

PRUEBA/PROVA: CELEBRITY NEWS

EXAM

CELEBRITY NEWS

In her quest to meet the rich and famous, Emma has bribed security guards, donned disguises, and even climbed through windows! But she does not think of herself as a criminal. 'I'm just doing my job. I only get paid for good stories, so I have to take extreme measures if I want to earn a decent income!' Emma Worth writes for a famous gossip magazine. She is one of a growing number of journalists who are using their professional skills to hunt and capture the so-called 'glitterati' unawares, each hoping to score an exclusive, and preferably shocking, scoop.

Gossip-mongering is nothing new. Indeed, sensationalist stories about the royal family (the A-list of their time) were published only a century after the invention of the printing press – in 1453! However, in recent years, our celebrity obsession seems to have escalated. Last year, *Heat* and *Closer*, the two best-selling UK gossip magazines, sold over a million copies every week, and new celebrity websites and TV programmes pop up every month. Even the traditionally more 'serious' press are turning to celebrities to boost sales. For example, the broadsheet newspaper *The Telegraph* now has a regular gossip column called 'The Spy'.

But many people are critical of celebrity gossip hunters like Emma. Some stars complain that they are being denied a basic right to privacy and respect, and even that their lives have been ruined by press intrusion. What's more, the gossip trade is often very cruel and hurtful. It seems that there is a big reader demand for articles that dig the dirt on the stars that cheat, or the 'babes' with eating disorders. Some non-celebs are unhappy too. According to one highly-regarded news reporter, 'Our hunger for gossip means that there is less media coverage of vitally important issues, such as politics and the environment. I didn't join the profession to write kiss-and-tell stories. We need to stop taking this trivia so seriously!'

1. Read the text. Indicate whether the following statements are TRUE or FALSE and write down which part of the text justifies your answer. [2 POINTS]

- a) Gossip writers are particularly keen to be the first to write about a story, especially if that story is likely to be a big surprise to readers.
- b) In the sixteenth century, people were equally as obsessed with celebrity gossip as we are today.
- c) Editors of traditional newspapers now publish celebrity gossip in a belief it will help sell more copies.
- d) People are no longer interested in reading about the unflattering or shocking secrets of celebrities.

2. Answer the following questions in your own words according to the text. [2 POINTS]

- a) Why does Emma wear disguises and break into buildings?
- b) Why is one journalist unhappy about the fashion for celebrity gossip?

3. Find words or phrases in the text that correspond to the words and definitions given.

[1,5 POINTS]

- a) put on clothes to hide your true identity (paragraph 1)
- b) a piece of exciting news that is reported for the first time (paragraph 1)
- c) encouraging or spreading rumours (paragraph 2)
- d) became worse or more serious (paragraph 2)
- e) find out unpleasant or harmful information about someone and tell others about it (paragraph 3)

4. Choose the correct option, a, b, c or d for each question and COPY the sentence onto your answer sheet. [1,5 POINTS]

1. Journalists want to become celebrity hunters because ...

- a) they are obsessed with the rich and famous.
- b) they enjoy breaking the law.
- c) they hope to make money.
- d) celebrities are easy to write about.

2. In the past, people were ...

- a) just as interested in gossip as we are today.
- b) mainly interested in gossip about kings and queens.
- c) able to read gossip stories shortly after printing was invented.
- d) not interested in gossip stories.

3. One journalist is not in favour of gossip, because he or she ...

- a) thinks that all gossip is a waste of time.
- b) would prefer to write about more serious news.
- c) hates having to write kiss-and-tell stories every day.
- d) thinks it is too difficult to find interesting stories.

5. Write 120–150 words on the following topic. [3 POINTS]

Celebrities have a right to privacy. Do you agree?