

PRUEBA: CELEBRITY NEWS

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 appear every year. Even the traditionally more 'serious' press are turning to celebrities to boost sales. For example, the broadsheet newspaper *The Telegraph* now has a regular, salacious gossip column called 'The Spy'.

But many people are critical of celebrity gossip hunters like Emma, not least the celebrities themselves, who complain that they are being denied a basic right to privacy and respect. Celebrity gossip is often very cruel. It seems we love to read about the football stars that cheat on their girlfriends, or the Hollywood 'babes' with eating disorders. We love to poke fun too: at photographs of celebrities exposing their cellulite on the beach, or looking the worse for wear after a night out. You would need to be very thick-skinned indeed not to feel a little bit hurt by this type of relentlessly negative coverage.

Fortunately for the celebrities, however, it seems that a backlash is beginning. Sales of gossip publications are starting to slow, and industry analysts predict that the public will soon become bored with celebrity news. For some journalists, this change of heart cannot come too soon. According to one highly-regarded news reporter, 'Our hunger for gossip means that there is less media coverage of more 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. Answer these questions about the text. Use your own words whenever possible. (2 points: 1 point each)

1. Why does Emma wear disguises and break into buildings?
2. Why do some celebrities criticize gossip hunters?

2. Read the following statements, decide whether they are true or false and justify your answer by quoting evidence from the text. (2 points: 0.5 points each)

1. Emma worries about breaking the law.
2. Broadsheet newspapers are only concerned with serious news, not celebrity news.
3. *Closer* is one of the most popular gossip magazines in Britain.
4. One journalist is unhappy about our modern obsession with gossip.



3. Find in the text the words or groups of words which match these definitions: (1 point: 0.2 points each)

- a. salary, money that you earn
- b. rapidly grown
- c. insensitive, not concerned by what other people think
- d. constantly, unchangingly
- e. a negative reaction to something which used to be viewed positively

4. Complete the text using the correct words from the box below. There are two words that you won't need. The word in gap (d) will need a capital letter. (2 points: 0.25 points each)

Why are we so interested (a) ____ celebrity scandal? It seems that we enjoy reading (b) ____ other people's problems and misfortunes. Perhaps this (c) ____ us feel better about the fact that we are not rich or famous. (d) ____ day we see adverts and television programmes featuring people (e) ____ are richer and (f) ____ successful than we are. Maybe we need (g) ____ read about celebrity problems in order to (h) ____ ourselves that nobody's perfect.

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5. Write a composition of between 150–200 words on ONE of the following topics:

- 1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being a celebrity?
- 2. Imagine that you have just seen a famous celebrity. Write a narrative describing what you saw and heard.