

Name: _____ () Class: _____ Date: _____

You have found a web article about the entertainment industry. Read the web article

Text 3 Web article

The price of \$ fame

① Many people subscribe to the belief that being famous is the best thing on earth.

Why else would there be so many wannabe Internet celebrities who openly beg for 'likes' and 'follows' on their social media sites? Or why would daredevils attempt all sort of outlandish and sometimes fatal stunts just for that elusive 15 minutes of fame if their video manages to go viral? This is also the main reason behind the continued successes of numerous televised talent contests, such as *American Idol*, *The Voice*, *The X Factor*, *Britain's Got Talent* and many more, where contestants vie for that highly coveted trophy and a shot at becoming a household name. Many are inspired by how well-known pop stars seem to effortlessly earn millions just by holding a few concerts and aspire to be just like them. But is this all smoke and mirrors? Is it possible that celebrity status only looks good from the outside, but is actually a small, inescapable glass cage?



Brad Pitt

② No doubt, famous people do get preferential treatment wherever they go. A celebrity is never going to be told at an exclusive high-end restaurant that there are no tables left or that the waiting list is several months long. All they need to do is show up, flash a smile and doors open everywhere for them. When your name appears on the big screen, you are a VIP everywhere you go. Celebrities never have to queue up for anything, and have access to a world of luxury most of us can barely imagine. Being an internationally renowned actor, Brad Pitt even has an asteroid in space named after him. His fame is etched in the heavens!

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- 25 **3** Whenever we see photos of famous people on social media, they appear to be living like kings and queens. They lounge around in their majestic mansions, race around in outrageous luxury vehicles, and wrap themselves in exclusive designer clothes. They even often receive these exquisite outfits for free, which is, of course, completely backwards! Some mega celebrities even purchase entire tropical islands, just so they can enjoy their luxury in peace. According to Forbes magazine, singer Katy Perry and
- 30 charming boy band One Direction each make over HK\$800 million a year, which is more money than most people make in a lifetime.



Katy Perry and One Direction

- 4** If all of this sounds too good to be true, then perhaps it is. Fame can be a double-edged sword. The adoration from fans, which gives celebrities their money and power, can also be the very thing that makes fame unbearable and sometimes even terrifying.
- 35 Though their home lives look idyllic, celebrities are constantly battling for basic privacy. There have been numerous instances of obsessed fans breaking into their idols' homes, hacking information from their mobile phones, stalking them and watching their every move, and just making them fear for their safety in general. In 2014, two 12-year-old girls broke into Justin Bieber's residence just to catch a glimpse of him. Fortunately for them,
- 40 Bieber only gave them a lecture instead of having them arrested for trespassing. Some celebrity home invasion stories take a more sinister turn, such as the time Hollywood superstar Nicholas Cage woke up late at night to find an admirer looming over his bed in the dark!

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5 In addition to suffering from constant invasions of their privacy, celebrities have to be extra diligent about any photos and videos they post online, even if they upload them
45 onto private social media accounts. Any unflattering or compromising media could easily be hacked, leaked and then shared by millions of people online around the world. These embarrassing photos and videos have the potential to tarnish reputations, end careers and cause intense emotional stress for all those involved.

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Justin Bieber

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6 Easily recognized by the public and photographed everywhere by the paparazzi, celebrities are unable to lead normal lives. It is simply impossible for them to participate in normal everyday activities that we take for granted, such as casually going shopping, hanging out with friends or just going out to get ice cream. Now in his 20s, Justin Bieber has mentioned in interviews that he often feels very depressed because he cannot go anywhere nor do anything alone. Having become an international sensation overnight at the tender age of 16, Bieber has had to endure the relentless

60 hounding of the paparazzi intent on documenting and photographing every aspect of his life. This meant he was denied the chance of experiencing the ordinary pleasures of growing up and just being a teen.

7 All in all, though stardom and fame may seem to be the symbol of ultimate success, there is always a price to pay. As the age-old adage goes: Every coin has two sides.

Challenging reading and comprehension

Unit 5

Name: _____ () Class: _____ Date: _____

Comprehension 3 *Your classmate wants to know about the web article. Answer his questions using information from the web article. For multiple-choice questions, choose the best answer and blacken ONE circle only.*

1 According to the article, why are talent contests popular?

2 Find words or expressions that can replace the following in paragraphs 1–2:

- | | |
|--|--|
| i) extremely strange | |
| ii) difficult to get | |
| iii) spread quickly from one person to another | |
| iv) something people want very much | |
| v) hiding the truth | |

3 What does 'this' (line 10) refer to?

4 According to the text, what is the owner of a busy restaurant likely to say to a celebrity who wants to dine there?

- | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| A 'Your assistant made a reservation for you.' | A | B | C | D |
| B 'We can put you on a waiting list for a table.' | | | | |
| C 'We can get a table for you immediately.' | | | | |
| D 'I apologize, but there are no tables available.' | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |



5 What does the writer describe as 'completely backwards'? Why do you think he or she says this?

6 What is the meaning of the expression 'living like kings and queens'?

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7 About how much money does Katy Perry make each year?

8 Why do some celebrities choose to own private islands?

9 What does 'the very thing' refer to in line 31?

10 What happened to the girls that broke into Justin Bieber's home?



11 Do you think celebrities' lives are easier or harder in the age of social media? Explain your answer.

12 What are THREE examples in paragraph 6 of ordinary activities that celebrities cannot take part in?

i) _____

ii) _____

iii) _____



13 Why might the problems of being a celebrity be worse for people who became famous at a young age?

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- 14 Complete the summary below by choosing the best answer that will complete the missing information.

Due to their fame, famous people are _____ (i) _____ ordinary lives. Whenever they appear in public, people _____ (ii) _____ them. Therefore, they cannot do anything _____ (iii) _____. This lack of _____ (iv) _____ can lead to feelings of _____ (v) _____ over time.

- | | | |
|------------------|---------------------|---------|
| (i) A afraid of | C able to have | A B C D |
| B unable to have | D unwilling to have | ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| (ii) A ignore | C applaud | A B C D |
| B discuss | D recognize | ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| (iii) A alone | C with their fans | A B C D |
| B together | D entertaining | ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| (iv) A privacy | C rights | A B C D |
| B paparazzi | D adoration | ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| (v) A awareness | C rage | A B C D |
| B nervousness | D depression | ○ ○ ○ ○ |

- 15 Which of the following statements are facts? Which of them are opinions? Put a tick (✓) in the correct boxes.

| Statements | Fact | Opinion |
|---|------|---------|
| i) Being an internationally renowned actor, Brad Pitt even has an asteroid in space named after him. | | |
| ii) Hollywood superstar Nicholas Cage woke up late at night to find an admirer looming over his bed in the dark. | | |
| iii) Fame can be a double-edged sword. | | |
| iv) There have been numerous instances of obsessed fans breaking into their idols' homes. | | |
| v) All in all, though stardom and fame may seem to be the symbol of ultimate success, there is always a price to pay. | | |

Challenging reading and comprehension

Unit 5

Name: _____ () Class: _____ Date: _____

16 Match the correct subheadings (A–E) to the paragraphs in the web article. Write the letter in the space next to the paragraph numbers.

| Subheadings | Paragraph no. | (A–E) |
|--|---------------|-------|
| A No hope of normalcy | 2 | |
| B A luxurious lifestyle | 3 | |
| C Special treatment | 4 | |
| D Downfall in one click | 5 | |
| E No privacy, even behind closed doors | 6 | |

17 What is the purpose of this article?



18 i) After reading the article, why do you think the writer compares celebrity status with 'a small, inescapable glass cage'?

ii) Do you agree with this comparison? Why or why not?



19 Would you want to be famous? Explain your answer.
