Reading 01

**Online Fandom**

 In 1893, Arthur Conan Doyle became bored with writing detective stories for his character Sherlock Holmes. So the English author decided to write a story called *The Final Problem*, in which the hero Sherlock Holmes dies. But readers sent thousands of angry letters to Conan Doyle, demanding Holmes's return. Some fans even wore black armbands and marched through the streets of London as a sign of protest. Finally, the author gave in to the pressure. In 1901, he brought Sherlock Holmes back in his novel, and went on to write 31 new stories about the brilliant detective. Sherlock Holmes's fans rescued their favorite character through letters and demonstration. But how do we modern fans do it now?

 Most of us agree that TV and multimedia have replaced literature as the dominant form of public entertainment. Meanwhile, the spread of the Internet has made it much easier for 21st century fans to express their views to the makers of entertainment. Today, fans write comments on websites and interact with each other to share information.

 Over the past few decades, the community of fans, or “fandom," has become an organized force in entertainment. From drama to talk shows, fans freely express their views and enjoy their influence as a result. Just as Conan Doyle's fans did to revive Sherlock Holmes, today's fans will also get together to save their favorite character from being killed off. Sometimes they push the producers and the writers of TV shows to bring a romance back into the story.

 No matter what the time or place, it seems fans like to express their love of story in any given format, and by doing so, continue to interact with the creators. And maybe that's the reward as well as the privilege of the true fan of any era!

Reading 02

**The Bandwagon Effect**

 As a rule, people want to belong to a popular group. A “sense of belonging” is a basic social need, and one may feel more pride and security by conforming to the popular group. People sometimes imitate others in order to enjoy such feelings. For example, teenagers tend to purchase expensive sneakers or clothes just because their friends buy those things. This is a typical example of “the bandwagon effect.”

 The term originated in America more than a hundred years ago. A bandwagon was a vehicle pulled by horses or oxen. It was used to carry a political candidate alongside musicians to draw the attention of the crowd at a parade. There was an expectation that people would easily remember and eventually vote for the candidate riding on the bandwagon. But the result surprised everyone: It happened that many people would actually “jump” onto their favorite candidate’s bandwagon. So the popularity of a candidate could be judged by the number of people who jumped on his wagon. Besides that, there was another interesting aspect to this odd phenomenon: The crowd would prefer to join the wagon loaded with more people. They must have felt better following the choice of the majority at the parade. Over time, the term “bandwagon” has become a metaphor for this tendency. Now, when someone says “hop on the bandwagon,” they really mean “do what everyone else is doing.”

 Today, the bandwagon effect is most commonly seen in the advertising industry. For instance, you may be familiar with slogans like this: “All teens are in love with this new MP3 player, Magic Eko! Now it’s your turn to find out why!” People are led to believe that they don’t belong to a popular group unless they buy Magic Eko. Clearly, the bandwagon effect is an essential commercial strategy to encourage customers to buy new products.

Reading 03

**Red Crabs on Christmas Island**

 Every year a strange sight can be seen on Christmas Island, an island in the Indian Ocean. Although there are 14 different types of land crabs on the island, it's the red crabs that make the most amazing migration.

 When the first heavy rain falls on Christmas Island around October or November, the rainy season has officially begun. This is the signal for red crabs to begin their annual migration. Approximately 120 million crabs come out of their holes in the forest and walk to the ocean! To get to the ocean and look for a mate, the red crabs walk through the jungle, across roads, through towns and down steep cliffs. They go everywhere, sometimes onto driveways and even into houses!

 Almost a million red crabs never make it to the ocean because they get lost or die along the way. But every year more than a hundred million red crabs walk for nearly 18 days, surviving the dangerous journey to the ocean. The males take a brief dip in the ocean water, and then walk to the nearby forest to mate with the females. After mating, the males return to the ocean to dip again and then begin the trip home on land. In about two weeks, the females lay about 100,000 eggs each in the ocean and then return home. After another month, baby crabs hatch, making the same journey their parents and other crabs have made for generations. Pretty impressive considering they've never been there before and don't have road maps!

 Although the crabs make driving difficult and frustrate people, no one on Christmas Island wants to get rid of them. Many people consider it a privilege to watch the annual migration. The locals don't get any benefit from the migration; they can't cook any of the red crabs because this type of crab can't be eaten! Even so, it's definitely worth dropping by Christmas Island in December or January to watch a blanket of red crabs migrate to the ocean and back.

Reading 04

**Going Dutch**

 The word "Dutch" originally referred to Germans, and even today, the word "Deutschland" means Germany. But in present-day English, "Dutch" refers to people and things coming from the Netherlands, the country on the coast of the North Sea between Germany and Belgium, which is also known as Holland.

 There are many English expressions that include the word "Dutch." Most of them have negative meanings. For example, "Going Dutch" means that each person pays his or her own way. "Dutch courage" means false courage or bravery gotten by drinking alcohol. A "Dutch uncle" is a person who gives unwanted advice. A "Dutch concert" is just a lot of noise and no music. A "Dutch defense" means surrender, although the Dutch never surrendered an inch of their homeland without a heroic fight.

 In these phrases the English imply that the Dutch are cowardly and cheap. Yet the rest of the world views Holland and the Dutch people much differently. When most people think of Holland, they imagine huge fields of tulips, tall windmills and children wearing wooden shoes ─ pleasant and positive things. So why did the English take such a contrary view of Holland?

 Before the 17th century, the Dutch were respected in English writing and language. But as the two countries became interested in the East Indies, they became rivals. They competed to control sea routes leading to the East Indies and the valuable goods found there. The Dutch and the English fought three wars at sea between 1652 and 1674. In 1667, when the Dutch boldly blocked off the Thames River near London, England, the English were outraged! It was during this time that the unfair war of words began. Today relations between the two countries are quite friendly, but the old phrases remain.

Reading 05

**Flowers Losing Their Scents**

 "Doing business without advertising is like winking at a girl in the dark. You know what you are doing, but nobody else does." This famous quote applies not just to the world of advertising, but also to the world of flowers today. Flowers have to "advertise" their presence over a large area by using their sweet scent to attract bees and butterflies. However, flowers have gradually been losing their scent because of increasing pollution levels in the atmosphere.

 Scientists at the University of Virginia recently created a model demonstrating how a flower's scent molecules travel through the air. They discovered that the molecules of scent that flowers produce bond with pollutants like ozone. The bonding generates chemical reactions and destroys the scent, so the smell of the flower no longer travels as far as it used to. Without a long "scent trail," pollinators like bees cannot find the flowers they need for food.

 Two hundred years ago there was much less pollution in the air. Scientists believe that back then the scent of flowers could travel almost as far as 1,200 meters. Today it only travels approximately one-quarter of that distance. For this reason, bees and other pollinators must search over greater distances and use their sense of sight as well as their sense of smell to find the flowers.

 What would happen if the bees couldn't find enough flowers? Flowers provide bees with nectar, which is their main food source. If they weren't able to find enough flowers and nectar to go around, bees wouldn't be able to maintain their population. What's more, flowers and plants that need bees to spread their pollen would not be able to reproduce as readily. As a result, the diversity of plants on Earth would greatly decrease, as would humanity's food resources.

Reading 06

**The Origins of Golf Terms**

 All sports seem to have their own special language and golf is no exception. Anyone who has watched golf on television has heard terms like birdie and bogey. But many people don't know the origin of golf or the origin of its unique vocabulary. Learning the history and language of golf makes it easier to understand.

 Golf started in Scotland many years ago. When shepherds got bored watching their sheep, they took sticks and hit stones into rabbit holes. The game became more complex as they counted the number of times a player hit the stone before it got into the hole. Eventually the stick became a golf club and the stone evolved into a golf ball. But the idea of the game has remained the same: the fewer strokes it takes a player to get the ball into the hole, the more skilled the player is.

 The most important skill in golf is to hit the ball a great distance with accuracy. Each hole in a game of golf is given a "par." The par is the number of times it is expected a golfer must hit the ball before it goes into the hole. Being "under par" means a person hits the ball fewer times than expected.

 Other golf terms may have gotten their start in Scotland's countryside. For example, the way balls "fly" through the air is often compared to types of birds. One stroke under par is a "birdie." An eagle (a more amazing bird) is two strokes under par and an albatross is three strokes under par. Albatrosses are very rare in golf, like in nature. Known for flying further than almost any other bird, an albatross is what every golfer hopes to hit.

 A bogey means that a golfer hits one stroke over par. The term "bogey" comes from the United Kingdom and means a ghost. When someone says a golfer got a bogey it means they hit the golf ball so badly that they seemed possessed by a ghost!

Reading 07

**The Deep Sea Anglerfish**

 You probably know that some fish eat other fish, but did you know there is one fish that has its own fishing rod? The anglerfish, found in deep parts of the Atlantic and Antarctic Oceans, has a long rod-like fin that looks like a worm. Using this special fin, the anglerfish "fishes." This is why it is called the "anglerfish."

 An anglerfish sits on the seafloor, blending into its surroundings. The only part of its body that other fish notice is the fin. The anglerfish hangs the fin in front of its open mouth. When another fish sees the fin, it thinks it is a worm. The smaller fish swims closer and the anglerfish swallows it.

 Although they sound frightening, anglerfish are small, reaching a maximum length of 12 centimeters. The color of the anglerfish can be brown, dark gray or black. An anglerfish has soft flesh and bones, and small eyes. Because of its round body it cannot swim very fast or straight. Instead, it sort of moves from side to side through the water.

 The male anglerfish is smaller than the female and looks completely different. The male is the size of a small finger and is black in color. When he matures, his digestive system weakens, making it impossible for him to feed on his own. He must find a female or starve. With his hooked teeth, he attaches himself to the female. He bites into her, releasing an enzyme to break down the skin of his mouth and some skin on her body. The two fish blend together and become one. Even their blood vessels join, becoming one system.

 The male spends the rest of his life living like a parasite, getting his nourishment from her body. A female anglerfish can carry six males on her body at once. A single female anglerfish is responsible for feeding herself and all the male anglerfish she carries.

Reading 08

**Yves Saint Laurent**

 We normally expect fashion designers to create attractive clothes, not to bring about important changes in society. But that's exactly what Yves Saint Laurent did.

 The famous French fashion designer dominated the fashion industry for more than four decades before his death in 2008. One of his creations was the pantsuit, a woman's suit of clothing consisting of trousers and a matching coat or jacket. Saint Laurent introduced the pantsuit in 1966, when a large number of European and American women were entering professional careers. They wanted to be treated as equals with the men who were doing similar jobs. But they had been forced to wear skirts, which set them apart. Pantsuits made them look and feel equal. As one woman put it, "When you wore them, your legs took longer steps; men looked at your face, not your ankles, and were forced to listen to the words that came out of your mouth." Saint Laurent's design encouraged the growth of women's confidence and power in the working world. The pantsuit has been called "what fashion gave to feminism."

 Saint Laurent also helped change the attitudes of white people towards other races. He was the first designer to hire black models in his fashion shows, and one of the first to employ Asians. By promoting the image of non-whites as beautiful and glamorous, he encouraged their acceptance in European and American society.

 Finally, he made the fashion industry more democratic. Before Saint Laurent, French "high fashion" designers only created custom-made clothing that only very wealthy customers could afford. But in 1966, Saint Laurent opened a store in Paris where he sold "ready-to-wear" clothes. These mass-produced clothes were much less expensive, which allowed ordinary women to dress fashionably.

 Although his main aim was creating beauty, Yves Saint Laurent also helped create major social changes: equality of the sexes, races, and economic classes.

Reading 09

**Air Conditioning**

 It’s the middle of the summer. It’s 30°C. Chubby Charlie feels hot and uncomfortable. Being a fat man, he feels the heat even more than ordinary people do. So what’s the first thing he does? Well, he turns on the air conditioner, of course!

 Recent research at the University of Alabama’s Clinical Nutrition Center suggests that Charlie may unknowingly be making himself fatter every time he turns on the air conditioner. People enjoy living in comfortable temperatures. For most people, that means keeping the room temperature between 18°C and 24°C. This is known to scientists as the thermoneutral zone. In the thermoneutral zone, there is no need for the body to control its temperature. It is only when the body’s temperature is below or above this zone that it works to return to the comfort level. Simply put, it is only when our bodies are too hot or too cold that we burn calories to keep our bodies comfortable. Thus, we may be putting on extra weight by turning on the air conditioner.

 Bigger people like Chubby Charlie tend to feel the heat more than ordinary people. The reason is that layers of fat act like blankets, warming the body up. So, fatter people typically use the air conditioning more often. This can lead to a vicious cycle. Fat people are likely to get hot easily. They may often turn on the air conditioner to cool down. Then, their bodies don’t burn calories. The excess calories could turn into even more fat.

 There is a simple solution for Chubby Charlie: Don’t turn on the air conditioner as much. By keeping away from the air conditioner, Charlie can burn tens of thousands of calories every year. In addition, hot people have smaller appetites. In mid-summer, Charlie will probably eat less if he doesn’t turn on the air conditioner. Thus, he puts fewer calories in his body. Let’s go on an air conditioner diet this summer!

Reading 10

**Lactose Intolerance**

 Susan couldn't help it. She and her friends began lunch with cheesy nachos. Then they ate cheeseburgers and drank milkshakes. Things seemed fine, but then suddenly Susan's stomach started making noise. Her stomach hurt, and, racing to the restroom, she had horrible gas! She was so embarrassed. She had been so excited to go to lunch with her friends that she totally forgot to watch how much dairy she ate! Susan is lactose intolerant, and eating too much dairy can make her feel really sick.

 Lactose intolerance means that the body can't easily digest a special sugar called lactose. Unfortunately for Susan and millions of other people with this problem, lactose is found in almost all dairy products ─ yogurt, cheese, milk and ice cream.

 Our body uses an enzyme called lactase to break lactose into a simpler form of sugar. Once lactose is broken down, it's easy to digest and it becomes great fuel for the body. But people like Susan don't have enough lactase to break down all the lactose they take in. So, about half an hour to two hours after eating dairy-rich foods, their stomachs begin to hurt and they have gas, making them feel bloated ─ like their stomachs are getting bigger. Sometimes they even get diarrhea when they eat too many dairy foods.

 So how can someone living with this problem still eat out with friends? Here are some tips. If you're going to eat a dairy-rich food like ice cream, eat something with it that doesn't have any dairy, like a salad or a sandwich without cheese. This will help slow digestion, and your body will have time to create more lactase. Also, eat lots of foods that are dairy-free but high in calcium, like broccoli and soy products.

Reading 11

**Impressionism**

 Impressionism was an artistic movement that began in the late 19th century. It was one of the most famous movements in art history. Even if you are not into art, you have at least heard of the famous Impressionists like Monet, Manet, and Renoir, and have seen some of their paintings.

 The Impressionists were different in their choice of subject matter and use of color from earlier generations. Before the Impressionists discovered the beauty of everyday life, most painters focused on traditional subject matters such as still lifes, historical events and biblical stories.

 However, Impressionists took an interest in the daily lives of ordinary people in the cities, which were expanding in both size and in their range of culture and entertainment. They started to paint seemingly ordinary matters. For example, Manet and Renoir painted people enjoying picnics in the park, or just hanging out in urban settings.

 More importantly, the Impressionists changed the old conception of color. Before the Impressionists, artists believed that everything had a unique color of its own which could not be replaced. For instance, the sky was blue, apples were red, and leaves were green. But Impressionists saw that the color of an object constantly changes according to the amount of sunlight and the atmosphere at the time it was drawn. Therefore, they focused on the momentary impressions of the object. That is to say, they painted the objects by relying on "how" they saw them in that place and at that time.

 Monet was one of these Impressionist painters. He made a series of paintings of a single cathedral at different times of the day. Each painting in the series was a different color, reflecting the changes in sunlight shining on the cathedral throughout the day.

 Impressionism began as a revolutionary approach towards the fine arts, and soon became one of the most popular movements in art history. Probably the greatest contribution of the Impressionists is the fact that they introduced the joy of perceiving things as we actually see them rather than as we are told to.

Reading 12

**The Mayan Numeric System**

 How did the ancient Mayan people count numbers? Their numeric system was based on 20, not on 10, as is our own. Perhaps they used fingers and toes for counting.

 In our numbering system, if you put the number one ( 1 ) next to the number zero ( 0 ), it becomes the number 10. But in the Mayan system it is different: if you put the number one ( ) above the number zero ( ), it is equal to 20 ( ). Our numeric system has ten symbols to show all the numbers. Mayan numbers could all be written with only three symbols: a dot for 1, a bar for 5, and a seashell-like symbol for 0.



 Using these three symbols, the Mayans could write out any number from one to 19. How would the Mayans write the number 12, then? They would write two bars, each representing five and two dots, each representing one. Added up, it amounts to a sum of 12.



 How did they show numbers that were higher than 19? In our counting system, the number forty-six, for example, is written with a "4" next to a "6." The "4" is in the tens place and represents 40 (four sets of ten). And the "6" is in the ones place, representing 6 (six sets of one). However, in the Mayan system, there is a twenties place instead of a tens place. Look at the example below to see how they wrote the number 46:



Reading 13

**Keeping Sunflowers in the Dark**

 Anyone who keeps a garden knows that most plants bend toward the sun to catch as much sunlight as they can. This is called "solar tracking," and sunflowers are a well-known example of such a phenomenon. If you observe a sunflower in the early morning, you will find it turning its face eastward; at sunset, on the other hand, its face will turn towards the west. But what if there's no sun for the sunflower to guide its solar tracking? In other words, what happens if you take a sunflower out of the garden bed and keep it in a completely dark closet?

 Surprisingly, the sunflower will continue its solar tracking with or without sunlight. It will bend, just as it did outside, eastward at sunrise and westward at sunset, even if there is not a single ray of light inside the dark closet. This is a classic example of what scientists call a circadian rhythm. A circadian rhythm is a daily cycle of behavior that is internal to the organism, rather than being directed by the environment.

 Sunflowers do follow the sun, but they don't just "seek" sunlight. This is clear from the fact that the sunflower in darkness bends just as well. Although sunflowers don't bend themselves with any purpose in mind, some scientists think they have evolved their solar tracking system over millions of years. According to this theory, the evolution helps sunflowers catch light more effectively, and the ones that catch light best are most likely to survive. As a result of this natural selection, we now have sunflowers that bend automatically. However, that only happens when sunflowers are young plants. After a certain stage sunflowers stop following the sun and only face east.

Reading 14

**The Soccer War**

 Participating in the World Cup is a great way for countries to show their national pride. But you might change your mind if you knew what happened almost 40 years ago, when a soccer game between two countries became an excuse to start a war.

 Honduras and El Salvador, two neighboring Central American countries, were playing in a tournament to qualify for the 1970 World Cup in Mexico. The first game was played in Honduras. Honduran fans kept the Salvadoran team awake all night, beating garbage cans and setting off fireworks. The exhausted Salvadorans were defeated the next day, 1-0.

 When the Honduran team went to El Salvador for the second game, they got a surprise! Surrounding the stadium were tanks and soldiers. The Salvadorans insulted the Honduran flag and national anthem. Unable to concentrate, the Honduran team lost 3-0.

 The final game between the two national teams was played in Mexico. Five thousand police were called in to keep the dangerous fans separated. El Salvador won the game, but both teams ended up qualifying for the World Cup. The soccer game may have ended, but the conflict wasn't over. After the three soccer games the hostility between Honduras and El Salvador increased, leading to the outbreak of an official war, known as the "Soccer War." Soccer, however, wasn't the only cause of the Soccer War.

 The trouble had actually started years earlier over a territorial dispute between the two countries. El Salvador, a country with a large population and very little land, noticed that Honduras had a larger land area and a smaller population. El Salvador began claiming part of Honduran land, and Honduras grew angry. The two nations argued over the border for years.

 Unfortunately, the soccer games were played when tension between the countries was at its peak and the games worsened the dispute. Although the war lasted only 100 hours, thousands of people were killed and wounded. As is always the case with war, nothing was solved. The territorial dispute between the two countries was not settled until the International Court of Justice (ICJ) stepped in more than 20 years later.

Reading 15

**Gift-Giving Culture**

 Gift-giving is an integral part of all human societies. It is how we show our appreciation, how we celebrate certain occasions, and how we maintain friendships and relationships. Gifts can express how we feel, but they can also express unintended messages, so gift-giving etiquette in any culture should be handled carefully.

 In some cultures that place a high emphasis on gift-giving, there is a ritual involved in the giving and receiving of gifts. In Japan, for example, gifts are presented in beautifully wrapped packages and are both presented and received using both hands. The giver says something modest, such as "It isn't much, but I wanted to show my appreciation." The recipient of the gift will refuse once or twice, but the giver will insist. Then the receiver will reluctantly accept the gift and put it away to be opened later.

 The choice of gift is important, naturally, and in some cultures it is easy to offend a person by giving the wrong gift. The givers of gifts must consider symbolism; for example, a gift of a knife or letter opener in Brazil might be seen as symbolizing the ending of a relationship; not the intended message of the gift.

 The relationship between the giver and the receiver of a gift also determines what kind of gift is appropriate. For example, in the United States, gifts such as perfume are only given to women by boyfriends or husbands. If a friend were to give such a gift, it might be interpreted as a romantic advance.

 The culture of gift-giving differs from one society to another, but they all have an idea in common: in any country, when choosing gifts we must always consider the message we wish to convey with the gift and think about whether or not it is suitable for the intended recipient. Your gift will be much more appreciated if it shows consideration and respect for the recipient's culture.

Reading 16

**A Miraculous Frog**

 Frogs sleep through the long months of winter underground without freezing. This is called hibernation. During hibernation, animals do not move or eat, but they stay alive.

 One type of frog living in North America has a very unusual way of hibernating: freezing! The North American wood frog appears to be dead but comes alive in the spring, just as water changes to ice and back. Most animals die if they freeze because its body cells are destroyed under the extreme temperature. So how is it possible for the wood frog to survive the freezing?

 The secret lies in the fact that although the water *between* the cells in the frog's body becomes frozen, the water *inside* the cell does not freeze. Before the winter begins, the wood frog stores carbohydrates in its body. As the temperature drops, these carbohydrates turn into glucose, something like sugar juice that fills the inside of the cell. Glucose has a much lower freezing point than water. Due to this fact, the body cells of the wood frog do not freeze, which in turn allows it to survive icy temperatures.

 Now researchers are hoping to adapt the wood frog's secret to advance medical science. The idea is that a similar principle can be applied to preserving human organs for transplants. At the present stage, a donor's organs are kept in a special liquid under a very low temperature. But they must be used quickly because freezing them would kill the cells in the organs. If doctors could learn to apply the same principle that protects the wood frog during its hibernation to organs, they could preserve organs longer. That would give them more time to find the best matches among people waiting for organ transplants.

Reading 17

  **The Great Gatsby**

 Set in the 1920s during "the Jazz Age," the novel *The Great Gatsby* is considered by many to be one of the greatest American books of all time. Written by F. Scott Fitzgerald, it is generally agreed that *The Great Gatsby* is his finest work, offering unique insight into the empty lives of the newly rich.

 The title character of this novel is a wealthy man by the name of Jay Gatsby, a man who has everything in life that people think is important ─ except love. The character Nick Carraway narrates the novel, while renting a house near Gatsby's huge mansion. Every week Gatsby hosts an extravagant party in hopes of attracting his lost love, Daisy, but instead many wealthy young people visit, and spend their time gossiping.

 Although it seems Gatsby has everything a person could ever want, Nick discovers Gatsby is dissatisfied, only wanting to be reunited with the love of his life, Daisy. But Daisy is married, so Gatsby encourages Nick to help them reunite. With Nick's help, Daisy and Gatsby finally meet, and they become emotionally involved once again. Everything is fine until Daisy accidentally runs over a woman while driving Gatsby's car. Gatsby, rather than abandoning her to her fate, takes the blame for the accident. Tragically, the dead woman's husband murders Gatsby. In the end, none of the people who attended his beautiful parties care enough about him to attend his funeral.

 F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel was not immediately popular, but it became greatly appreciated by American readers and writers who realized that "the American Dream" of being wealthy was not enough to make someone truly happy. Other writers took this theme to heart and began questioning the real meaning of American values in their writings as well.

Reading 18

**Warren Buffett**

 There is an English saying that goes, "Don't judge a book by its cover." This is true of Warren Buffett. Although he is one of the world's richest men, Warren Buffett lives a simple, ordinary life. He prefers plain clothing and drives himself instead of having a driver and an expensive new car. Buffett even decided that upon his death, his fortune would be donated to charity.

 As a child, Buffett always worked hard and enjoyed earning money. He sold soft drinks door to door and worked in his family's grocery store. He learned about the stock market, buying his first stock at age 11. When his family moved to Washington, D.C., Buffett delivered rival newspapers in five different neighborhoods. When customers canceled a subscription, Buffett offered the competitor's newspaper. With this strategy, Buffett was able to earn an adult's salary. At 14, Buffett began renting farmland to people. He continually looked for new opportunities and expanded his business.

 Successful at 17, Buffett didn't care to attend college. But his father's encouragement made him change his mind and attend the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and then the University of Nebraska. Harvard Business School rejected his application because they felt he was too young. However, this worked out because Buffett attended Columbia University, studying under Benjamin Graham, the father of value investing. Graham greatly influenced Buffett's investment strategy. Buffett carefully chose important basic stocks and kept them faithfully, earning more money than people who frequently changed stocks. This was his investment philosophy as well as his life's philosophy.

 Buffett has been living in the same humble house and working in the same office since 1951. He doesn't see the need for expensive purchases like fancy clothes, restaurants, or limousines to show off his wealth. His business strategy is also his life's philosophy ─ work hard, choose carefully, stay humble and be successful.

Reading 19

**Admiral Yi Sun Shin**

 In 1597, Korea was invaded by the Japanese for the second time in five years. The situation was a serious crisis for Korea. The navy had lost a number of major sea battles. By October, Korea had only 13 warships left, but the Japanese had 133. The Korean navy was no match for the Japanese fleet.

 What could Admiral Yi do in this desperate situation? He had a brilliant idea. The battlefield, Jindo Island, is characterized by narrow straits and fast currents. In one part of the Myeongnyang Strait, the distance between the island and the mainland is only 300 meters. Admiral Yi thought that he could use such a geographical feature to his advantage. Admiral Yi made secret plans that the Japanese never expected. Yi placed a steel wire under the water between the island and the mainland to block the Japanese ships when they came. The admiral also hid his ships in the shadows of the nearby hills.

 On a foggy October morning, Yi sent one of his ships to lure the Japanese. As expected, the Japanese ships chased the Korean one toward the Myeongnyang Strait. After many ships had entered the strait, the Koreans raised the hidden wire above the water. Blocked by the wire, the Japanese ships began to run into one another. At that very moment, the Koreans started firing from their hiding places. The Japanese ships were completely destroyed.

 Because of Admiral Yi’s extraordinary victory at the Battle of Myeongnyang, Japanese ground forces had to give up their advance toward Seoul. Since Japanese ships could no longer transport supplies and additional soldiers, the invasion ended.

 Today, the battle is celebrated as one of Admiral Yi’s greatest victories. In a fight comparable to that of David and Goliath, the small group of Korean ships destroyed a much larger Japanese force.

Reading 20

**The Facebook Phenomenon**

 The online phenomenon known as Facebook began as a Harvard University dropout's hobby. Once limited to university students, Facebook has now become the largest social networking website in the world. It is a dynamic way for old friends and colleagues to find each other and for new friends to meet.

 Started in 2004, Facebook was originally a site only students with an email address ending in "edu" could join. It was like being part of a huge but exclusive club. College students throughout the USA joined the website to create extensive networks. As Facebook's popularity grew, its founder, Mark Zuckerberg, realized even more people would love to sign up for the service. In 2006, Facebook opened its membership to anyone with an email address. Facebook experienced another boom in its popularity.

 There are many features that make Facebook so popular with its users. In just minutes anyone can sign up for the service and start uploading photos or videos. Most new members also enjoy searching for friends they lost track of years ago. Whether they knew each other from elementary, middle, high school or college, people around the world reconnect using Facebook's simple tools.

 Facebook also includes many specialized features. Members write on a friend's "Wall," a special section of each person's profile page. Friends post short public messages on each other's walls or they can send more private "Messages." Facebook members also "poke" each other as a greeting. Sending a "poke" to a friend is like saying "I'm thinking of you." Like a real-life poke in the ribs, a virtual poke shows you want someone's attention. Members also send virtual "gifts" they've purchased. "Gifts" are little icons of things you might really give. Members can buy these icons inexpensively and send them, showing their appreciation.

 Facebook's features all help establish quality connections between people, so no matter how far apart they are geographically, they can communicate closely.

Reading 21

**Pets and Owners**

 If you have a chance to take a walk in a park, look carefully at the people walking their dogs. You'll probably find friendly-looking, outgoing people with friendly, outgoing dogs; quiet people with quiet dogs; large men with oversized dogs; and long-haired women with long-eared dogs. As you've probably noticed in your own observation, dogs and their owners tend to look alike. Have you ever wondered why?

 These resemblances are so common that psychologists have tried to explain them. There are two theories: the convergence theory and the selection theory. The convergence theory says that as the owner and the dog spend more time together, they influence each other to the point where their appearances grow similar. In other words, they "converge." The selection theory, on the other hand, claims that owners are initially attracted to dogs that resemble them, so they choose those dogs as pets.

 Recently, psychologists at the University of California decided to test the two theories by taking pictures of 45 dogs separately from their owners. Then they asked research participants to match the dogs's photos with their owners. The research participants were quite successful with purebred dogs: they correctly matched 16 out of 25 with their owners. However, they had almost no success connecting mixed-breed dogs with their owners. When owners select a purebred puppy, they can easily predict what it will look like later. But that is not true with mixed-breed dogs because it's hard to foretell what a mixed-breed puppy will look like when it becomes an adult. And since it was the purebreds, not the mixed-breeds that resembled their owners, the study seems to support the "selection theory."

 But one bit of warning. Although many people resemble their dogs, not all dog owners enjoy having the resemblance pointed out to them. So, even if the similarity is amazing, don't go up to a stranger and say, "Wow, you look just like your dog!"

Reading 22

**The New Internet Slang: Netspeak**

 *ltns! do u wan 2 mmas?*

 It's bizarre to some people, but most American teens understand what that all means ─ it's an example of Netspeak, the language of digital communication. It's used in Internet chat rooms, instant messaging, and cell phone texting to get messages through quickly but what does it all mean? *Long time no see! Do you want to meet me after school?*

 The widespread use of Netspeak among teenagers frustrates many teachers and parents. They claim its use encourages students to ignore proper spelling, punctuation, and grammar. They fear Netspeak is destroying the English language and ruining students' communication skills.

 But linguists disagree. They say Netspeak and the Internet are helpful because they motivate kids to develop an interest in reading and writing. Thanks to online chatting, instant messaging, and blogs, young people are writing and communicating with each other more than ever before.

 Linguists also say we shouldn't judge Netspeak according to traditional writing. The English language is changing because communications technology is changing. Netspeak uses acronyms (like *HAND* for *Have a nice day*) and shortened words (like *coz* for *because*). But abbreviating words and phrases is neither dangerous nor new. Long before the Internet, English words often evolved by shortening longer words: *mathematics* was shortened to math and *examination* to *exam*, like thousands of other words. It's the evolution of language.

 Despite teachers' and parents' concerns, linguists say that most teenagers know when Netspeak is appropriate and when it is not. They understand that the language they use when chatting online is completely different from the language they should use to write academic papers. And while Netspeak might get reluctant readers and writers to communicate more in these formats, it is still important to teach teens standard English in order for them to achieve success in the future.

Reading 23

**Global Seed Vault**

 We all know the Bible story about how Noah prepared for the Great Flood. By preserving a pair of every species on his ark, he was able to restore life on Earth following the major disaster.

 Like Noah, we might encounter severe floods as a result of global warming, or other major threats to humans: nuclear war or the impact of a huge meteorite. Any such disaster could destroy the natural habitats where plants grow, and also the plants themselves, including their seeds. Without seeds, agriculture would be impossible. The end of agriculture would mean the end of civilization.

 That's why a modern version of Noah's Ark was opened in Norway in February 2008. It's called the Global Seed Vault. A vault is a strong, safe storage unit for important things, such as gold or important documents. But in this case, it's for agricultural seeds, the building blocks of civilization. When the seeds are destroyed in their natural habitat, the Global Seed Vault is an alternative supply. This way, the diversity of species can be preserved, and agriculture can continue to flourish.

 The vault is inside a cave dug 130 meters deep into a frozen mountain on Norway's ice-cold Spitsbergen Island, just 800 kilometers from the North Pole. Seeds of thousands of different plants are being deposited in the vault. Deep in the frozen mountain, the seeds will remain frozen for centuries. There they are safe from nuclear attacks, earthquakes, and other effects of global warming.

 Although the government of Norway owns the Global Seed Vault, other countries can also deposit their seeds without charge and withdraw them whenever they need to. The first deposit was a box of seeds from different species of rice originating from 104 countries. Thousands more species are being added, as the organizers of the project attempt to store seed samples of every agricultural plant on earth. Everyone hopes they won't be needed. But we must learn from Noah's wisdom: it's best to always be prepared.

Reading 24

**Tricked out of Love**

 Imagine you're a lonely wasp, looking for love to brighten your life. You know exactly what your mate should look like and how her perfume should smell. And then it happens! You see her from a distance and fly over to introduce yourself. She smells great, so you ask her to dance, bumping against her a couple of times. But just as your song is ending, you realize she's not a wasp at all, but a terrific smelling plant!

 If you'd been the wasp in that situation, you'd probably have flown away disappointed at being tricked. It happens all the time to Campsoscolia ciliata wasps. They think they've found love, but all they've found is Ophrys speculum, a type of orchid, that deceives male wasps by almost perfectly disguising itself as female wasps.

 Orchids, like other flowers and many plants, need insects to help them spread their pollen, a fine dust that lets plants breed. This type of orchid has evolved to attract a particular type of wasp to help it get pollinated. The orchid develops a bloom that looks like a female wasp and is covered with little red hairs. The orchid also creates a perfume, or scent, that matches the smell of a female wasp. Even better, the perfume the orchid creates is much stronger than the smell of a real female wasp. So there's really no competition; if the male wasp is nearby, he'll choose to visit the orchid over the female wasp.

 As the male wasp bumps his body against the orchid's blossom, he gets covered with orchid pollen. The next time he tries to find love with another flower, he'll drop some of that pollen off, letting the orchids reproduce, even if he never gets a real chance himself!