

**Core
Competencies**

108 Curriculum Guidelines



Spot On Reading 1

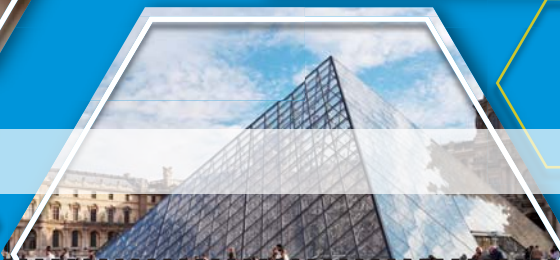
Keys to Developing Core Competencies



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Laura Phelps



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2	Making the Modern Princess	timeline / gender equality
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4	Saying Goodbye to a Pet	table / economy / finance
5	Dots, Dots Everywhere!	passage / arts / literature
6	Download, Listen, and Enjoy!	bar chart / Internet / technology
7	On or Off—You Decide!	advertisement / houses / apartments
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9	Track That Junk!	passage / Internet / technology
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18	All of Life’s Many Characters	chart / psychology
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26	Varying Global Responses to COVID-19	map / health & body
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45	Reaching the Summit	passage / sports
46	Defending the Human Body	timeline / health & body
47	The Six-Month Switch	passage / history
48	Can a Tomato Help You Focus?	infographic / education
49	The One Who Brings the Big Ships in	passage / career
50	Slow but Successful!	bar chart / animals
51	YouTube Star: Dream Job?	passage / career
52	Swimmers, Stay Safe!	chart / safety
53	The Mind Behind So Many Great Buildings	timeline / architecture
54	An Unfair Society, Still?	bar chart / culture
55	Buzz Killer	infographic / science
56	Fast Growers!	bar chart / fun fact / phenomenon
57	When Your Living Room Is Your Office	table / Internet / technology
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59	Future Meat	infographic / environment / conservation
60	Hands Off the Wheel	bar chart / Internet / technology

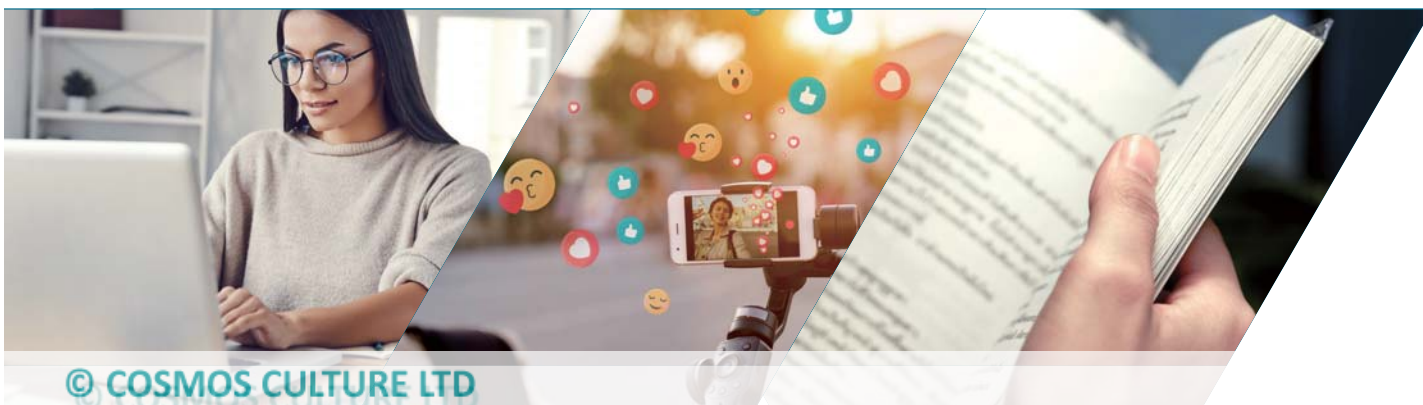
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Introduction

Spot On Reading is a three-volume series of reading practice books that helps readers develop reading competence and improve their reading-comprehension skills. As the 108 curriculum guidelines emphasize the importance of **interdisciplinary and real-life-based learning**, this series aims to provide readers with content that spans a wide variety of topics and forms.

Each book in the series contains **60 articles** covering a comprehensive range of subjects, including animals, economy & finance, sports, history, and careers, to name a few. Many of the readings also include **supporting reference sources** and **visual materials**, such as infographics, timelines, bar charts, and mind maps. The intriguing topics and diverse formats present in this series not only ensure a rich reading experience but also connect the learning process with readers' everyday lives.

In addition, each article is followed by **five comprehension questions** and **a vocabulary practice**. The former offers **mixed question types**, including multiple-choice, short-answer, true/false, and matching questions, designed to stretch students' answering abilities beyond the basic level. The latter contains **matching and completion sections**, which help readers gain a better understanding of the definitions and usages of each article's vocabulary. After working through the abundant questions in the series, readers will have learned to answer each type of question correctly and quickly and will be fully prepared for their upcoming entrance examinations.



Key Features

1. Interdisciplinary topics related to everyday life

The topics in each book include culture, school, careers, safety, internet & technology, science, travel, and many more. This diversity enables readers to enrich their lives by exploring a wide range of knowledge in English.

2. A variety of reference sources and visual materials

Many of the articles in each book include additional elements, such as charts, tables, timelines, Venn diagrams, maps, and infographics, all of which teach readers how to analyze content that supports the main text.

3. Graded difficulty

Each book in the series is graded according to its language difficulty. As such, readers can choose which book to read according to their personal English level. The difficulty levels are distinguished by the length of each text, the number of high-level words used, the complexity of the grammar, and the maximum sentence length.

Articles without graphics:

	Book 1	Book 2	Book 3
Word count for each article	250–300 words	300–330 words	330–360 words
7,000 words for high school	Level 1–Level 4	Level 1–Level 5	Level 1–Level 6

Articles with graphics:

	Book 1	Book 2	Book 3
Word count for each article	150–200 words	200–230 words	230–260 words
7,000 words for high school	Level 1–Level 4	Level 1–Level 5	Level 1–Level 6

4. MP3 audio recorded by professional native speakers

Each article in the series has been recorded by a native speaker. When listening to these recordings, learners can be confident that they are hearing the correct pronunciation of each word while simultaneously boosting their listening skills.

How to Use This Book?

1 The wide variety of topics maintain readers' interest while broadening their knowledge.

UNIT Animals ◀ 01

1 The Fish That Can Switch

1 With their bright orange-and-white pattern, clownfish are one of the most easily recognizable fish in the ocean and a common sight among coral reefs. However, different to most fish, which are both either male or female, clownfish are all born male. That doesn't mean, though, that there are no female clownfish; otherwise, how would they reproduce? So where do the females come from?

2 When it comes time to mate, the largest, most aggressive male clownfish in a group changes its sex and becomes female. It then chooses the second-largest male in the community to breed with. When it dies, its former male partner now gets first choice of food, becomes larger, changes sex, and takes over the female role. And so the cycle continues.

↓ The largest male clownfish in a group changes its sex, thus continuing the breeding process.

↑ Clownfish are one of the most easily recognizable fish in the ocean.

Animals

UNIT Psychology ◀ 18

18 All of Life's Many Characters

1 The psychologist Carl Jung said each of us holds, deep in our minds, a group of symbolic characters. Known as "archetypes," these characters represent a certain kind of personality. You'll probably recognize many already. This is because they often appear in fairy tales, legends, and movies. What's more, each of us identifies with at least one of them in how we behave. Jung's archetypes are listed on the wheel below. The outer ring shows the different types. The inner ring shows their main desires. And the ring in the middle shows the methods they use to try and achieve those desires.

Psychology

UNIT Education ◀ 28

28 School for the Whole Child

↓ Education isn't just about memorizing facts and getting good grades.

1 Think back to your schooldays. What did you learn? Math, science, reading, and writing? These things are important, of course, but some educators believe school should teach children much more. In general, traditional education prepares young people to become workers and citizens. But an alternative model, known as holistic education, has different goals.

2 Those who believe in holistic education say there is more to life than memorizing facts and getting good grades. Education, they suggest, should encourage a love of learning for its own sake, and that means learning about the planet, the arts, oneself, and others. Where traditional schooling divides knowledge into academic subjects, holistic schools operate on the principle that everything in the world is connected (see the chart on the next page). And learning happens in many ways, not only through lectures and homework.

↓ Holistic education aims to nurture students' talents and love of learning.

Education

2 Many articles include examples of reference sources and visual materials, which provide additional information relevant to the main text.

UNIT Gender Equality ◀ 12

2 Making the Modern Princess

1 The first Disney princess was Snow White. She was beautiful, she cooked and cleaned, and she wanted to marry a prince. However, Disney's heroines are very different these days. From Frozen, sisters Anna and Elsa care more about each other than men. They are clever and brave. And they celebrate their unique talents. The timeline below shows the evolution of Disney princesses.

Traditional Period

- **Snow White** (1937) took care of seven dwarves, woken from her sleep by a prince's kiss
- **Cinderella** (1950) did all the housework, waited for a prince to save her
- **Aurora in Sleeping Beauty** (1959) woken from her sleep by a prince's kiss

Period of Change

- **Artel in The Little Mermaid** (1989) wanted to see new things, rescued a prince (twice)
- **Belle in Beauty and the Beast** (1991) read lots of books, chose to marry a kind beast
- **Jasmine in Aladdin** (1992) refused a marriage arranged by her father
- **Pocahontas in Pocahontas** (1995) wanted to end war and racism
- **Mulan in Mulan** (1998) showed women could fight as well as men

Recent Period

- **Tiana in The Princess and the Frog** (2009) worked hard to get what she wanted
- **Rapunzel in Tangled** (2010) escaped her tower to follow her dreams
- **Merida in Brave** (2012) convinced her society to change an unfair tradition
- **Anna and Elsa in Frozen** (2013) thought family love was more important than romance

Timeline

UNIT Houses / Apartments ◀ 17

7 On or Off—You Decide!

1 So you have decided to study at Bridgdown University! One of the biggest decisions to make when you are going off to university is whether to live on campus in student accommodation. Here is a helpful comparison between one of Bridgdown University on-campus student rooms and a typical shared apartment downtown. Hopefully, this will help you decide which option is best for you!

On Campus
Single room in residential building

\$6,150 per semester (\$1,640 per month)

- One fully-furnished single room (includes bed, desk, chair, closet, sink, and mirror)
- Shared bathroom (1 bathroom per 2 students)
- Contracts signed on a semester-by-semester basis
- Electricity, water, and gas bills are all included
- Each room has air conditioning and internet access
- Access to common areas (TV room, kitchen)
- All common areas are cleaned weekly
- Fresh bed linen supplied each week
- Campus facilities such as laundry room, library, and lecture rooms all within 5 minute walk
- No pets allowed
- Secure environment with a 24-hour guard and CCTV cameras
- 11 pm curfew

↓ a dormitory room

Advertisement

UNIT Education ◀ 22

22 Thinking Visually

1 Writing is a wonderful invention. Sentences and paragraphs allow us to share our thoughts with others. They let us do this even if people are far away or living many years later than us! But when we write only for ourselves (for example, when we brainstorm ideas on a topic), sentences can feel too restrictive. Many people like to use mind maps instead. They use them to organize their thoughts, take notes during a lecture or film, or memorize important details.

2 Mind maps are diagrams that contain just key words and phrases. Take a look at the mind map below. A student made it to help her revise for a test on Pop Art. But this is not the only kind of mind map! How a mind map looks depends on the information it shows. This could be

Mind map

3

Each article is followed by five comprehension questions and a vocabulary practice in order to test readers' understanding of the text.

Reading Comprehension

UNIT 22
QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following is implied in the passage?

(A) Adults over 50 should spend at least three-and-a-half hours a day watching TV.

(B) Watching less TV and reading more books can help children increase their language skills.

(C) If you want to reduce your stress level, you should watch TV instead of reading a book.

(D) Studies from Japan are often unreliable and should not be taken too seriously.

2. Look at the chart again. Mark the following statements T (true), F (false), or NG (information not given).

Statement	T / F / NG
(1) Watching TV is more relaxing than playing video games.	
(2) Six minutes of reading reduces your stress level by more than 50%.	
(3) Taking a walk reduces your stress level more than listening to music does.	

3. According to the information given in the third paragraph, what are two effects that watching TV has on children?

Effect 1: _____

Effect 2: _____

4. What is the reason given for why reading has so many positive effects on people?

Because _____

What does the author mean by saying "The science, it seems, is clear"?

(A) We need to perform more studies.

(B) The attempt was unsuccessful.

(C) People have strong opinions on this topic.

(D) There is plenty of supporting evidence.

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Multiple choice

True/False

Short answer

Short answer

Multiple choice

Vocabulary Practice

UNIT 23
VOCABULARY PRACTICE

A Matching

Match the words on the left with their definitions on the right.

1. due to	(A) about
2. regarding	(B) shut down
3. switch off	(C) words
4. include	(D) because of
5. result in	(E) cause
6. reduce	(F) add
7. engagement	(G) participation
8. text	(H) cut

B Completion

Complete the sentences with the words below and change their forms when necessary.

decrease	claim	excellent	function
separate	require	stress	science

1. Unfortunately, the collapse of his business led to his financial ruin and caused him a great deal of _____.

2. While the wine at the restaurant was _____, the food was rather disappointing. I doubt we'll go there again.

3. It's quite common for a degree to _____ the student to present a large project or piece of work.

4. A car needs gasoline in order to _____. Without it, it simply will not work. You'd better get some.

5. All advertisements _____ to be selling the newest, best or most effective products, but are they really true?

6. After five months of a strict diet and regular exercise, Barry saw his weight _____ by 30 percent.

7. From the 15th to the 17th century, huge advances in _____ and art were made all over Europe.

8. The population of the area decided that it was time to break away and create a _____ country.

23
Books or TV—A Choice

Part A Matching

Part B Completion



22 Thinking Visually

1 Writing is a wonderful invention. Sentences and paragraphs allow us to share our thoughts with others. They let us do this even if people are far away or living many years later than us! But when we write only for ourselves (for example, when we brainstorm ideas on a topic), sentences can feel too restrictive. Many people like to use mind maps instead. They use them to organize their thoughts, take notes during a lecture or film, or memorize important details.

2 Mind maps are diagrams that contain just key words and phrases. Take a look at the mind map below. A student made it to help her revise for a test on Pop Art. But this is not the only kind of mind map! How a mind map looks depends on the information it shows. This could be



On the Balcony
(1957)

Portrait of David Hockney
(1965)



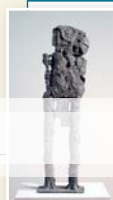
Peter Blake

UK



I Was a Rich Man's Plaything
(1947)

Eduardo Paolozzi



Cyclops
(1958)



← Mind maps let us organize thoughts and memorize information.

a process, a cycle, or a hierarchy (organizing things according to their importance).

- 3 The human brain likes this kind of diagram for several reasons. First, the information is shown in a visual way. As a result, we can take a mental “photo” of it. Second, only the most vital information is included. So a mind map can be read quickly. And third, the relationships between the bits of information are made clear by lines and shapes.

Pop Art

(late 1940s to 1960s)



USA

Andy Warhol

Campbells Soup Cans
(1962)



Shot Marilyns
(1964)



Whaam!
(1963)



Roy Lichtenstein

In the Car
(1963)



QUESTIONS

1. In the first paragraph, what is the author's purpose in mentioning written sentences?

- (A) To provide a contrast. (B) To give a historical detail.
(C) To point out a problem. (D) To present new information.

2. According to the passage, why does the human brain like mind maps? Please give at least two reasons:

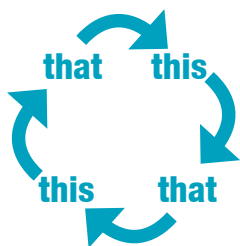
- (1) _____

(2) _____

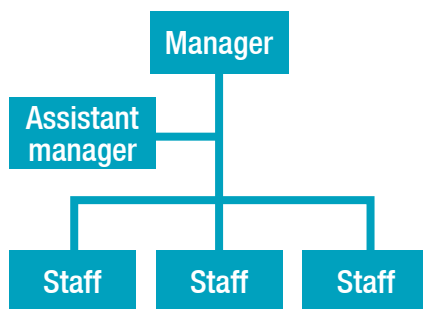
3. Look at the chart and answer the questions.

- (1) Which two countries were famous for Pop Art? _____
(2) Which artist was producing work the earliest? _____
(3) Which artist painted *On the Balcony*? _____
(4) In which year did Andy Warhol make *Shot Marilyns*? _____

4. Find words in the passage that describe what is shown by the mind maps below.



(1) _____



(2) _____



(3) _____

5. Which word in the first paragraph can be replaced by the word "limiting"?

- (A) Brainstorm. (B) Memorize. (C) Restrictive. (D) Incredible.

VOCABULARY PRACTICE

A Matching

Match the beginnings of sentences on the left with the endings on the right.

- | | |
|--|---|
| _____ 1. The wheel is perhaps the most important | (A) a long list of road signs and their meanings. |
| _____ 2. I think you need to rewrite this paragraph | (B) about this old building. Do you know when it was built? |
| _____ 3. I'm bored of talking about the news all the time, | (C) in order to make your essay clearer. |
| _____ 4. For my driving test, I need to memorize | (D) so can we please change the topic? |
| _____ 5. I'm looking for some information | (E) looks just like him. You're a very talented artist. |
| _____ 6. I haven't even begun to revise | (F) depending on who is going. |
| _____ 7. This portrait you painted of your father | (G) invention in human history. |
| _____ 8. I might attend the party, | (H) for my big final exam yet! I'd better get started! |

UNIT

22

Thinking Visually

B Completion

Complete the sentences with the words below and change their forms when necessary.

process
phrase

importance
balcony

film
relationship

contain
thought

- When the weather is warm and sunny, I can dry my wet clothes right here on my _____.
- These two problem are of equal _____, so I'm not sure which we should discuss first.
- I'm just a big baby. I cried so hard at the end of the _____. It was so moving!
- Jack is so difficult to work with. His favorite _____ is "I'll do it later." He should be fired.
- The _____ of building a new subway system is going to take several decades, but the city needs it.
- My _____ with Peter is strictly one of employer and employee. We never socialize outside of the office.
- I had an interesting _____ during the meeting yesterday: how about we put Jess in charge of the project?
- This book _____ a lot of useful tips on how to stay calm under pressure. I'm

already using them.



26

Varying Global Responses to COVID-19

1

Covid-19 has become a worldwide pandemic. However, not every country has been equally affected by the virus. By December 2020, over 300,000 Americans had lost their lives to it—the highest number of deaths in any country, though Brazil was not far behind (see the map on the next page for more information). On the other hand, countries such as Laos and Macau had reported very few cases and no deaths at all.

2

There are also international differences in the death rate, which is to say the percentage of people who do not survive after catching COVID-19.

→ The number of COVID-19 cases may be higher in countries where testing is widely available.



For example, in September 2020, the death rate of Mexico was over 10 percent, whereas that of the United States, which had the highest number of deaths, was under three.

↓ While COVID-19 became a worldwide pandemic, each country responded to the virus in its own way.



← Some countries may have fewer cases due to better-quality healthcare services.

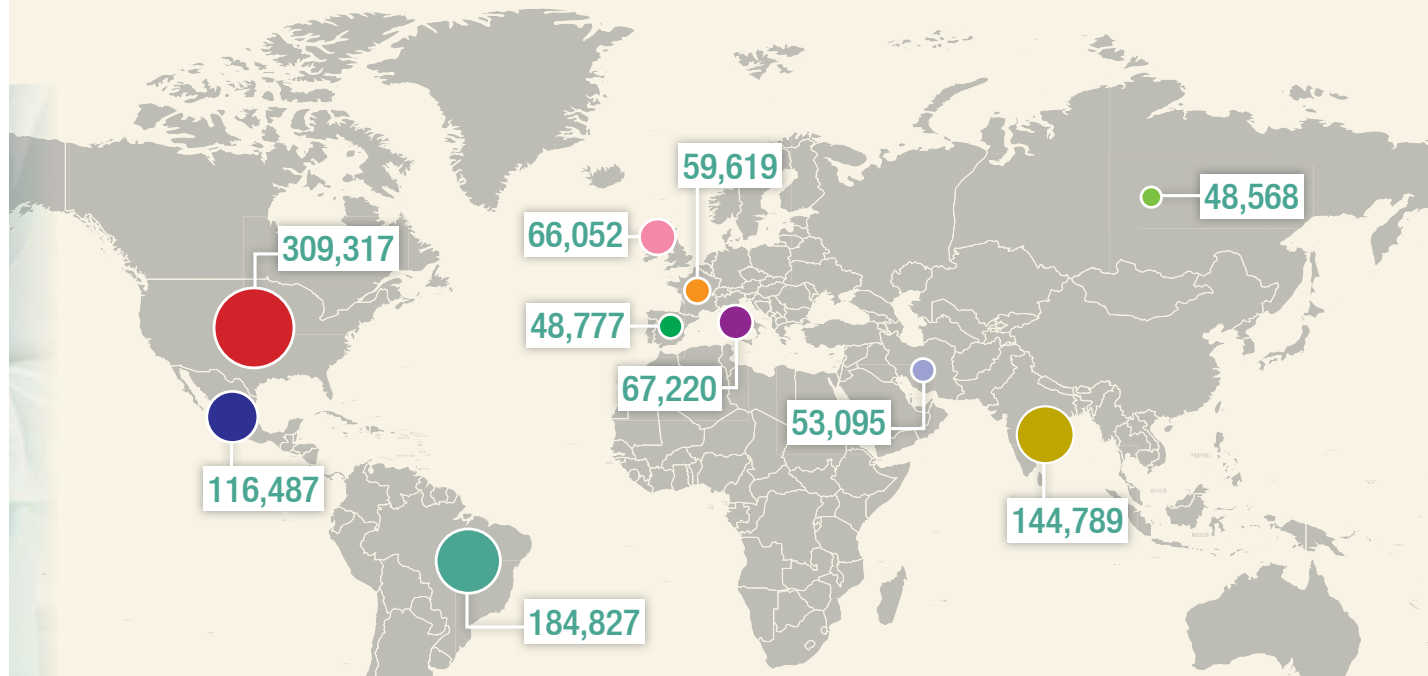
3

Why have some countries been more seriously affected than others?

¹ Scientists are not sure, but they have a number of theories. ² One is that figures are higher in countries where testing is widely available, and data is freely published. ³ Another is that countries with younger (and therefore healthier) populations were better able to resist the virus. ⁴ And a third theory, which should give governments a lot to think about, is that some nations simply have better healthcare services that can cope with this kind of crisis.

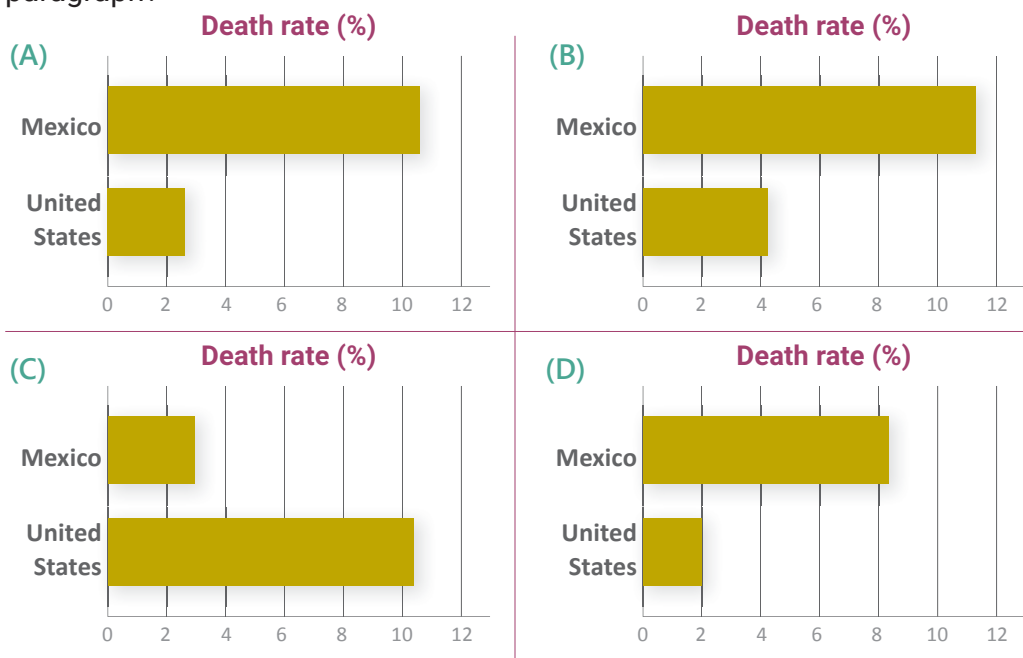
The Ten Countries With the Most Deaths From COVID-19 (December 2020)

United States India Brazil Russia United Kingdom
France Spain Mexico Italy Iran



QUESTIONS

1. What is the main idea expressed in the first paragraph?
 - (A) As of December 2020, Macau had reported zero COVID-19 deaths.
 - (B) By the end of 2020, more than 300,000 Americans had died from COVID-19.
 - (C) Some countries have been affected more than others by COVID-19.
 - (D) COVID-19 has affected almost every country in the world.
2. Look at the chart in the article. Which of these sentences is true?
 - (A) Italy had a higher number of deaths than the UK.
 - (B) India and Iran had roughly the same number of deaths.
 - (C) France had the sixth highest number of deaths in the world.
 - (D) Russia had the fewest deaths of any country in the world.
3. Which of the following four charts illustrates a statistic from the second paragraph?



4. Complete the sentence with words from the final paragraph.
One reason that some countries had fewer deaths from COVID-19 is that people were _____ and _____.
5. Which sentence in the final paragraph contains the author's opinion?
Write the number of the sentence.

VOCABULARY PRACTICE

A Matching

Match the words and phrases on the left with their definitions on the right.

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| _____ 1. theory | (A) while on the contrary |
| _____ 2. publish | (B) fight against something |
| _____ 3. resist | (C) for that reason |
| _____ 4. be able to | (D) sharing a similar or typical case |
| _____ 5. simply | (E) a group of ideas meant to explain something |
| _____ 6. therefore | (F) clearly and directly |
| _____ 7. whereas | (G) make written information available to the public |
| _____ 8. for example | (H) have the skills or qualities necessary to do something |

B Completion

Complete the sentences with the words below and change their forms when necessary.

government	crisis	death	equally
healthy	service	nation	report

- _____ have responded to COVID-19 in many different ways, and some policies have been more successful than others.
- Canada is a relatively young _____ with a short history, but it is one of the world's richest countries.
- Times of _____ can be so sudden and unpredictable that they make even the most careful planning totally useless.
- With _____ from heart disease on the rise, fast food companies are being pushed to offer more salads.
- The doctors couldn't figure out why a young, _____ individual like Janet would have such high blood pressure.
- Child care _____ have been proven to help women re-enter the workforce after giving birth. They're really necessary.
- Those with higher incomes can afford better healthcare, so the virus hasn't affected all people _____ in this country.
- A case of COVID-19 was _____ in our city last week, but it turned out to be a false positive.

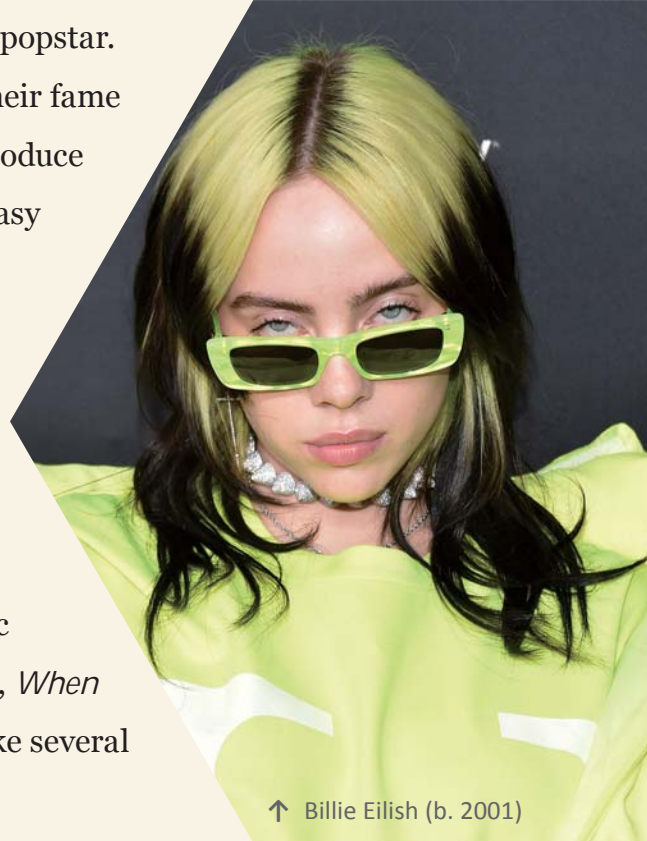


27

Not Your Typical Teen Popstar

1

Billie Eilish is not your typical teen popstar. She was never a child actor who used their fame to launch a music career. She doesn't produce upbeat dance tracks or songs that are easy to sing along to. She doesn't wear tiny dresses or perfect makeup. She does things her own way, and if no one likes it, then so what! But people do like the way she does things. Her songs have been listened to millions of times online. She has handfuls of major music awards. And her first full-length album, *When We Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?*, broke several records in its first week of release.



↑ Billie Eilish (b. 2001)

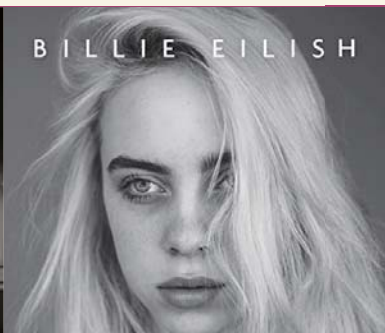
2

Eilish was just 14 when she uploaded her song "Ocean Eyes" to the Internet. Against her expectations, the next morning,

↓ Eilish's first full-length album—*When We Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?*

↓ "Ocean Eyes" earned Eilish a record deal.

↓ Billie Eilish and her brother, Finneas Eilish



the song had gone viral. Soon after, she was offered a record deal and began releasing hit after hit. In 2019, she released her first album, which became one of the year's most successful records and included elements of pop, electronic music, jazz, dance, R&B, and hip hop. Her songs also avoid common pop themes, such as breaking up and making up. Instead, her lyrics explore serious themes such as drug addiction, loneliness, and mental health.

3 While most popstars signed to major record labels work with teams of songwriters and producers, Eilish almost always works with her older brother, Finneas. Their brother-sister connection and shared musical tastes allow them to create songs that are distinctively their own and uniquely suited to Eilish's soft, sad singing voice. As a result, the music they create together stands out strongly against the **same old** sounds of modern day pop.

4 By playing by her own rules, Eilish is sure to have an interesting and long-lasting musical career. And many of us can't wait to see what she comes up with next!

→ Billie Eilish isn't your typical teen popstar— she stands out with her own style.



QUESTIONS

1. What does the phrase **same old** most likely mean?

- (A) Old-fashioned. (B) Exciting and new.
(C) Deliciously sweet. (D) Boring and familiar.

2. What is implied about Eilish and her brother?

- (A) They understand each other very well.
(B) They dislike each other and don't get along.
(C) They like completely different types of music.
(D) They have opposite personalities.

3. "Instead, she wears loose-fitting boyish clothes, dyes her hair blue, and never tries to look cute in photos."

Where would the above sentence best fit in the passage?

Write down the sentence it would immediately come after.

4. Which of the following subjects is NOT touched on in the passage?

You may need to mark more than one.

- (1) ☐ How Eilish got started in the music business.
(2) ☐ The quality of Eilish's voice.
(3) ☐ The influence of Eilish's parents on her career.
(4) ☐ How Eilish behaves on social media.
(5) ☐ The music styles present on Eilish's first album.

5. Fill in the chart below about the differences between Eilish and most modern popstars.

Typical Modern Popstars . . .	Billie Eilish . . .
. . . work with teams of (1) _____.	. . . works only with her older brother, Finneas.
. . . start as actors and use that fame to launch a pop career.	. . . became a viral hit after she (2) _____.
. . . sing mostly about breaking up and making up.	. . . sings about serious topics such as (3) _____, _____, and _____.

VOCABULARY PRACTICE

A Matching

Match the words on the left with their definitions on the right.

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| _____ 1. launch | (A) products to change your face's appearance |
| _____ 2. career | (B) transfer data from your computer to another |
| _____ 3. makeup | (C) start or set in motion |
| _____ 4. handful | (D) having to do with wired devices or appliances |
| _____ 5. break up | (E) a small quantity or number |
| _____ 6. upload | (F) a profession or occupation |
| _____ 7. expectation | (G) a strong belief that something will happen |
| _____ 8. electronic | (H) end a romantic relationship |

UNIT
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Not Your Typical Teen Popstar

B Completion

Complete the sentences with the words below and change their forms when necessary.

label

musical

uniquely

lyrics

addiction

distinctively

teen

element

- Her recipes include _____ from many different cultures and traditions, but Korean cooking is her biggest influence.
- Experts are worried that social problems like drug _____ will increase if the economy doesn't recover soon.
- The song's _____ are inspired by the singer's time working as a waitress at a Japanese restaurant.
- It was _____ an email from Tom: the spelling was all wrong and there were no periods.
- I think you are _____ equipped to coach these kids due to your background as a basketball player.
- Forced to balance the demands of school, work, and their parents, _____ actors have a hard life.
- Emily's voice has a _____ quality to it when she speaks; it almost sounds like she's singing.
- As platforms like YouTube have become more popular, conventional music _____ have become less important for young singers.