

1. Text comprehension

(40 points)

1.1 True or false

(10 points)

The following statements are either true or false with respect to the article on gossip by Frank T. McAndrew that you have just read. Mark those that are true with a T, and those that are false with an F.

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|
| 1) McAndrew believes that our attitude towards gossip is ambivalent. | <input type="checkbox"/> | T |
| 2) Gossip is usually about something that can be judged in terms of good and bad. | <input type="checkbox"/> | T |
| 3) According to McAndrew, it is quite obvious that the phenomenon of gossip is a product of evolution. | <input type="checkbox"/> | F |
| 4) Some people have suggested that gossip can effectively be used by individuals for finding out how well they are doing in contrast with others. | <input type="checkbox"/> | T |
| 5) The reason why we are unable to resist gossip is determined by our inability to resist sex and sweet food such as doughnuts. | <input type="checkbox"/> | F |
| 6) Gossip is only a positive force to the extent that it helps to control people. | <input type="checkbox"/> | F |
| 7) Members of a group who do not play by the rules are more liable to become the subject of gossip than those who comply with the rules. | <input type="checkbox"/> | T |
| 8) McAndrew suggests that people skilled in gossiping do not like to discuss gossip seriously. | <input type="checkbox"/> | F |
| 9) McAndrew maintains that a good team player knows intuitively when not to gossip. | <input type="checkbox"/> | T |
| 10) McAndrew claims that gossiping is only self-serving if we do not know when to keep our mouths shut. | <input type="checkbox"/> | F |

1.2 Multiple choice questions

(30 points)

Please circle the letter before the line that **best** completes the sentence according to the text by Frank T. McAndrew.

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| 1) According to Robin Dunbar gossip | | |
| a) is an important evolutionary development | | |
| b) allows us to see differences and similarities between ourselves and others | | |
| c) makes moral judgments | | |
| d) brings people of the same group closer together | | X |
| 2) The article does not suggest that | | |
| a) very few people can resist gossip | | |
| b) in order to tell somebody a juicy story about an acquaintance, you need to trust him or her | | |
| c) gossip is an entirely positive phenomenon | | X |
| d) gossip helps keep people in line | | |
| 3) In McAndrew's opinion, gossip made survival easier for cave-dwellers because | | |
| a) there was fierce competition for food and reproductive partners | | |
| b) it provided useful information about their main competitors | | X |
| c) gossips had a more fascinating life | | |
| d) there was no alternative entertainment like doughnuts or sex | | |
| 4) The term "free riders" (line 66) is used here to denote individuals who | | |
| a) are not accepted in a group | | |
| b) disappoint a group's expectations | | |
| c) show selfish, irresponsible behavior | | X |
| d) all of the above | | |

- 5) The author suggests that in-group competition among cave-dwellers
- a) was fiercer than it is today because there were fewer supplies
 - b) required social intelligence
 - c) was toughest among males
 - d) had nothing to do with how gossip functions today
- 6) The article claims that our interest in doughnuts and sex
- a) made our ancestors more successful
 - b) was at the root of our ancestors' in-group competition
 - c) is an outcome of evolution very much in the same way that gossip is
 - d) a) and c) above
- 7) According to the article, if you share sensitive information with another person it means that
- a) you are ambitious
 - b) you are an outsider
 - c) you respect this person
 - d) you trust this person
- 8) McAndrew claims that gossip, in its more benign forms
- a) gives us access to useful secret information
 - b) regulates the life of a group
 - c) helps divide insiders from outsiders
 - d) all of the above
- 9) If your office mates gossip about you, it is likely that
- a) they admire your skills and intelligence
 - b) they want to share doughnuts and have sex with you
 - c) you may be an overachiever
 - d) you are not considered a good colleague
- 10) One of the author's conclusions is that
- a) successful gossips should not be seen as egoistic
 - b) gossiping still has a bad image, undeservedly so
 - c) gossiping is a skill of importance in our society
 - d) all of the above
- 11) Those of our ancestors who had an interest in the lives of others
- a) were likely to have an advantage over their peers
 - b) were more likely to hand down their genes
 - c) had better relations to out-group members
 - d) b) and c) above
- 12) We should change our attitude towards gossip
- a) in order to pay tribute to our cave-dweller ancestors
 - b) because it is more complex and crucial for our lives than we think
 - c) because it is not a character flaw
 - d) because it is the only way to share key information

13) According to McAndrew, a successful gossip

- a) never has self-serving ends
- b) strikes the right balance between gossiping and being silent
- c) often gets into trouble with his peers
- d) is a good team player because he has no character flaws

X

14) McAndrew suggests that gossip

- a) always makes you a good team player
- b) is a detestable trait of personality
- c) is a valuable social skill
- d) is done best by people with a flawless character

X

15) McAndrew's article says that

- a) gossiping is a remnant of evolution that has lost its initial function
- b) the function of gossiping has remained very much the same since the age of the cave-dwellers
- c) being skilled in gossiping was more vital for our forbearers than it is for us today since it helped them to get their fair share of the resources, which were then much more limited
- d) being skilled in gossiping is more vital for us today than it was for the cave-dwellers even though its social importance is usually underestimated

X

2. Vocabulary

(25 points)

2.1 Word formation

(10 points)

In the following sentences (1-10), use **one word** that **fits the gap** and belongs to the **same word family** as the word in **CAPITALS**. - There are two examples (0, 00) at the beginning.

0) Researchers have produced some interesting findings about the social function of gossip.	RESEARCH	1 essentially
00) It was an entertaining speech.	ENTERTAIN	2 trusty, trusted trustworthy
1) This article was concerned with the evolution of language.	ESSENTIAL	3 confirmation
2) We should share our secrets only with friends.	TRUST	4 recognizable
3) Please, wait for of the test results!	CONFIRM	5 unable
4) She is hardly with her new wig.	RECOGNIZE	6 unreliable
5) After the accident, he lay there, to move.	INABILITY	7 selfishly
6) The trains in Italy are notoriously	RELIABLE	8 immoral
7) The spoiled children, instead of sharing, kept all the sweets to themselves.	SELFISH	9 Violations
8) Is it to gossip about someone?	MORAL	10 environmentally
9) of human rights happen every day.	VIOLATE	
10) A biosphere is an sensitive area.	ENVIRONMENT	

2.2. Synonyms

(10 points)

Underline the word that could **best** replace the word(s) *in italics* in each of the following sentences so that the initial sentence retains its **original meaning**.

- | | | | | | |
|---|------------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------------|---|
| 0) detest (line 9) - Everyone seems to <i>detest</i> a person who is known as a "gossip". | a) love | b) dislike | c) <u>hate</u> | d) tease | |
| 1) irresistible (line 14) - Why does private information about other people represent such an <i>irresistible</i> temptation for us? | a) strong | b) unbearable | c) likable | d) unyielding | A |
| 2) far-fetched (line 28) - The idea may no longer seem quite so <i>far-fetched</i> . | a) distended | b) withdrawn | c) unrealistic | d) aberrant | C |
| 3) ancestors (line 28) - Our cave-dweller <i>ancestors</i> lived in relatively small groups. | a) heirs | b) forefathers | c) descendants | d) inheritors | B |
| 4) come down (line 41) - It is the genes of those individuals that have <i>come down</i> to us through the ages. | a) been weakened | b) been broken | c) lowered | d) been transmitted | D |
| 5) forsake (line 42) - Our inability to <i>forsake</i> gossip is as much a part of who we are as our inability to resist doughnuts. | a) enjoy | b) give up | c) resign | d) pursue | B |
| 6) benign (line 49) - The nasty side of gossip overshadows the more <i>benign</i> ways in which it functions in society. | a) malignant | b) harmful | c) intricate | d) harmless | D |
| 7) live up to (line 61) - Gossip is used to enforce group norms when an individual fails to <i>live up to</i> the group's expectations. | a) complete | b) cheer up | c) satisfy | d) abide by | C |
| 8) uncovering (line 66) - Gossip can be an effective means of <i>uncovering</i> "free riders". | a) removing | b) revealing | c) punishing | d) rejecting | B |
| 9) reciprocity (line 67) - They are tempted to violate group norms of <i>reciprocity</i> . | a) mutuality | b) one-sidedness | c) distribution | d) bias | A |
| 10) perceived (line 80) - Successful gossiping is about sharing key information with others in a way that will not be <i>perceived</i> as self-serving. | a) noticed | b) understood | c) realized | d) resented | B |

2.3 Antonyms

(5 points)

Give **one** word that is **opposite in meaning** to the word in italics by supplying the correct **prefix**. One example has been done for you.

0) It may serve purely <i>selfish</i> interests. (line 47)	unselfish	unselfish
1) Most researchers <i>agree</i> that gossiping involves talk about people who are not present and that this talk is relaxed, informal and entertaining. (line 1)		disagree
2) It is not obvious in what way an individual <i>interested</i> in gossip should have had an advantage over others. (line 24)		uninterested
3) She is extremely <i>sensitive</i> when it comes to the feelings of others. (line 52)		insensitive
4) Gossip can be an <i>effective</i> means of uncovering "free riders". (line 65)		ineffective
5) <i>Successful</i> gossiping is about being a good team player. (line 78)		unsuccessful

3. Essay

(60 points)

Choose **one** of the three following topics for an essay (300-400 words).

- 1) Comment on the following quotation: "Man is least himself when he talks in his own person. Give him a mask, and he will tell you the truth." (Oscar Wilde)
- 2) Comment on the following quotation: "No one gossips about other people's secret virtues." (Bertrand Russell)
- 3) Imagine that you are a visitor in a society or country where people have no concept or even word for "lying". These people either tell the truth or they remain silent, they seem to feel no urge whatsoever to attempt anything in between. Now write a letter home to a friend here in Western Europe and tell him or her about how strange or fascinating life in that country is.

4 Grammar

(75 points)

4.1 Re-phrasing sentences

(20 points)

Complete the second sentence so that it has **the same meaning** as the first sentence, using the word given. Do **not** change the word given. You must use **between two and seven words**, including the word given. There is an example (0) at the beginning.

0) When does the next exam begin? Couldyou tell me when..... the next exam begins?	(tell)	you tell me when
1) When the student has to face malicious gossip about himself at school, he panics. The student panics malicious gossip about himself at school.	(faced)	(if)when (he is) (being) faced/ with
2) Self-confident people like Barack Obama don't worry too much about what others think of them. Self-confident people like Barack Obama to what others think of them.	(thought)	don't give (too) much/ thought

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|--|
| <p>3) The tabloid photographers were rude but the movie star got her revenge on them in court.</p> <p>The movie star paid the tabloid photographers rude to her in court.</p> | <p>(being)</p> | <p>back/ for being</p> |
| <p>4) I'm disappointed that you didn't back me up when they were telling lies about me.</p> <p>You me up when they were telling lies about me.</p> | <p>(might)</p> | <p>might (well) have/ backed</p> |
| <p>5) Britney Spear's reputation was bad two years ago.</p> <p>Britney Spear's reputation bad.</p> | <p>(used)</p> | <p>used to/ be</p> |
| <p>6) I last read the tabloid newspaper "Blick" five years ago.</p> <p>I 2004.</p> | <p>(have)</p> | <p>haven't read/ the tabloid newspaper since</p> |
| <p>7) I asked her: "Please tell me what she really thinks."</p> <p>I asked her.....</p> | <p>(to)</p> | <p>to tell me what she really/ thought</p> |
| <p>8) I regret having talked about my best friend behind her back.</p> <p>I about my best friend behind her back.</p> | <p>(wish)</p> | <p>wish I had /not talked</p> |
| <p>9) Before her death, Lady Diana demanded action by the police against tabloid photographers.</p> <p>Lady Diana demanded action against tabloid photographers.</p> | <p>(should)</p> | <p>that the police / should take</p> |
| <p>10) The ski champion spread a lot of nasty doping rumors about the opponent before the race.</p> <p>A lot of nasty doping rumors about the opponent before the race .</p> | <p>(were)</p> | <p>were spread/ by the ski champion</p> |

4.2 Gap-filling

(5 points)

Complete each gap with **one word only**.

Few people can say that they've never participated in gossip (1)..... At the same time, (2)..... would actually say that they enjoy being gossiped about. (3) is a difference (4)..... gossip and good-natured social chat. For example, gossip usually entails putting someone (5)....., (6) good-natured idle talk accentuates positive aspects of someone's personality and deeds. People (7)..... harbour feelings of insecurity, boredom or negativity are more prone to gossiping. (8)....., rumour is not only negative. The rumour mill provides you with information about what your peers think of you and of your plans, ranging from malicious and personal attacks (9)..... harmless chatter. The truth is, gossip will exist (10)..... you take part in it or not.

- 1 before
- 2 nobody / no one
- 3 There
- 4 between
- 5 down
- 6 while, whilst, whereas
- 7 who
- 8 However, Yet,
- 9 to
- 10 whether

4.3 Verb forms (active and passive voice, participles and infinitives) (20 points)

Complete the following text by placing the words in brackets in correct form and order. **Do not add** any nouns or pronouns.

Rumors are difficult to disprove. Maybe you (1) (notice) this. Even the craziest legends and most outrageous conspiracy theories never (2) (seem/die). Rumors (3) (work) just like the telephone game. After a rumor (4) (tell) a few times, the details (5) (get) lost and the message (6) (grow) simpler. Urban legends are a modern kind of rumor. They (7) (present) in story form, usually as something that (8) (happen) to a friend's friend. A well known story is the one about the wet dog which (9) (allegedly/put) in the microwave to dry. Many people (10) (still/believe) today that a giant prehistoric monster (11) (haunt) Loch Ness, in spite of the fact that the existence of such a creature (12) (not/prove). Already in the 19th century many eyewitnesses (13) (convince) that they (14) (see) the monster's silhouette in the fog. Studies on gossip (15) (show) that a rumor which is an outright lie isn't believable. In this case, evidence that something (16) (not /happen) (17) (easily / can / find). But other rumors are more persistent because there (18) (be) some sort of coincidental circumstantial evidence backing them up. For example, during the U.S. presidential campaign some people (19) (think) that Barack Obama (20) (convert) to the Muslim faith as a child.

- 1 have noticed
- 2 seem to die
- 3 work
- 4 has been told
- 5 get
- 6 grows
- 7 are presented
- 8 (has) happened
- 9 was allegedly put
- 10 still believe
- 11 haunts/ is haunting
- 12 is not proven/ has not been proven / proved
- 13 were convinced
- 14 had seen/were seeing
- 15 show
- 16 didn't happen
- 17 can easily be found
- 18 is
- 19 thought
- 20 had converted

4.4 Error correction

(10 points)

Some of the sentences are correct and some have one or more mistakes. If a sentence is correct, put a tick (✓) at the end of each line. If the sentence has a word which should not be there, **cross it out**. If a word or a structure is incorrect, **cross it out and correct the mistake** in the space at the end of each line.

1) The news was released from the Head of Communications.	_____	by
2) Everyone has already gossiped, hasn't he?	_____	haven't they
3) He could have come with us had he not missed the train.	_____	✓
4) The children said they should have built a snowman if it had snowed.	_____	would
5) Englishmen, most of which prefer beer to wine, eat two hot meals a day.	_____	whom
6) He always borrowed his library books for a long time when he was a student.	_____	✓
7) Because of the terrible road we had to drive much careful than we would have liked.	_____	more carefully
8) I hardly think he was serious when he said that. He must have been joking.	_____	✓
9) I'll get in touch with you as soon as I'll arrive at the airport.	_____	arrive
10) Albert and Alice have had a most amusing time yesterday.	_____	had

4.5 Translation

(20 points)

Translate the following sentences into idiomatic English. Translate as freely as necessary but as closely as possible.

- 1) Angeblich kommt "gossip" von "go sip". Früher schickten Politiker ihre Assistenten in Bars und befahlen ihnen, ein Bier zu trinken und dem Gespräch der Leute zuzuhören.
- 2) Viele Manager versuchen schon seit langem erfolglos, Klatsch am Arbeitsplatz einzudämmen.
- 3) „Du hättest den anderen nichts über Joannas persönliche Probleme erzählen sollen. Wir dürfen ihre Privatsphäre nicht verletzen.“
- 4) Wenn wir nicht das Verlangen hätten, über andere zu lesen oder zu reden, gäbe es nicht so viele Boulevardzeitungen.
- 5) Man glaubt, dass junge Frauen viel Zeit damit verbringen, triviale Informationen über andere austauschen.
- 6) Als der Richter ihn bat zu erklären, warum er die Geschichte den Medien weitergegeben hatte, stritt er alle Anschuldigungen ab.
- 7) Die meisten Unternehmen werden die momentane Wirtschaftskrise überstehen, vorausgesetzt sie gewinnen das Vertrauen ihrer Investoren wieder.
- 8) Der Autor behauptete, dass es ein Gen für Neugier über andere gebe, was ich bezweifle.
- 9) Man kann sich nicht darauf verlassen, dass er sich auf die Wahrheit beschränkt, er hat einen Hang dazu, die Tatsachen zu beschönigen.
- 10) Eric Foster, der Professor an einer berühmten amerikanischen Universität ist, untersucht seit über zwanzig Jahren Gerüchte und ihre Konsequenzen.

1)	Supposedly "gossip" comes from /is said to come/is supposed to come from, "go sip". Politicians used to send their assistants to the pubs and told/ordered them to drink/have a beer and listen to people's conversations.
2)	Many/A lot of managers have been trying without success/unsuccessfully to limit/check gossip at the office/the workplace.
3)	"You shouldn't have told the others about Joanna's personal problems. We mustn't violate/intrude into her privacy."
4)	If we didn't have the urge/desire to read or talk about others, there wouldn't be so many tabloids.
5)	Young women are believed/are thought to spend a lot of time exchanging trivial information about others.
6)	When the judge asked him to explain why he had leaked the story to the media, he denied all accusations.
7)	Most enterprises/companies will survive the present/current economic crisis, provided they restore/regain the trust of their investors.
8)	The author claimed there is a gene for curiosity, which I doubt.
9)	You can't rely on him to stick only to / to only tell the truth, he tends/has a tendency to embellish the facts/make the facts look better.
10)	Eric Foster, who is a professor at a famous American university, has been studying rumours and their consequences for over twenty years.