



**GCSE**

3700U30-1A



**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

**UNIT 3**

**Reading and Writing: Argumentation, Persuasion and Instructional**

FRIDAY, 8 JUNE 2018 – MORNING

**Resource Material**

For use with Section A

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*Text A is taken from Wikipedia and gives information about selfies.*

## The Selfie

The word 'selfie' was added to the Oxford Dictionaries in August 2013 (it was even their Word of the Year!), defined as "a photograph that one has taken of oneself, typically taken with a smartphone or webcam and uploaded to a social media website."

Selfies have been around for years. The word first appeared on Flickr in 2004, and Myspace quickly popularised the mirror pic. In the past two years, selfie-taking has exploded.

In 2012, Google searches for 'selfie' took off, and the hashtag #selfie has grown by more than 200 percent since January 2013. Today, 55 million posts on Instagram are labelled with the hashtag, and the number of #selfies and #selfiesunday posts are above 5 million and 4 million, respectively.

Source: Wikipedia

**Text B** gives instructions on how to take a selfie photograph.

### How to take the perfect selfie...



*Text C is taken from a blog where people were invited to give their opinions about selfies.*

## **Debate: Is Selfie Culture Out of Control?**

*Whether it's to show off a new haircut or cool vacation, posting your face on social media is practically a reflex. But with websites dedicated to "Selfies at Serious Places"—like funerals (cringe!)—some say selfie-mania is out of control. We asked two teens: is selfie culture helping our self-esteem or sentencing us to lives of self-obsession?*

### **YES: Stop seeking attention and approval by posting selfies.**

The selfie phenomenon might seem like a meaningless fad, but it has gone way too far! Pictures are supposed to capture a special moment forever, but the explosion of selfies has devalued the power of a photograph. People seem to think that any moment is a moment worthy of immortalising. It's not!

Selfies also highlight the growing narcissism of our generation. We all seem to think we're so important, and our selfies are a way to beg for attention. In fact, I've seen friends get so caught up in getting a selfie that they are outright disrespectful, ignoring everyone and everything around them!

Remember, the emotional boost we get from earning 'likes' is temporary. Try to get that same feeling by creating an awesome memory—then you've captured a mental photo you can treasure forever.

**—Alex, 17, student**

### **NO: Selfies are a powerful tool for self-expression.**

I'm sick of hearing that selfies are a dangerous trend! Not only do we gain more friends but they're a beautiful form of self-expression, allowing us to share emotions like joy or despair.

Most important, though, selfies improve self-esteem—and not because of "likes." The biggest boost comes from seeing people with different body types, hairstyles, skin tones, and fashion senses. They enrich your image of what people really look like (unique!)—as opposed to seeing only what the media shows you.

**—Isabel, 17, student**

*Text D is a newspaper article taken from The Guardian.*

## **Sharing the (self) love: the rise of the selfie and digital vanity**

Social media and the internet are making us more vain, but can this trend be reversed?

What do Kanye West, Kim Kardashian, and Justin Bieber have in common? Inflated self-views, superficial personalities and shameless self-promotion. In that sense, they are just like millions of their Facebook and Twitter fans around the world, except successful. Welcome to the age of digital self-love, a world of unlimited bragging possibilities. Showing-off has never been easier and, ironically, more celebrated.

Until the 90s, television provided an escape from reality by transporting viewers to the fictional universe of sitcoms and soap operas. Then came reality TV, which turned our attention back to ourselves by broadcasting the allegedly genuine lives of everyday people. In the past decade, social media has taken us to new territories of self-love by enabling everybody to broadcast their life and be the star of their own 24/7 show.

Online exhibitionism and showing off have been at the core of every mega-successful app and website. It all began with MySpace, a directory for wannabe pop stars and DJs. Then came Facebook, the encyclopaedia of common people. YouTube gave everybody their own TV channel, Blogger and Tumblr made us all creative writers. Twitter brought in tons of followers and LinkedIn brings positive support – because who cares about our faults? There is even a movement dedicated to preserving social media activity after people die.

Vanity levels have been rising for decades. We are now more connected than ever, but also less interested in other people, except when it comes to finding out what they think about us.

Needless to say, most social media users are not narcissistic. However, scientific studies have shown that the number of status updates, attractive selfies, check-ins, followers and friends, are all linked to vanity as is the tendency to accept invites from strangers, particularly when they are attractive. The reason is that vain individuals are much more likely to use social media to portray a desirable, though unrealistic self-image and broadcast their life to an audience.

Sure, there's nothing wrong with seeking others' approval – a healthy identity actually depends on paying careful attention to what others think of us. When taken too far, however, the desire to be accepted becomes a relentless quest for approval, which undermines other people and impairs our ability to build and maintain happy relationships and successful careers.

**Text E** shows how the *No Makeup Selfie* campaign grew quickly in Britain.

## NO MAKEUP SELFIE

The No Makeup Selfie campaign grew quickly in Britain, and ended up raising several million pounds for Cancer Research U.K., even though the group initially had nothing to do with the effort.

Author Laura Lippman started the trend to support actress Kim Novak, whose appearance was criticised at the Oscars.

Others picked up on the idea, and somehow the hashtag #breastcancerawareness and donation links to Cancer Research U.K. started getting added to the selfies.



### IT STARTED WITH A TWEET...



**85,000**

people mentioned the No Makeup Selfie on Twitter alone in the first week of going viral.

**£2 million**

was unexpectedly raised in this time period, thanks to those participating and supporting across various social media platforms.



**59,000**

Instagramers posted selfies in the first 24 hours.

this figure tripled to **£6 million** in just six days.