

# Talk a Lot

## Media

### What Would You Do?

Read the problems below and decide which group each one belongs in: **Radio, Television, Journalism, or New Media.** There are four problems in each group. Then offer some advice to each person. Try to use some of the **discussion words, idioms, phrasal verbs, and slang words and phrases** from this unit in each answer:

1. Two months ago I bought a fantastic mobile, which I was so happy with. But I've just found out that they're about to bring out [launch] a new version with better features for the same price! Should I get one...?	2. I want my granny to buy a new digital radio, because I know that she'll love some of the new digital-only stations. She's listened to my digital radio, but declares that her old analogue set sounds much better...	3. They're launching a brand new MP3 player on Friday, and I want to be the first to get my hands on one! Problem is, to be first in the queue I'll have to camp outside the store overnight, and I've got college the next day...	4. I'm a fairly well-known daytime-TV personality; a respectable married man, with two teenage children. However, last week I had a fling with a pole dancer, and she's just told me that she's sold her story to a tabloid...
5. My kids are real couch potatoes, but they start screaming if I threaten to turn off the telly. I want them to watch less and go out and play with their mates. On the other hand, I don't want to upset the little dears...	6. I made up a story about a politician and my paper ran it. It forced the guy to resign. Everybody said it was right to print the article - although I know it was untrue. Should I come clean and apologise? I'll probably lose my job...	7. Very often I find that I'm in the middle of my favourite programme, and the channel suddenly changes, and we're watching whatever my partner wants to watch. How can I get to have the remote control once in a while...?	8. I called in to a late-night phone-in show on the radio, to discuss a personal problem, but the DJ made fun of me and some of my friends heard it. Now they won't stop teasing me...
9. I've started using a cloud computing service, and it's really convenient, because I can sit down and work on any computer with internet access. However, my kid brother seems intent on stealing my password...	10. I work in a factory, where the tasks are repetitive and monotonous. We usually listen to the radio - all the latest chart hits. But recently a new gaffer [boss] has banned the radio and plays classical music CDs instead...	11. I'm a journalist on a local rag [low-quality newspaper] and I haven't had a good scoop for ages. My boss has ordered me to bring back "something sensational" for tomorrow's edition. How can I uncover an amazing story...?	12. I recorded the final of a talent contest last night, and I can't wait to watch it when I get home. I haven't heard the result yet, and I'm terrified that one of my friends will spoil it for me - or I'll find out another way...
13. I'm just about to settle down and enjoy the season finale of my favourite TV show, but I can see that the TV Licensing inspectors are coming. I haven't got a licence! What shall I do? I don't want to miss it...	14. I get a magazine each week, but I often throw it away unread. When I do have time to read it, though, I love it. I'm thinking of cancelling my subscription, because of the cost. But what if I miss some juicy gossip...?	15. I'm a DJ on a national music radio station. I used to have really high ratings, but recently they've been getting lower and lower. I seem to have run out of ideas for new, original features and competitions...	16. Somebody I don't get on with has set up an embarrassing website dedicated to me, using pictures from my Facebook page. I think they're making fun of me, because I refused to help them cheat in an exam...

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### Discussion Questions – Group 1

- 1.** What is your favourite... a) radio station, b) DJ, c) TV channel, d) TV programme, e) newspaper, f) magazine, g) website, h) podcast, i) gadget, j) technology brand? Why? Which do you dislike? Why?
- 2.** Radio is over a hundred years old. Why hasn't it ever been replaced by a more modern form of media?
- 3.** Do you approve of the actions of the paparazzi? How do they manage to make a living? Do certain celebrities invite prying eyes? If yes, who... how... and why?
- 4.** Would you prefer to be able to receive over a thousand mediocre TV channels, or just four really brilliant ones?
- 5.** Why is social networking so popular? Are you part of a social network? How did we use to keep in touch before the arrival of social networking?
- 6.** Who is your favourite TV presenter? Would you like to become one? Why? / Why not? What qualifications and skills do you think you'd need to be successful?
- 7.** What would happen if the media just stopped production? How would it affect your life?
- 8.** How do freesheets (free newspapers) make money? Is it a good business model?
- 9.** Which TV shows get you and your friends and family talking, producing "water-cooler" moments? How do they achieve such an effect?
- 10.** Should the internet be censored so that it contains only material that everybody agrees with?
- 11.** Do you subscribe to any magazines? If yes, why? What do you like about them?
- 12.** Is it possible to access an unbiased source of news? Why? / Why not?
- 13.** Why is it much cheaper to buy a radio than a television or MP3 player? Which form of media offers the best value for money?
- 14.** Do you know anybody who is a complete Luddite or technophobe [fearing and rejecting new technology] – or are *you* one? What effect does this have on their (or *your*) life? Should we always gratefully embrace new technological advances, or should we be more cautious?
- 15.** Describe what you think the *next* popular form of mass media will look like.

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### Discussion Questions – Group 2

- 1.** If you could keep only one form of media, which would you choose? Why?
- 2.** Do you listen to drama on the radio? How does it differ from drama on TV or in films?
- 3.** Are newspapers becoming obsolete? If yes, why? Do you think they'll still be around in ten years' time? If not, what will replace them? Will it be a change for the better?
- 4.** Why do technology companies continue to produce more and more new gadgets, and updates for existing gadgets? Haven't we got enough devices?
- 5.** How can students use different parts of the media to improve their language skills?
- 6.** Who controls the remote control in your home? Why? How did they gain this power? How do you feel about this situation?
- 7.** Are these things too expensive: a) magazines, b) internet connection, c) satellite TV packages, d) newspapers, e) TV licence? What media is available to you for nothing?
- 8.** Imagine that you could be a top radio DJ and present your own two hour show. What kind of music or speech content would you broadcast? Imagine the running order for the show.
- 9.** Do you think of the planet when purchasing new consumer goods, such as mobiles, MP3 players and flat screen TVs? What kind of natural resources are required to produce these products? Where do these resources come from? What happens to the consumer goods that we throw away? How do you dispose of waste generated by using the media?
- 10.** Why do newspapers contain so many articles? Nobody can possibly read them all!
- 11.** How influenced are you by the media? How does it affect your decisions?
- 12.** How is the media funded? How much do you pay towards it? How much *should* we have to pay? Do you pay to surf the internet? What do you think about adverts in the media, e.g. on TV or on the radio / internet? How far do they dictate your spending habits?
- 13.** Do you like hearing and reading about celebrities in the media? Why? / Why not?
- 14.** Should the government control the press? Why? / Why not?
- 15.** If you could choose *anybody*, who would you most like to interview for a newspaper / magazine article? Choose one living person and one dead person. Why would you choose them? Think of three questions to ask each. Invite your partner to imagine their answers.

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### Agree or Disagree?

Do you agree or disagree with these statements? Say why. Find out what your partner thinks, and mark the boxes with ✓ for agree and x for disagree:

Me: My Partner:

- |                                                                                                                                                                     |                          |                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I really need a new mobile.                                                                                                                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. <i>“Radio is a medium of entertainment which permits millions of people to listen to the same joke at the same time, and yet remain lonesome.”</i> – T. S. Eliot | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. We have so many TV channels, but there’s never anything to watch.                                                                                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I set aside “me-time” especially to read my favourite magazine.                                                                                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. The media is too invasive. I feel like I’m being overwhelmed by the constantly updated flow of information.                                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I’ve never listened to a podcast in my life. I don’t see the point.                                                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Online news and blogging is sounding the death knell for traditional newspapers.                                                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. I love reading the latest celebrity gossip.                                                                                                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. I hate people who give away free newspapers in the street. They’re always getting in my way – and they won’t take no for an answer!                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. The media continually distracts us from what is important in life.                                                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. <i>“Where ignorance is bliss it’s foolish to borrow your neighbour’s newspaper.”</i> – Kin Hubbard                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. I wouldn’t recognise any of the artists in the Top 40, I’m afraid!                                                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. I’m in charge of the remote control in my home.                                                                                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. <i>“I find television very educating. Every time somebody turns on the set, I go into the other room and read a book.”</i> – Groucho Marx                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. Most of what the news media produces is either speculation or downright lies, with very little information that is actually true.                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. Children and teenagers should not have the internet in their rooms.                                                                                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |