Book online or by telephone on 212-352-3101.

Event 4

Sign up for a Broadway classic this Saturday! If you haven't seen it before, or even if you have, you will enjoy the devilish and delightful tale of murder, greed and corruption that is *Chicago*. Set in this notorious city during the jazz-age twenties, *Chicago* keeps the story moving with massive showstopping song and dance numbers. The original choreography by the brilliant Bob Fosse, and the now-classic score, will hold you spellbound. Join the queue for a ticket – it's worth it!

Event 5

Go off-Broadway for something totally different this weekend. This is not a traditional, story-driven production – there isn't even a stage for the performers, or seats for the audience. Instead *Fuerzabruta* is a full-on 360 degree experience – the action happens around, above and among you. The performance is completely non-verbal and uses music, dance, acrobatics and visual art to excite a whole range of emotions, from humour to suspense to pure exhilarating joy. Book a ticket today from \$75.