

# LEARNING english



**THE LANGUAGE  
OF THE MEDIA**

**NEWS REPORTS, SPORTS COMMENTARIES,  
ARTS REVIEWS, AND MORE.**

**BBC  
WORLD  
SERVICE**

# Welcome

Welcome to **The Language of the Media**, a booklet designed to introduce you to some of the styles of English you will hear when listening to BBC World Service.

The aim of this booklet is to help you become a more effective listener in English. So we have identified eight types of programmes or parts of programmes and have created tasks to help you recognise and understand them more easily.

The types of broadcasts we look at are:

1. **News headlines**
2. **News reports**
3. **Sports commentaries**
4. **Holiday programmes**
5. **Arts reviews**
6. **Interviews**
7. **Financial reports**
8. **Internet**

## How to use this booklet

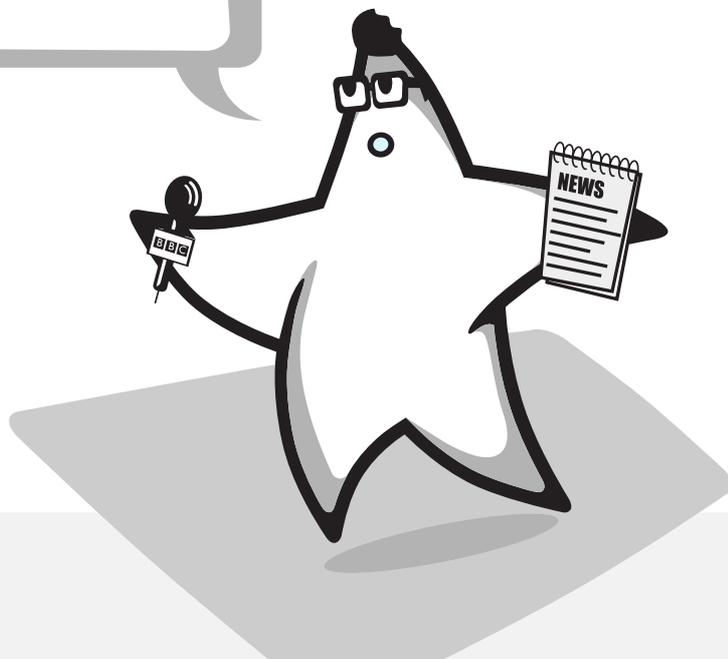
Each page relates to a different type of broadcast. On each page you will find a short explanation of the type of broadcast, along with extracts taken from BBC World Service programmes.

After reading the extracts, you will find tasks designed to help you identify the key features of this type of programme or broadcast. You may be asked to look at the grammar or vocabulary of the extracts, or at how information is organised in the text. Answers to these exercises can be found at the back of the booklet.

Following the exercises, you will find an explanation of the key features of the language of this type of programme, along with a follow-up exercise.

On the inside back cover, to help you expand your vocabulary, you will find a glossary of the words which are underlined in the text.

We hope you enjoy **The Language of the Media** and find that the extracts and exercises help improve your listening skills.



# 1. The language of headlines

## What is a headline?

The headline of a news story is the short summary which introduces the story at the beginning of a TV or radio news broadcast, or which appears above articles in a newspaper or on a website.

- ① The following headlines all appeared on the BBC World News website on 4th December 2000. Match the headline with the news stories.

1. Gore **pins** hopes on Florida court      2. University attacked over 'tobacco money'  
3. Space station hit by **hitch**              4. Beckham to reject £80,000-a-week

- a) Cancer care and research charities have attacked a university's decision to accept £4m sponsorship from British American Tobacco.  
b) Democrat Al Gore appeals to the Florida Supreme Court in what his lawyers say is likely to be the last stand in his battle for the presidency.  
c) David Beckham is to reject Manchester United's new and improved contract offer, according to Sunday newspaper reports.  
d) Astronauts from the American space shuttle Endeavour have had some difficulties in installing a new solar power system on the International Space Station (ISS).

- ② Headlines are not full sentences, but short summaries designed to attract attention. As a result, some words are omitted. Look at the headlines again. Try to write the headlines as complete sentences.

## The grammar of headlines

Which types of words do you need to add to make the headlines full sentences?

**Parts of speech:** The aim of a news headline is to grab your attention. Therefore, any 'unnecessary' words are often left out. These include:

- Articles:**                                      **The** space station has been hit by **a** hitch.  
**Auxiliary verbs:**                              The space station **has been** hit by a hitch.  
**Possessive adjectives:**                      Gore has pinned **his** hopes on the Florida Court.

What do you notice about the forms of the verbs used in the headlines?

**Verb forms:** News broadcasts and newspapers are designed to make you think that news stories are happening NOW. Try changing the forms of the verbs they use to indicate that something happened very recently.

**Present simple:**                              Gore **pins** hopes...

The present simple tense in the headline replaces the **present perfect simple** or the **past simple** tense in the news story. The effect is to say that the story is happening NOW rather than in the very recent past.

**Past participles:**                              University **attacked** over tobacco money.

The full form of this headline should read: The University **was attacked** over the tobacco money.

When the passive voice is used in a headline, it is usually just the **past participle** form which appears. Auxiliaries verbs make the headline long and detract from the immediacy.

**Infinitives:**                                      Beckham **to reject** £80,000 a week.

When the story refers to the future plans of the subject, the headline usually uses a verb in the infinitive form.

The headline above is a shortened form of the sentence: David Beckham **is going to reject** the new, improved contract which has been offered to him.

## Language task

Here are some titles for news articles – but the sentences are too long to be headlines. Can you shorten them?

- a) **A victim of a car crash has learned to walk again.**  
b) **A new drug will cure 'flu this winter.**  
c) **The police questioned a suspect in a robbery yesterday.**

## 2. The language of news reports

### What is a report?

A **news report** gives you details of a news story. The **reporter** needs to choose the words he or she uses very carefully to make the story clear and unbiased.

- ① The two news reports below come from BBC Radio News. Do they contain good news or bad news?
  - a) Five men **have been arrested** in connection with the theft last month of three masterpieces from the National Museum in Stockholm. The Swedish nationals **were detained** in the Stockholm area just days after police received several photos of the paintings, along with a demand for hundreds of thousands of pounds. The works of art, including one by the Dutch master, Rembrandt, **are estimated** to be worth up to \$30m in total.
  - b) The crew of the world's biggest ocean-racing yacht, the Team Philips catamaran, **have been rescued** after the boat was badly damaged in storms. They had been preparing for a race 800 miles off the west coast of Ireland.
- ② Look at the verbs in **bold** print. Why are they similar?
- ③ In report **a)**, find two words or phrases with a similar meaning to 'paintings'.
- ④ In report **b)**, find two words with a similar meaning to 'boat'.

### The language of news reports

The purpose of a news report is usually to give the listener information in an interesting but objective way. To do this, they often use the passive voice and words which are **near synonyms**, that is words which have nearly the same meaning.

**Passive voice:** Using the **passive voice** makes the report sound more formal. By putting the object of the verb at the beginning of the sentence, they take our attention away from the subject. So, although '**Five men were arrested**' and '**Police arrested five men**' have the same meaning, the reporter is focusing on the result of the action instead of the people doing the action. News reports often use the passive voice to avoid saying directly that someone has done something. In this way, they try to remain impartial.

**Synonyms:** Using words with similar meanings in a news report keeps it interesting. As there is a lot of information in a very short time, it is important that the listener pays attention. If we hear the same word being repeated more than once or twice we might get bored and stop listening. By using near-synonyms (e.g. yacht and boat), the reporter can keep us interested in the whole story.

### Language task

- ① Read the extract below about how police in the Thames Valley area are trying to reduce burglaries. Find out what happens ...
  - a) if someone is burgled once
  - b) if someone is burgled twice
  - c) if someone is burgled three times.

*For the past two years, the Thames Valley Police have been combating repeat burglaries with an increasing green, amber, or red police response. First-time victims of burglary are warned of the possibility of repeat attacks and are advised on security. A second break-in triggers an 'amber' response. This is when the property is code-marked and their neighbours are asked to keep watch. After a third robbery, alarms are fitted – free of charge in some cases. When the approach was reviewed last year, it was found to have dramatically reduced offences.*

- ② Find three words or phrases which the reporter uses to mean **burglary**.
- ③ Find six examples of verbs being used in the **passive voice**.

### 3. The language of sports commentaries

#### What is a commentary?

A commentary is a description of an event as it is happening. The **commentator** describes for the listener all of the important points of the event so that she or he can visualise what is happening. The most common type of commentary is of sporting events.

Read the commentaries below. Which sport is being commentated on in each extract?

- a) *Away they go. Lewis **sprints** into the lead. Bradley is going well too for the United States but it's going to be Lewis. Lewis gets the gold. I think it was Gradi the silver and **a photo** for the bronze. Lewis dances his way along the track. He's done what he came to do. And look at the time – 9.99 seconds. Fantastic! Carl Lewis has won the gold and a nation celebrates.*
- b) *And as we enter the closing moments of extra time it looks like this match could end with a draw. And that really would be a tragedy after the brilliance we've seen from both teams tonight. Both sides played the best kind of attacking game and yet despite numerous shots at goal neither side has won. And yes! That's it. The referee blows his whistle...*
- c) *As the tension builds on court, Hardy serves straight down the line. That's a fantastic shot! It puts him at 40-15. And Hardy serves again. But it's a good return by Janocsek, the backhand shot **whistles past** Hardy. But Hardy still has the advantage. He serves again and ... yes, that's it! Game, set and match to Hardy.*

Identify the words in each extract which tell you what the sport is.

#### The grammar of commentaries

Extract **b)** begins near the end of the game. Read the extracts again and identify the main differences between commentaries which happen at the end of a game and those which give details of the game as it is happening. Think about **tenses** and the **length of the sentences**. Then continue reading below.

Because commentaries are descriptions of events as they are happening, they normally use the **present simple** and **present continuous tenses**. However, when the commentary is coming to a close, the commentator will often describe the game in **present perfect** tenses, showing that the event has taken place in the very recent past.

While the action is happening, the commentators tend to use very short sentences. This helps convey a feeling of excitement to the audience. Finally, and unusually in radio and television broadcasting, you will often hear **exclamations** of excitement. In extracts **b)** and **c)**, the commentators say 'That's it!' to show that the game is over.

#### Language task

Read the following extract from a newspaper report on a football match between two English clubs, Everton and Sunderland. How might it sound if a commentator was describing the match?

*'...in the 65th minute Sunderland took the lead. Alex Rae smashed an unstoppable shot past the Everton goalkeeper... . Then the Sunderland team attacked their opponents' goal and Philips missed, hitting the ball against the post... .*



## 4. The language of holiday programmes

### What is a travelogue?

A travelogue is the description of someone's travel experiences, often told while the person is on the journey. On the radio, you can often hear two different types of travelogue. Some are descriptions of difficult journeys told by news reporters or correspondents. Others, however, are descriptions of holidays by presenters, designed to encourage the listener to visit the place being described.

- ① Read the extracts below. Which one is not taken from a holiday programme?
- a) *Every morning you go to the local market with your hostess and teacher Kum Pip. So these are the **infamous** Durians. These are meant to be really, really **disgusting** and **smelly**, aren't they? Mmm, very **tasty**. Now, I know it's a bit of a travel **cliché** to advise you to come and see a **lively** and **bustling** street market, but this is a **fantastic** example of why food is so central to the whole Thai culture.*
  - b) *A two-hour drive from Minneapolis is Minnesota's north shore, 150 miles of cliff drops and views over **vast** Lake Superior. What an adventure. I'm heading up Highway 61 along the north shore to the wilderness of the boundary waters, an area where Minnesota's great lakes meet the Canadian border. So, for the **ultimate wilderness** experience, you need a canoe.*
  - c) *We have many example of **highly-concentrated** beach developments on the Mediterranean coast and in some parts of the Caribbean or South-East Asia where very intensive developments have destroyed the very basis of tourism which was the beach. And today you have **crowding** problems, and **pollution** concerning **waste** water particularly.*
  - d) *Truly a land of contrasts, Sri Lanka has much to offer the more **intrepid** traveller. From the **teeming** city streets of Columbo to the **stunning** mountain scenery of the interior, Sri Lanka really is a paradise isle. At this moment in time the north and east of the island are largely **out of bounds** to travellers but there is still plenty to see and do.*
- ② Look at the **adjectives** highlighted in the text. Try to identify which usually describe **negative** ideas or experiences and which describe **positive** ones. Which can describe positive **or** negative ideas or things?
- ③ Extracts **a)**, **c)** and **d)** all describe places which are filled with many people. However, they use three different adjectives. Which adjectives do they use?

### The vocabulary of holiday programmes

The descriptions of places and journeys in holiday programmes are intended to make us want to visit the place being described. Therefore, the presenter will often use adjectives and phrases which give a positive view, even of things which are not very pleasant.

#### Choice of adjectives

Travelogues **a)** and **d)** describe very busy places as **bustling** and **teeming** but extract **c)** refers to **crowding** problems. Bustling, teeming and crowded all mean 'filled with people'. The first two words give us a feeling of a place which is exciting and full of life. They give us a positive idea or **connotation**. **Crowded**, however, simply means 'too many people' – a very negative connotation. When learning adjectives, it is particularly important to notice if they have positive or negative connotations.

Holiday programmes often give us the impression that the place which the presenter is visiting is not just good – it's wonderful! To help give this impression, they use **extreme adjectives**. For example, Lake Superior is described as **vast** – an adjective which means very, very big – and Durian fruit as **disgusting**, or very, very unpleasant.

#### Language task

Below is a description of a place in Scotland. Try to replace the adjectives in **bold** with an extreme adjective or one which has a more positive connotation. Take care not to change the facts – just make it sound more attractive!

*Edinburgh is a **very pretty** city on the east coast of Scotland. Every year, the city holds an arts festival when the normally **quiet** streets are **busy** with artists and musicians. Be careful, however. Even in summer, the weather in the capital of Scotland can be **very cold**. Don't worry, though – the traditional Scottish food and drink is both warming and **very tasty**.*

## 5. The language of arts reviews

### What is a review?

An arts review is the discussion of the work of an artist in the field of music, cinema, literature, art or the theatre. Although the vocabulary used in reviews depends very much on the type of art being discussed, you will find that there is a very clear way of organising information in the introduction to a review. If you can identify the way in which the information is organised in the introduction, this will help you understand the information in the main part of the review more easily.

Read the introductions to three reviews below.

#### a) Lennon – The Legacy

*Twenty years since John Lennon's death and the influence of the working class hero can still be felt. Not only is this a significant anniversary of his death, but also Lennon would have celebrated his 60th birthday in October 2000. Consequently, tributes to one of Britain's greatest songwriters fill the British newspapers, radio programmes and television schedules. But what was so revolutionary about John Lennon? Lennon – The Legacy examines the impact he has had on the music industry and looks back at the legend that is John Lennon.*

#### b) Alice Walker: A Battle of Words

*Alice Walker is a woman of many talents. Not only is she a poet, an essayist, short-story writer and award winning novelist, but she is also a social activist and in her own words 'a womanist' – a phrase adopted to describe a black feminist. As *Off The Shelf* concludes its reading of Walker's novel, *By The Light Of My Father's Smile*, tribute is paid to one of America's most celebrated female writers.*

#### c) Emmy Winning Country

*Emmylou Harris has been a by-word for American country music for three decades. Born in Birmingham, Alabama, USA, she has worked with many top performers. However, her career was nearly brought to an end earlier this year when she was involved in a car accident. She now plans to lead a quieter life, but that hasn't stopped her bringing out a new album, *Red Dirt Girl*. One of the world's greatest country rock singers, talks to *Outlook* about her extraordinary life and career.*

- ① Find three pieces of information about each person.
- ② Look at the second sentence in extracts **a)** and **b)**. Find the phrases used to link together the two pieces of information in each sentence.
- ③ Look at sentences two and three in extract **c)**. How does the presenter link together two pieces of contrasting information?

### The language of arts reviews

The introduction to a review about an artist and their work usually begins with **an interesting fact** about the artist. The presenter then usually goes on to give us **two contrasting** or **different pieces of information** about the artist or their work. This makes the listener think that there is an element of conflict or surprise in the artist or the work. It also gives a short summary of what the review will talk about in more detail. Finally, the introduction finishes with a comment about the artist. So, John Lennon is referred to as a 'legend', Alice Walker is 'one of America's most celebrated female writers' and Emmylou Harris is 'one of the world's greatest country rock singers'. By describing the artists as very important people, the reviewer is telling us that we should listen to the programme because it will be very interesting.

### Listening task

When you are listening to a review, use the introduction to create your own listening exercise. Listen for three pieces of information about the subject, then decide which one you find most interesting. Then listen to the rest of the programme to find as much as you can about the piece of information you chose. By **selecting** what you listen for, you can make it easier to understand what you hear.

## 6. The language of interviews

### What is an interview?

An interview takes place between a presenter of a programme – or *interviewer* – and someone who has been invited onto the programme to speak about a particular topic – the *interviewee*. The *interviewee* is often an expert on the topic or someone who has strong opinions, for example a politician talking about the government or a cinema critic talking about a new film. The *interviewer's* task is to get the *interviewee* to say as much as possible about the topic, usually by asking many questions.

① Here are three extracts from BBC World Service interviews with ...

1. a showbusiness news reporter.
2. a business reporter.
3. a film critic.

Match the interviewee above with their interview below.

a) **Interviewer:** What are the words which really irritate you when they publicise their films?

**Derek:** Well, I think the word 'great' – great acting, great drama... but what's even more irritating is when they cut out of your review something slightly out of context so that you may say, 'Despite the fact that it's far too long, this is a pretty good movie' and they will say, 'A pretty good movie'.

**Interviewer:** So you have to be extremely careful when you're writing that nothing can be taken out of context.

**Derek:** Well, it's almost impossible because they'll take a couple of words out, whatever you say.

b) **Patrick:** Recently, the trend is for mergers across borders and countries, and frequently this means one company buying another. But the phrase that is used is 'merger of equals' which frequently it's not. One company is simply buying the other.

**Interviewer:** And for one set of people involved in the company it's not good news.

**Patrick:** No, because often, from the top to the bottom, there are job losses.

c) **Tom:** When you go to cover these events, there are publicists out in force who want you to use showbiz language. On the other hand, I do try to damp it down because I do see showbusiness reporting as a journalistic endeavour. We're not just there to have a good time and fawn all over these glittering stars.

**Interviewer:** But I guess amongst all the glitter and all the glamour it must be hard not to be swept along.

**Tom:** Yes, I think it really occurs at the most intense level with the big Hollywood blockbusters because they make them into what they call 'event movies'.

② Find three words in each passage which we associate with the interviewee's job.

③ Look at the interviewers 'questions'. How many of them are real questions?

### The language of interviewers

In the extracts above, we find only one example of a 'real' question: 'What are the words which really irritate you?' The other examples of the interviewer's speech are statements which the interviewee can agree with, or which can help him say more. So, for example, in **a)**, the interviewer's comment (So you have to be careful... ) shows the interviewee what the listener has understood from what he has said. In **c)** the interviewer gives his opinion of what life is like as a showbusiness reporter. This means that the interviewee has a point he can agree with and talk about further. When listening to interviews, remember that the interviewer's job is to **prompt** or help the interviewee to talk. If the interviewer uses too many direct questions, the interviewee will soon stop speaking. Therefore, the interviewer uses comments such as **conclusions**, **summaries**, and **contrasting opinions** to help the interviewee speak about the topic.

### Listening task

When you next listen to an interview on the radio, try to focus on what the **interviewer** says. How many questions does she ask? What comments does she make? Listening closely to the interviewer will help you identify what the

interviewee is going to talk about next.

## 7. The language of financial reports

### What is a financial report?

A financial report is a news report about the economy and business. A financial reporter will often speak about how well or badly companies are performing, and the effect of business performance on a country's economy.

① Read the following extracts by financial reporters. Identify which is ...

1. a financial news report.
2. an interview with a financial reporter.
3. an introduction to a longer economic report.

a) For a decade, the roar of the tiger economies\* has mesmerised many in the West and terrified many more. While European economies lurched from anaemic growth to recession, Thailand, South Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore soared from strength to strength. But now, everything seems to be changing. Almost half of Thailand's banks have gone bust. In Malaysia, the stock market has plunged by a quarter this year amidst fears that the economy could fall next.

*\*The 'tiger economies' is the name given by Western countries to the strong economies in the East, such as Thailand and Singapore.*

b) It's been another Black Monday on stock markets around the world and tonight the government is being asked to call off the sale of BP\*. The price of BP shares has fallen so much that the companies which were underwriting the sale have gone to the government. In stock exchanges in Tokyo, Hong Kong, New York and London, billions have been wiped off the value of shares.

*\*British Petroleum*

c) When we hear business reports, even if we don't understand every term being used, the language is very exciting – things like 'plummeting stocks' and 'rocketing stocks'. The language is very strong and exciting.

② In extract **a)** is the news good or bad for the 'tiger economies'?

③ In extract **b)** is the news good or bad for the world economy?

④ In all three extracts there are phrases which are used to talk about prices rising and falling. Identify two verbs in passages **a)** and **c)** for talking about increases and decreases in prices. Identify two adjectives in passage **b)** for talking about falling prices.

### The language of financial reports

In financial reports, many of the words and phrases used to describe a company's success or failure are very dramatic.

**Rising and falling:** The rising and falling of prices is often described using verbs which relate to flying.

Describing prices as **soaring** – extract **a)** – and **rocketing** – extract **c)** – gives the impression that prices are going up very quickly, like a bird or a plane. Similarly, verbs such as **plunge** and **plummet** give the impression of very rapid falling. These verbs are used to create a feeling of excitement and speed, and to reflect how quickly the economy of companies and countries can change.

**Doing well or doing badly?** When businesses or economies lose money, the losses are often reported using phrasal verbs (verb + preposition). This more informal language can be very dramatic. In these extracts, we hear that banks have **gone bust** – that is, they have lost all their money. In the same way, money is **wiped off** the value of shares. Often, we hear that companies are completely **wiped out**. Using these phrasal verbs gives the impression of a violent loss of success, and makes the listener feel that the developments are very dramatic.

### Listening task

When you next listen to financial report on the radio, try to focus on the way the successes and failures of companies are being described. How many different ways can you identify of saying 'Prices have risen' or 'Prices have fallen'?

## 8. The language of the internet

### What is the language of the internet?

Because the use of computers and the spread of information through the internet – or world wide web – has happened only recently, a whole new vocabulary is developing to talk about these technological developments. This page introduces you to some of the key vocabulary you need to understand radio items about the internet.

① Look at the three extracts below from BBC radio programmes. Which one tells you ...

- a) **how to access the BBC via the internet?**
- b) **why the internet can be expensive?**
- c) **how the internet works?**

1. Understanding the internet requires a leap of the imagination, there are no managers or owners. First, your home computer connects to an **internet service provider** – either a university or a private company. Now you have direct access to computers around the world offering millions of **menus** and letting you talk to others directly or discuss any topic under the sun.
2. For £5.50 you can **surf the net** for an hour in this café, or in any other 'Cyberia' **cyber**-café in the country. But because they pay by the hour, customers watch the clock. If telephone calls to the internet were charged at a fixed rate and not by the hour, this café and many others like it would reduce their rate, giving **e-commerce** a boost.
3. A reminder that all this and more can be found on the Home Truths **website**. To **log on** simply go to **www dot bbc dot co dot uk forward slash Radio 4 forward slash Home Truths**.

② The words in bold are important when we talk about the internet. Read the passages again and match the words in bold with the definitions and descriptions below.

- a) to look at different pages of information on the internet
- b) a collection of pages on the internet belonging to the same company, programme or individual
- c) an electronic form of doing business
- d) lists of different types of information or things you can do on the internet
- e) to connect your computer to the internet, or to a website on the internet
- f) words for the symbols . and / when they are in internet addresses
- g) a company which connects your computer to the internet through a telephone line
- h) an adjective which refers to the world of electronic communication networks and communities that can be reached through a computer

### The vocabulary of the internet

The vocabulary used to talk about the internet falls into two main groups: new words and phrases created especially to talk about the internet, and old words which are being used in a new way.

**Nouns:** The internet is also known as the **net** and the **web** (or **world wide web** – **www**). Both 'net' and 'web' are used to give us a picture of how information on the internet is connected. Information is linked together, but there is space between the links and both webs (like spiders' webs) and nets (like fishing nets) can change shape and move.

**Adjectives:** Perhaps the most useful adjective is **online**, meaning something which can be contacted via the internet. So we can have online doctors, teachers and even BBC World Service is online.

**Prefixes:** We can create new words with two important prefixes: **e-**, as in **e-mail** and **e-commerce** and **cyber** as in **cyber-space** and **cyber-café**. **E-** before a word means 'electronic' – so email is electronic mail or post. **Cyber-** shows that the word refers to the world of electronic communication networks and communities that can be reached through a computer – so cybercafé is a café where you can buy time on a computer to access the internet. The word **web** is also used as a prefix to show that something can be found on the internet. So we have **webpage**, **website** and **web address**.

**Verbs:** We use new phrasal verbs – verbs with prepositions – to talk about connecting to the internet: to **log on** and to **log off**. When we talk about looking for information on the internet, we either **browse** – we look for something specific, following a path through different web pages, or we **surf** – that is, look at different websites for our own amusement.

## Language task

Complete the paragraph using the following words. Put one word or phrase in each space.

**e-commerce**

**the web**

**websites**

**online**

**log on**

The world wide web was created in 1990. Also known as (1) \_\_\_\_\_, it's made up of published pages which you see when you connect (or (2) \_\_\_\_\_) to the internet. These pages are organised into (3) \_\_\_\_\_. Some of these are set up by companies and enable customers to make bookings or order goods and services (4) \_\_\_\_\_. This type of business or (5) \_\_\_\_\_ is also affecting the way companies deal with each other because firms can easily place orders or market their products with businesses in many different countries.

## Glossary

### 1. The language of headlines

**to pin your hopes on something** to rely on something in order to be successful  
**a hitch (noun)** a small problem  
**'flu** short word for *influenza*, a common winter illness in Britain

### 2. The language of news reports

**unbiased (adj)** neutral, does not favour one side or the other  
**objective (adj)** unbiased, not emotional or sensational  
**impartial (adj)** unbiased  
**burglary (noun)** the crime of stealing from someone's house. The verb is to burgle and the person who burgles houses is a burglar.

**to combat (crime)** to try to prevent crime happening  
**to trigger (an action)** to make something happen  
**offences** crimes

### 3. The language of sports commentaries

**to sprint (verb)** to run very quickly for a short time  
**a photo** in this situation, a *photo finish*. The runners have finished the race very close together. To decide who has won third place, the race officials must look at a photograph of the finish of the race.  
**the ball whistles past** when something whistles past you, it goes past very quickly making a high, loud sound as it goes though the air!

### 4. The language of holiday programmes

**infamous (adj, neg)** famous, but for bad reasons  
**disgusting (adj, neg)** horrible, very unpleasant  
**bustling (adj, pos)** very busy  
**cliché (noun)** a phrase that has been used so much that it no longer has any real effect  
**vast (adj)** very big, huge  
**ultimate (adj)** the last or the most important; it cannot be beaten  
**wilderness (noun)** wild place  
**pollution (noun)** dirt in the environment, for example from household rubbish, fumes from cars and chemicals from factories  
**intrepid (adj)** very brave and adventurous  
**teeming (adj)** full of people, or animals. e.g. The lake was teeming with fish.  
**stunning (adj)** very beautiful  
**out of bounds (adj)** if a place is out of bounds you are not allowed to go there

### 5. The language of arts reviews

**significant (adj)** important  
**consequently (adv)** as a result of this...  
**social activist** a person who works to create changes in society  
**feminist** a person who believes in equal rights for women  
**decades (noun)** a decade is a period of ten years  
**extraordinary (adj)** having some special or extreme qualities

### 6. The language of interviews

**to irritate someone** to make someone a little angry  
**a trend (noun)** a fashion or a new way of doing business  
**publicists** people whose job is to make films, events or people famous or well-known. From the verb to publicise.  
**to damp (something) down** to make something less noticeable. In this case, the interviewee is damping down his use of showbusiness language because it is too sensational.  
**to fawn over (someone)** to flatter someone, to tell them only good things about themselves  
**glittering (adj)** shining brightly. Stars in this situation are famous actors and actresses.  
**blockbusters** very famous films or books which many people see or buy

### 7. The language of financial reports

**to mesmerise** to hypnotise or fascinate someone  
**anaemic growth** very weak growth  
**(economic) recession** a time when the country's economy is failing badly  
**the stock market** the place where shares in companies are bought and sold  
**to call off (a sale)** to cancel something which has been planned (in this example, the sale of a large company)  
**to underwrite (a sale)** to guarantee that people will not lose money if they participate in a sale of a company. The underwriters accept responsibility for any losses which a sale might make.  
**to wipe (money) off (a price)** to reduce the cost of something by a large amount  
**to plummet** to fall very, very quickly  
**to rocket** to rise very, very quickly

# Answers

## 1. The language of headlines

1. **1b, 2a, 3d, 4c**
2. Al Gore has pinned his hopes on a Florida court.  
A university has been attacked over 'tobacco money'.  
The space station has been hit by a hitch.  
David Beckham is going to reject £80,000 a week.

### Language task

- a) Car crash victim learns to walk again.
- b) New drug to cure 'flu this winter.
- c) Police question robbery suspect.

## 2. The language of news reports

1. Both contain good news - the thieves have been arrested and the crew have been rescued.
2. All of these verbs are in the form of the **passive voice**: verb 'to be' plus the past participle.
3. masterpieces, works of art
4. yacht, catamaran

### Language task

1. **a)** The police speak to the victim to help them avoid being burgled again.  
**b)** The police mark the victim's belongings with a special code and speak to the victim's neighbours.  
**c)** The police fit burglar alarms in the victim's house.
2. repeat attacks, break-in, robbery
3. have been combating, are warned, are advised, are asked, are fitted, was found

## 3. The language of sports commentaries

1. **a)** athletics, **b)** football, **c)** tennis
2. athletics: sprint, track  
football: extra time, shots at goal, whistle  
tennis: court, line, serve, backhand shot, game set and match

### Language task

It's the 65th minute. Alex Rae smashes an unstoppable shot past the Everton goalkeeper and Sunderland take the lead. ...Now the Sunderland team are attacking their opponents' goal and Philips misses, hitting the ball against the post... .

## 4. The language of holiday programmes

1. **c)**
2. **Negative:** infamous, disgusting, smelly, crowding, waste  
**Positive:** tasty, lively, bustling, fantastic, intrepid, teeming, stunning  
**Either positive or negative:** vast, ultimate, highly-concentrated
3. bustling, crowding / crowded, teeming

### Language task

**Very pretty:** beautiful, gorgeous, glorious  
**Quiet:** silent, peaceful  
**Busy:** bustling, teeming  
**Very cold:** freezing  
**Very tasty:** delicious

## 5. The language of arts reviews

1. **John Lennon:** 20th anniversary of his death / 60th birthday in October 2000 / one of the greatest British songwriters / a 'working-class hero'  
**Alice Walker:** a famous American writer of poems, essays, novels and short stories / a social activist / a black feminist / author of 'By The Light Of My Father's Smile'  
**Emmylou Harris:** country singer from the USA / singer for more than 30 years / had a serious car accident this year / has released a new record called 'Red Dirt Girl'
2. **Not only** is this a significant anniversary of his death, **but also** Lennon would have celebrated his 60th birthday in October 2000.  
**Not only** is she a poet, an essayist, short-story writer and award winning novelist, **but** she is **also** a social activist and in her own words 'a womanist'.
3. ...she has worked with many top performers. **However**, her career was nearly brought to an end....

## 6. The language of interviews

1. **1. c) 2. b) 3. a)**
2. **Film critic:** publicise, acting, drama, review, movie, writing  
**Business reporter:** trends, merger, company, job losses  
**Showbusiness reporter:** publicists, showbiz, showbusiness, glittering stars, glitter, glamour, Hollywood blockbuster
3. Only the question, 'What are the words which really irritate you when they publicise their films?', in **a)**, is a real question.

## 7. The language of financial reports

1. **1. b) 2. c) 3. a)**
2. Bad news: The economies of these countries were successful but now things are changing.
3. Bad news: The price of BP shares has fallen very far. This means that stock markets in Tokyo, Hong Kong, New York and London have lost a lot of money.
4. **a)** soar / plunge  
**b)** shares **have fallen** / billions [of dollars] **have been wiped off** the value of shares  
**c)** plummeting / rocketing

## 8. The language of the internet

1. **a) 3. b) 2. c) 1.**
2. **a)** to surf the net  
**b)** a website  
**c)** e-commerce  
**d)** menus  
**e)** to log on  
**f)** dot, forward slash  
**g)** internet service provider  
**h)** cyber-

### Language task

1. the web
2. log on
3. websites
4. online
5. e-commerce