

21ST Century **Communication**

LISTENING, SPEAKING, AND CRITICAL THINKING

Second Edition

CHRISTIEN LEE

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21ST Century Communication 4

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Topics and Featured Speakers

1

Reality Check

Q: Can we trust the media?

**SUPASORN
SUWAJANAKORN**

*Fake Videos of Real People—
and How to Spot Them*



2

Self Therapy

Q: How much do our habits
affect who we are?

RON GUTMAN

The Hidden Power of Smiling



3

More than Words

Q: How can we communicate
better?

ERNESTO SIROLLI

*Want to Help Someone? Shut
Up and Listen!*



4

Risk Takers

Q: When are risks worth taking?

KASHFIA RAHMAN

*How Risk-Taking Changes
a Teenager's Brain*



5

Food for Thought

Q: Should we rethink what
we eat?

ISHA DATAR

*How We Could Eat Real Meat
without Harming Animals*



6

Hooked on Our Phones?

Q: Do we use our phones
too much?

ERIN SULLIVAN

*Does Photographing a Moment
Steal the Experience from You?*



7

Generations

Q: What are generations
and do they matter?

LEAH GEORGES

*How Generational Stereotypes
Hold Us Back at Work*



8

Mixing Cultures

Q: Is cultural exchange
always a good thing?

JIM CHUCHU

*Why Are Stolen African Artifacts
Still in Western Museums?*



Scope and Sequence

UNIT / THEME		LESSONS		
		VOCABULARY	VIEWING	LANGUAGE
1		Words related to news media Collocations with <i>media</i>	▶ A class discussion about fear in the media Note-taking Skill Abbreviations for numerical information Listening Skill Recognize the repetition of important details	▶ Three talks about preferred news sources Explain your preferred news sources Communication Skill Ask rhetorical questions
2		Words related to habits Forms of <i>adopt</i> , <i>adjust</i> , <i>modify</i> , and <i>persevere</i>	▶ A video podcast about improving your life Note-taking Skill Use visuals to guide note-taking Listening Skill Listen for supporting evidence	▶ Four excerpts from advertisements Persuade a friend to break a bad habit Communication Skill Start with selling points
3		Words related to communication Different meanings of <i>objective</i> and <i>grasp</i>	▶ TED-Ed <i>How Miscommunication Happens (and How to Avoid It)</i> Note-taking Skill Focus on essential ideas and details Listening Skill Understand analogies	▶ Two short talks containing useful analogies Explain how you would handle different situations Communication Skill Use contrast
4		Words related to risk Idioms containing the word <i>odds</i>	▶ TED-Ed <i>The Psychology behind Irrational Decisions</i> Note-taking Skill Note technical terms Listening Skill Understand technical terms	▶ A talk about logical fallacies Help a listener follow along as you explain a concept Communication Skill Help listeners follow ideas
5		Words related to farming and food Forms of <i>consume</i> , <i>equivalent</i> , and <i>harvest</i>	▶ TED-Ed <i>Should We Eat Bugs?</i> Note-taking Skill Notice time references Listening Skill Recognize persuasive language	▶ Three short talks about sustainable farming Explain why some foods might be good or bad Communication Skill Use qualifiers and intensifiers
6		Words related to phone usage and addiction Forms of the word <i>addict</i>	▶ A video podcast about phone addiction Note-taking Skill Notice questions Listening Skill Recognize a speaker's purpose	▶ A talk about pagers Use adverbials to talk about a past experience Communication Skill Describe time, frequency, and duration
7		Words related to generations Collocations with <i>debt</i>	▶ An online discussion about issues affecting young people Note-taking Skill Match speakers with their ideas Listening Skill Recognize perspectives	▶ Excerpts from a discussion Agree and disagree politely Communication Skill Respond to people's opinions
8		Words related to cultural appreciation and appropriation Collocations with <i>consideration</i> , <i>disrespect</i> , <i>offend</i> , and <i>rejection</i>	▶ A lecture about cultural appropriation Note-taking Skill Practice visual note-taking Listening Skill Distinguish facts from opinions	▶ A talk about influences on the English language Describe different aspects of culture Communication Skill Choose the right voice

LESSONS				
D COMMUNICATION	E VOCABULARY	F VIEWING	G CRITICAL THINKING	H PRESENTATION
 A conversation about news headlines Prioritize different news stories	Words to talk about fake images Forms of <i>detect</i> , <i>misrepresent</i> , <i>misuse</i> , and <i>verify</i>	 TED Talk <i>Fake Videos of Real People—and How to Spot Them</i> Supasorn Suwajanakorn Pronunciation Skill Thought groups	Analyze an infographic about how to recognize fake content online Synthesize and evaluate ideas about different kinds of false information	Individual presentation: The reliability of a news source. Presentation Skill Start with a question
 A talk about a life-changing product Persuade someone to start using a product	Words related to feelings and behavior Collocations with <i>emotional</i>	 TED Talk <i>The Hidden Power of Smiling</i> Ron Gutman Pronunciation Skill Dropped <i>t</i> and <i>d</i> sounds	Analyze an infographic about different types of smile Synthesize and evaluate ideas about the effects of smiling	Individual presentation: A habit that can upgrade your life Presentation Skill Use visuals effectively
 A conversation about a business meeting Help solve a communication problem	Words related to charity Verbs and nouns with the prefix <i>co-</i>	 TED Talk <i>Want to Help Someone? Shut Up and Listen!</i> Ernesto Sirolli Pronunciation Skill Pauses for effect	Analyze an infographic about listening styles Synthesize and evaluate ideas about listening effectively	Group presentation: How listening more would benefit certain groups Presentation Skill Use gestures effectively
 A talk about perceived risk and actual risk Identify and explain risks that are often misunderstood	Words related to risky behavior Forms of the word <i>mature</i>	 TED Talk <i>How Risk-Taking Changes a Teenager's Brain</i> Kashfia Rahman Pronunciation Skill Digraphs and Consonant Clusters	Analyze an infographic about risk assessment Synthesize and evaluate ideas about risk, consequence, and reward	Group presentation: How risk-taking can be both beneficial and harmful Presentation Skill Use personal anecdotes
 A focus group for a new restaurant Give feedback on ideas for a restaurant	Words related to scientific food innovations Synonyms and collocations of <i>breakthrough</i>	 TED Talk <i>How We Could Eat Real Meat without Harming Animals</i> Isha Datar Pronunciation Skill Stress and emphasis in numerical expressions	Analyze an infographic about the meat industry Synthesize and evaluate ideas about switching to meat alternatives	Group presentation: A possible solution to one aspect of the food crisis Presentation Skill Make your presentation relatable
 Three people talking about their phone usage Compare different people's phone usage	Words to talk about phones and photography Collocations with <i>compelling</i>	 TED Talk <i>Does Photographing a Moment Steal the Experience from You?</i> Erin Sullivan Pronunciation Skill Strong and weak forms of <i>that</i>	Analyze an infographic about why young people travel Synthesize and evaluate ideas about phones, social media, and travel	Individual presentation: When taking photos and videos is worthwhile, and when it isn't Presentation Skill Provide context
 A conversation between friends about their problems Compare the concerns of people from different generations	Words related to generational stereotypes Forms of <i>pragmatic</i> and <i>idealistic</i>	 TED Talk <i>How Generational Stereotypes Hold Us Back at Work</i> Leah Georges Pronunciation Skill Stress in prepositional phrases	Analyze an infographic about what workers want Synthesize and evaluate ideas about different generations in the workplace	Group presentation: The ideal workplace for your generation Presentation Skill Deliver a dynamic presentation
 A talk about Italian-American food Analyze different cultural influences	Words to talk about culturally important objects Forms of <i>acquire</i> , <i>campaign</i> , <i>discrimination</i> , <i>feature</i> , and <i>initiative</i>	 TED Talk <i>Why Are Stolen African Artifacts Still in Western Museums?</i> Jim Chuchu Pronunciation Skill Use emphasis	Analyze an infographic about culturally significant objects Synthesize and evaluate ideas about cultural restitution	Individual presentation: Things that represent a culture you appreciate Presentation Skill Use repetition as a rhetorical device

Welcome to 21st Century Communication, Second Edition

21st Century Communication Listening, Speaking, and Critical Thinking

uses big ideas from TED and National Geographic to look at one topic from different perspectives, present real and effective communication models, and prepare students to share their ideas confidently in English. Each unit develops students' listening, speaking, and critical thinking skills to achieve their academic and personal goals.



A street sign in Stockholm, Sweden.

6

Hooked on Our Phones?

Q Do we use our phones too much?

Our phones are amazing devices, but do we use them too much? The street sign in the photo was put up by two Swedish artists precisely for that reason. Its purpose was to remind pedestrians to look up from their phones before crossing the street. In this unit, we'll explore the issues of phone usage and addiction, and consider whether smartphones are doing us more harm than good.

THINK AND DISCUSS

- 1 Look at the photo and read the caption. Do you think the sign in the photo is effective? Why, or why not?
- 2 Look at the essential question and the unit introduction. How much do you use your phone? Do you think you're hooked on your phone?

Each unit opens with an **impactful photograph** to introduce the topic and act as a springboard for classroom discussion.

UNIT 6

Building Vocabulary

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Use ten words related to phone usage and addiction.
- Use different forms of the word addict.

LEARN KEY WORDS

A Listen to and read the information below. Discuss the questions with a partner.

1. What are some of the things smartphones have replaced?
2. Which mobile phone milestone do you think was most significant?
3. Which of the phone functions mentioned in the article do you think is most useful?

MOBILE PHONE MILESTONES

Mobile phones **empower** billions around the world. They allow people to do many things that would have been difficult or impossible to do in the past. They've become so **widespread** and central to our lives, in fact, that we often forget just how lucky we are to have them.

From a **historical perspective**, mobile phone technology has come a long way in a short time. It's hard to imagine that the pocket-sized gadgets we have today started off in 1973 as a bulky machine that did just one thing. Fast forward a few decades though and things get exciting very quickly.

Phones double up as gaming devices, music players, and cameras. They connect to the internet and function as mini computers. They sync up with other **gadgets** like speakers and TVs. They replace books and maps. And we use them to get work done, create art, and even find love.

These days, there's not much we can't do on a good mobile phone—which begs the question: what does the future of these **versatile** devices look like? It's hard to imagine, but whichever direction things go, one thing is for sure: phones aren't getting any less popular than they are today.



Q Do we use our phones too much?

Our phones are amazing devices, but do we use them too much? The street sign in the photo was put up by two Swedish artists precisely for that reason. Its purpose was to remind pedestrians to look up from their phones before crossing the street. In this unit, we'll explore the issues of phone usage and addiction, and consider whether smartphones are doing us more harm than good.

NEW The Essential Question outlines the central idea of the unit and directs students' focus to the main topic.

UPDATED Building Vocabulary uses infographics and readings to introduce vocabulary in context and teach words and phrases needed for academic studies.

Big ideas inspire many viewpoints. What's yours?

Note-taking Skill

Noticing Questions

When a speaker asks questions, make detailed notes about the responses you hear. This is because questions often signpost new ideas, key details, or what the speaker will discuss next. They outline how the talk is organized.

UNIT
6

Viewing and Note-taking

BEFORE VIEWING

- A How much time would someone have to spend on their phone for you to consider them a phone addict? Discuss with a partner.

WHILE VIEWING

- B **LISTEN FOR MAIN IDEAS** Watch Segment 1 of a video podcast about phone addiction. Check the statements you think the speaker says agree with.

1. ☐ Books are probably just as harmful as phones.
2. ☐ People use their phones a lot.
3. ☐ Something is only really an addiction if it causes harm.
4. ☐ Most people are probably addicted to their phones.

- C **LISTEN FOR QUESTIONS** Read the questions below. Then watch Segment 1 again. Summarize what the speaker says after asking each question.

1. "But are these pocket-sized gadgets really a problem?"
2. "But what if ... the small rectangular object ... were a book instead?"
3. "Why does one feel OK, but the other feel like an addiction?"

- D **INFER** Match the questions in Exercise C with the reason the speaker asks them.

1. "But are these pocket-sized gadgets really a problem?"
2. "But what if ... the small rectangular object ... were a book instead?"
3. "Why does one feel OK, but the other feel like an addiction?"

- a. to introduce the main idea of the talk
- b. to explain what it really means to be addicted
- c. to show that addiction isn't simply doing something a lot

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Note-taking Skill

Noticing Questions

When a speaker asks questions, make detailed notes about the responses you hear. This is because questions often signpost new ideas, key details, or what the speaker will discuss next. They outline how the talk is organized.

UPDATED Viewing and Note-taking allows students to explore one aspect of the unit theme and sharpen their academic skills with note-taking and listening comprehension practice.

- E **LISTEN FOR PURPOSE** Watch Segment 2 of the video podcast. Then answer the questions.

1. Why does the speaker list so many different phone functions?
 - a. to explain why people use their phones so much
 - b. to show how addicted we are to our phones
2. Why does the speaker ask, "Does addiction really explain why we use our phones so much?"
 - a. to show how little we understand about phone addiction
 - b. to show that heavy phone usage is not the same as phone addiction
3. Why does the speaker bring up history and different technological advancements?
 - a. to warn us not to make the same mistakes we made in the past
 - b. to show that we used to feel the same way about other technologies
4. What is the speaker's overall purpose?
 - a. to show how common phone addiction is
 - b. to challenge the idea of phone addiction

AFTER VIEWING

- F **REFLECT** Work with a partner. Discuss the questions below.

1. Look at your answers in Exercise A. Do you still feel the same way after watching the video?
2. The speaker compares phones to books, and later to radio, TV, and video games. Do you think phones are more harmful than these other things? Why, or why not?
3. In the talk, the speaker asks, "Are we all really addicted to our phones?" What is your view?

Most people are probably not addicted to their phones, but maybe a small percentage is ... Personally, I think we are addicted to our phones. Just trying going a day without it and see how you feel ...



Many people find it hard to put their phones away at night.

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UNIT
6

Noticing Language

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Notice language for describing time, frequency, and duration.
- Use adverbials to talk about a past experience.

LISTEN FOR LANGUAGE

Describe time, frequency, and duration

- A Work with a partner. Read the phrases below. Add them to the correct column in the chart.

briefly	after I've finished	for about
recently	a short while later	for almost
regularly	three weeks ago	every so often
around the time	occasionally	(twice) a year

Time (when)	Frequency (how often)	Duration (how long)

- B Complete the sentences from the talk in Lesson B using the expressions below. Then listen to the excerpts from the talk to check your answers. The first one has been done for you.

times a day	all the time	hundreds of years ago
many years later	every day	once every four minutes

1. "We see headlines ... all the time ... telling us that mobile phone addiction is widespread—that it's something we need to be worried about."
2. "Picture in your mind a teenager who spends many hours ... looking at a small, rectangular object."
3. "They check their phones about 340 ... That's about ..."
4. "... when the printing press was invented, people panicked about the destructive effects books and the ideas they contained would have on society. The same fear and anxiety returned ..."

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Communication Skill

Describing Time, Frequency, and Duration

Adverbials are words, phrases, or clauses that act as adverbs. You can use time adverbials to say *when* something happened, frequency adverbials to say *how often*, and duration adverbials to say *how long*.

- C Listen to a talk about phones. Complete the sentences using the expressions you hear.

1. ... two decades, ... people carried a different sort of mobile telecommunications device in their pockets.
2. You'd see them everywhere ... And you'd hear them go off ...
3. To page someone, you had to dial a number and ... type in a call-back number before pressing the "send" key ... the person receiving the page would hear a beep ...
4. But that was all ... that mobile phones started to become popular.

- D Complete the sentences below so that they are true for you. Share your answers with a partner.

1. I love ... I do it ... times a ...
2. I remember when I ... Many years later, I still ...
3. I ... all the time. After I've finished, ...
4. Every year, around the time when ... I always ...
5. Every so often, whenever I'm feeling bored, ...

- E Work with a partner. Read the description on the right and guess what it refers to. Then write your own descriptions, using the expressions from Exercises A and B. Can your partner guess what you're describing?

I do this once or twice a week when my fridge looks empty. I might go to the bank before I do this, and I might spend time in the kitchen after I've finished.

COMMUNICATE

- F Follow these steps:
1. Choose one of the topics below, and make notes for a short talk, including some adverbials.
 2. Work with a partner. Each person should speak for two minutes about their topic and then answer any follow-up questions.

a vacation you once took

a place you used to live in

a phone you used to have

a job or course you once did

PART 1 109

NEW Noticing Language provides students with useful language structures and communication skills to share their ideas confidently.

NEW Communicating Ideas encourages students to express their opinions, make decisions, and explore solutions to problems through collaboration.

UNIT 6
Communicating Ideas

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Use appropriate language for talking about time, frequency, and duration
- Collaborate to compare different people's phone usage

ASSIGNMENT
Task: You are going to collaborate in a group to learn about and discuss your cell phone habits.

LISTEN FOR INFORMATION

A **LISTEN FOR MAIN IDEAS** Listen to three people describing how they use their phones. Who do you think uses their phone the most? Whose phone usage would you consider the most concerning?

B **LISTEN FOR DETAILS** The pie charts show Naomi, Ruben, and Sasha's weekly phone usage. Listen again and write their names below the charts (1-3). Then, write the missing activities (a-d). Finally, calculate their total weekly phone usage.

a.

1. _____

b.

2. _____

c.

3. _____

Total weekly usage:

Ruben: _____ hours

Naomi: _____ hours

Sasha: _____ hours

C Look at the information in Exercise B. Are your answers to the questions in Exercise A still the same? Why, or why not? Discuss with a partner.

COLLABORATE

D Work individually. Write down the top five ways you use your phone. Then estimate how many hours you spend doing each thing per week, and how many additional hours you spend doing other things on your phone. Finally, use the information to draw a pie chart about your phone usage, and calculate your total screen time.

Activity	Hours per week
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. Others _____	_____
TOTAL:	_____

E Work in groups. Discuss your pie charts. Then look at Naomi, Ruben, and Sasha's pie charts. Discuss the questions below.

- How similar is your group's phone usage to the people in Exercise A?
- Should Naomi, Ruben, or Sasha be concerned about their phone usage?
- Is anyone from your group concerned about their own phone usage? If so, why?

Ruben uses his phone a lot, but I don't think he needs to be concerned because ...

I was a bit shocked to see how much time I spend on games per week ...

Checkpoint

Reflect on what you have learned. Check your progress.

I can ...

understand and use words related to phone usage and addiction.
addiction gadget adversely nuanced diminish perspective empower versatile excessive widespread

- use different forms of the word addict.
- watch and understand a talk about phone addiction.
- notice questions and use them to organize my notes.
- recognize a speaker's purpose.
- notice language for describing time, frequency, and duration.
- use adverbials to talk about a past experience.
- collaborate and communicate effectively to compare different people's phone usage.

UNIT 6
Viewing and Note-taking

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Watch and understand a talk about how phones can distract us
- Use the strong and weak forms of that

TED TALKS

Erin Sullivan is a travel photographer with a passion for the outdoors. She is also a writer and the host of an online video series. In her TED Talk, *Does Photographing a Moment Steal the Experience from You?*, Sullivan explains how we probably take too many photos, and how we lose out because of this.

BEFORE VIEWING

A Read the information about Erin Sullivan. Then discuss the questions below with a partner.

- Sullivan begins her TED Talk by asking: "What is the most beautiful place you have ever been? And when you were there, did you take a picture of it?" How would you answer these questions?
- Why do you think she chose to begin her TED Talk this way?

TED TALKS

“Photography can be part of a beautiful experience. Just don't let it be a block between you and reality.”

UPDATED Viewing and Note-taking uses big ideas from TED and National Geographic Explorers to present another aspect of the unit theme and help students improve their academic listening, note-taking skills, and pronunciation.

NEW Thinking Critically gives students a chance to synthesize, analyze, and evaluate the unit's ideas and find their voice in English.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Interpret an infographic about why young people travel
- Synthesize and evaluate ideas about phones, social media, and travel

UNIT 6

Thinking Critically

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Interpret an infographic about why young people travel
- Synthesize and evaluate ideas about phones, social media, and travel

ANALYZE INFORMATION

A Look at the infographic. How superficial or meaningful would you consider each reason? Write the sentence numbers on the scale below. Discuss your ideas with a partner.

superficial ← → meaningful

B Work with a partner. Discuss the questions below.

- Which two reasons relate most to what Erin Sullivan talked about in her TED Talk?
- How did you rate these two reasons in Exercise A?
- How popular do you think these two reasons for traveling are?

C Listen to a talk about travel and take notes. Complete each sentence with a number.

- Before the year _____, fewer than 600 people visited Trolltunga annually.
- These days, about _____ people visit Trolltunga annually.
- The number of visitors to Trolltunga has increased by more than _____%.
- About _____ of young people visited places because they saw them on social media.
- About _____ of young people say sharing vacation photos is important to them.
- About _____ of young people would not go somewhere if they could not take photos.

COMMUNICATE Synthesize and evaluate ideas

D Work with a partner. Read the conclusion of the talk in Exercise C. Then write a summary of the main idea of Sullivan's TED Talk. How are the focuses of the two talks similar? How are they different?

Conclusion of talk

"It is perhaps unfortunate that so many young people are making travel decisions based on their phones. We shouldn't want to visit a destination simply because it's trending on social media. There is, after all, so much more to travel than just going to popular places that look good in photographs."

E Read the four sentences below (a-d). To what extent do you agree with each idea? Write the letters on the scale. Then share your reasons with a partner. Discuss how you would change each idea so that you agree with it more.

strongly disagree ← → strongly agree

- ... sometimes it seems like we are missing the point of going to [these places] ...
- "The world needs every voice and perspective, and yours is included."
- "Travel can be enriching. It can help us become better people, and it can teach us about the world and ourselves."
- "It's perhaps unfortunate that so many young people are making travel decisions based on their phones."

I strongly agree with sentence "a" because many people I know just want to collect stamps in their passports. They want to say they've visited a lot of countries, but ...

I disagree with "b." I'm not sure we need every voice, especially if many of the voices are all saying the same thing.

UPDATED Putting It Together has students prepare, plan, and present their ideas clearly and creatively in a final assignment.

UNIT 6

Putting It Together

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Research, plan, and present on when taking photos and videos is worthwhile
- Provide context for photographs

ASSIGNMENT

Individual presentation: You are going to give a presentation on when taking photos and videos is worthwhile, and when it isn't.

PREPARE

A Review the unit. Consider all the ways people use their phones. In what ways can phones take away or lessen your enjoyment or appreciation of an experience?

B Search your phone for three photos or videos that are meaningful to you, and that you think were worth taking. Then choose three that aren't really meaningful to you, and that you probably should not have bothered taking. Complete these steps.

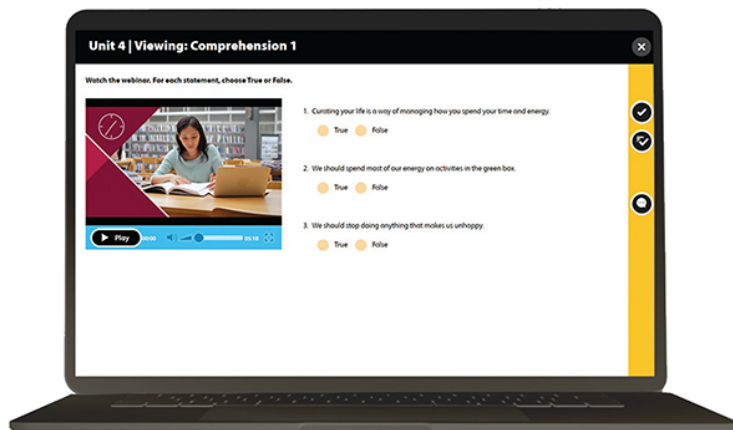
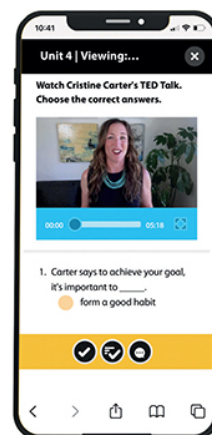
- Note down useful context, such as when and where the photos were taken.
- Note down why each photo is or isn't meaningful.
- Save the photos and videos to a folder that you can find again easily.

Context	Why is it meaningful?
1.	
2.	
3.	

Context	Why isn't it meaningful?
4.	
5.	
6.	

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The **Spark** platform delivers your digital tools for every stage of teaching and learning, including auto-graded Online Practice activities, customizable Assessment Suite tests and quizzes, Student's eBook, Classroom Presentation Tool, and downloadable Teacher's Resources.



N 'PAY TO PLAY' ... STOCKS FLATTEN AP





Pedestrians surrounded by media messages in Times Square in New York, U.S.A.

1

Reality Check

Q Can we trust the media?

The photo shows Times Square, New York, lined with giant advertisements and flashing news headlines. There's no escape from the media for these pedestrians, and the same can be said for most of us. Every day, we are bombarded by so many media messages that it has become more important than ever for us to be able to distinguish between trustworthy and unreliable information. In this unit, we'll examine how and why the media sometimes distorts the truth, and explore strategies for coping with all of this information.

THINK and DISCUSS

- 1 Look at the photo and read the caption. How do you think the media influences you?
- 2 Look at the essential question and the unit introduction. How much do you trust the media?

Building Vocabulary

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Use ten words related to news media
- Use collocations with *media*

LEARN KEY WORDS

- A**  Listen to and read the information below. What are some “soft news” stories you have read in the past? Discuss with a partner.

Is Soft News Really News?

When we think about the news, we usually think about war, natural disasters, or important topics like science, politics, and business. But news stories aren't always serious. Every now and then, we get a heartwarming **anecdote** about an adorable dog or cat, or some **sensational** story about a famous celebrity misbehaving.

In the world of **journalism**, news like this is called “soft news.” Soft news is a broad term, but its defining trait is that it is usually more for enjoyment or entertainment. Many people feel the quality of news is declining, and that soft news is partly to blame. So why then does soft news still exist in our **media**? The easy answer is that it sells. People like feel-good articles and juicy celebrity stories.

But for some people, soft news isn't actually soft. Sports **coverage**, for example, is more than just entertainment to people who actually work in sports. Also, imagine how anxious we'd all be if all our news stories were serious or heavy. Some feel that it's irresponsible to place **disproportionate** emphasis on bad news. Soft news is important because it reminds us that positive and fun things happen, too.

So is soft news really news, or just pointless entertainment? It probably depends on who you ask.

Sugar the surf dog takes part in a surf contest at Huntington Beach, California, U.S.A.



HARD NEWS

CHARACTERISTICS

- Important
- Current and time-sensitive
- Informative and objective

COMMON TOPICS

- Local and international events
- Politics
- Business and economics
- Health and medicine
- Education

SOFT NEWS

- Entertaining
- Not as time-sensitive
- Appeals to emotions

- Entertainment or celebrity news
- Lifestyle news
- Arts and culture
- Sports
- Feel-good pieces

B Match each word in **bold** from Exercise A with its meaning.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1. ____ anecdote | a. the work of writing, publishing or broadcasting news |
| 2. ____ media | b. shocking or exciting |
| 3. ____ journalism | c. significantly more or less than is required |
| 4. ____ coverage | d. a personal story |
| 5. ____ sensational | e. TV, print, radio, and the internet |
| 6. ____ disproportionate | f. the reporting of a particular news story or event |

C Read the passage. Then complete the sentences with the correct form of the words in **bold**.

Statistics show that many news agencies fail every year. To survive, some smaller agencies turn to tabloid journalism. Tabloid journalism focuses on stories that are sensational. These can be fun, but many are **negligent**: they ignore facts and report gossip to increase **subscriptions**. To many, tabloid journalism is harmful. It **distorts** the truth and distracts us from what's important.

1. The fees people pay to get access to media products are called _____.
2. To be careless or irresponsible is to be _____.
3. Numerical data that people use to show patterns or trends are called _____.
4. If you manipulate facts to create a misleading or false impression, you _____ them.

D The words in the box collocate with the noun **media**. Complete the sentences using the correct words.

coverage	literacy	frenzy	industry
----------	----------	--------	----------

1. There was a media _____ when the singer announced her surprise concert.
2. With so much news out there, we need to start teaching media _____ in school.
3. The media _____ is made up of many different types of companies.
4. The press release was a success. The media _____ they got was amazing.

COMMUNICATE

E Work with a partner. Discuss a few examples for each prompt.

1. something that caused a **media frenzy**
2. a media service that requires a **subscription**
3. a news story that received **disproportionate coverage**

F Work with a partner. Discuss the questions below.

1. Do you think that soft news is important and necessary? Why, or why not?
2. Do you believe that tabloid journalism is harmful to people? Why, or why not?

Viewing and Note-taking

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Watch a class discussion about fear in the media
- Use abbreviations for numerical information
- Recognize repetition of important details

BEFORE VIEWING

- A** Look at the abbreviations in the box below. Which ones do you already use? What other abbreviations for numerical information do you know? Discuss with a partner.

Percentages	25%	"25 percent of"
Fractions	$\frac{1}{3}$	"a third of"
Thousands	4.5k cars	"four thousand five hundred cars"
Millions	2M homes	"two million homes"
More than	> 30%	"over 30%"
Less than	< 60%	"under 60%"
Estimates	~ \$3M	"about three million dollars"

Note-taking Skill

Using Abbreviations for Numerical Information

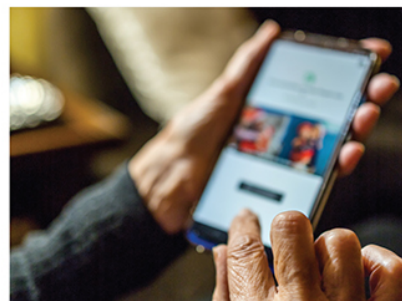
When noting down numerical information, it's often quicker and more accurate to use abbreviations. There are many common abbreviations you can use. You can also create your own abbreviations.

- B**  Listen to a talk about how people get their news. Note the numerical information you hear using the abbreviations above.

Digital news sources	Non-digital news sources

- C** Use your notes in Exercise B to answer these questions.

- _____ two thirds of U.S. adults get their news from websites and apps. That's about _____ people.
- _____ half of U.S. adults get their news from social media.
- _____ one fifth of U.S. adults get their news from podcasts.
- Just over _____ of U.S. adults, or _____ percent, get their news from TV.
- Seven _____ of U.S. adults get their news from radio.
- Only _____ in _____ people get their news from print sources.



WHILE VIEWING

- D** **LISTEN FOR MAIN IDEAS** Watch Segment 1 of a class discussion. For each opinion below, check (✓) whether it is voiced by Matteo or Lina, or both of them.

	Matteo	Lina
1. There are more fear-based stories in the media than before.	☐	☐
2. The world is becoming more dangerous.	☐	☐
3. The environment is getting worse.	☐	☐
4. Frightening news stories are more interesting to readers.	☐	☐
5. News companies need to make money.	☐	☐

- E** **LISTEN FOR DETAILS** Watch Segment 2 of the class discussion. Circle **T** for true or **F** for false.

1. Murder coverage increased because murder rates went up.	T	F
2. Bullying is less of a problem now than it was a few decades ago.	T	F
3. Murder rates in about 75% of the world have gone down.	T	F
4. Thea's sister believes the news stories she hears about the city.	T	F
5. Thea believes most people think critically about the news.	T	F

- F** **RECOGNIZE REPETITION** Watch an excerpt from the class discussion. Discuss with a partner.

- How many times does Matteo mention that the world is getting worse?
- Why do you think he repeats this point?

Listening Skill

Recognizing Repetition

Speakers usually repeat important ideas. They often paraphrase when they repeat; they rarely use the exact same words. Sometimes, speakers will signpost the repeated idea using phrases like *as mentioned* or *as I said*.

AFTER VIEWING

- G** **EVALUATE** Complete the tasks below.

- Work individually and complete the chart. Why is the news getting scarier? Summarize Matteo's and Lina's positions, then add your own. Who do you agree with more? Why?
- Work with a partner. Discuss Matteo's and Lina's views and share your own. Use the chart to help you.

Matteo	Lina	You

Noticing Language

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Notice language for asking rhetorical questions
- Talk about your preferred news sources

LISTEN FOR LANGUAGE *Ask rhetorical questions*

- A** Read the expressions below. Which two expressions signal that you've already considered an obvious question that's probably on a lot of people's minds? Discuss with a partner.

What does that really mean?	Why's that?
Don't you wish ... ?	Aren't you glad ... ?
Who really wants ... ?	Who wouldn't want ... ?
... , isn't it?	... , don't you?
You must be wondering: ... ?	I know what you're thinking: ... ?

Communication Skill

Asking Rhetorical Questions

A question is rhetorical if it doesn't require an answer. Speakers sometimes ask rhetorical questions to guide listeners' thoughts through complex topics. They also ask (and answer) them when the information they've presented raises an obvious question, to show they've considered what's on everyone's mind.

- B**  Listen to five excerpts from the class discussion in Lesson B. Check (✓) the three excerpts containing questions that are rhetorical.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. ☐ Excerpt 1 | 4. ☐ Excerpt 4 |
| 2. ☐ Excerpt 2 | 5. ☐ Excerpt 5 |
| 3. ☐ Excerpt 3 | |

- C**  Listen to the three rhetorical questions from Exercise B. Match the questions to the reasons for asking them.

- _____ to show awareness of a question people may have
- _____ to get people thinking about the topic
- _____ to reinforce a point by making it more relatable

- D** Complete the sentences. Use appropriate expressions from the box above.

- _____: why would a young person like me choose to get her news from the radio?
- So you probably think I get all my news online, _____?
- _____ you could spend more time away from screens sometimes?
- I used to watch TV news a lot, but not anymore. _____? Well ...
- I mean, _____ to listen to that much news?

According to a 2022 U.S. survey, 55% of people aged 18–34 still like to read a newspaper from time to time.



- E**  Listen to three people talking about their favorite news sources. Did they use the same expressions you used in Exercise D?

COMMUNICATE

- F** How do you get your news? Note in the chart below why you like or don't like each way of getting news.

News websites and apps	TV news channels	Newspapers and magazines	Radio news stations	Social media platforms

- G** Work in a group. Take it in turns to give a short talk about where you like to get your news. Use rhetorical questions when explaining your preferences and to raise obvious questions that need answering.

I think TV news channels are biased. What does that mean? Well, ...

Communicating Ideas

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Use appropriate language for asking rhetorical questions
- Collaborate to prioritize different news stories

ASSIGNMENT

Task: You are going to collaborate in a group to decide which news stories should feature on a news website's homepage.

LISTEN FOR INFORMATION

A  **LISTEN FOR MAIN IDEAS** Listen to a conversation between two newspaper editors. What three news stories are they considering using as their headline? Write brief notes below.

1. Story 1: _____
2. Story 2: _____
3. Story 3: _____

B  **LISTEN FOR DETAILS** Listen again and complete the chart. Summarize the pros and cons of each story.

Story	Pros	Cons

C Work with a partner. Which of the three stories do you think should lead, and why? Why not the others?

COLLABORATE

D Work in a group. You are a team of editors for an online news website. Think of ten headlines that are attention grabbing. Use your imagination—the stories don't have to be real. Cover a range of different topics.

How about *Local College Student Wins National Science Contest*?

Sure, that's a nice human-interest story. And how about ...

- E** In groups, rank your headlines from 1 (most important) to 10 (least important). Rank them again from 1 (most interesting) to 10 (least interesting). Then, decide which five headlines to feature on the homepage of your news site. Write one headline in each of the five boxes below, based on how important and interesting you think the stories are.

THINK TANK NEWS CORP				

- F** Work with a partner from a different group. Discuss your homepages in Exercise E. Which stories would you be most interested in reading? Would you prioritize your partner's stories differently?

Checkpoint

Reflect on what you have learned. Check your progress.

I can ... ☐ understand and use words related to news media.

anecdote
media

coverage
negligent

disproportionate
sensational

distort
statistic

journalism
subscription

- ☐ use collocations with the word *media*.
- ☐ watch and understand a class discussion about fear in the media.
- ☐ use abbreviations to note numerical information.
- ☐ listen for the repetition of important details.
- ☐ notice language for asking rhetorical questions.
- ☐ use rhetorical questions in a talk about preferred news sources.
- ☐ collaborate and communicate effectively to prioritize different news stories.



A fake photo from 1894 of a man holding a giant potato.