UNIT 10

C1.1

Exercise 1

For questions 1–8, read the text below and decide which answer (A, B, C or D) best fits each gap. There is an example at the beginning (0).

Going digital

Long after most of our competitors had jumped on the **(0)** bandwagon of cloud-based software, our small publishing firm was still relying on paper files and an ancient email system. Senior management had simply failed to keep **(1)** _____ of developments in the industry, and when they finally decided to modernise, everyone knew we were facing a steep learning **(2)** _____.

The office administrators bore the **(3)** _____ of the early frustration, since they had to transfer years of records into the new system. Many of them had private doubts about the project, but most kept quiet rather than **(4)** _____ the boat. Fortunately, the IT department went out of its **(5)** _____ to help, running extra training sessions and answering questions at all hours.

Two years on, the gamble has clearly **(6)** _____ off. Staff now **(7)** _____ for granted features that once seemed out of reach, such as editing documents together from home, and the company finds itself, rather unexpectedly, at the **(8)** _____ of digital publishing in the region.

0	**A** **bandwagon**	**B** trend	**C** wave	**D** train
1	**A** pace	**B** sight	**C** touch	**D** track
2	**A** line	**B** curve	**C** slope	**D** path
3	**A** weight	**B** burden	**C** brunt	**D** load
4	**A** rocking	**B** shaking	**C** tipping	**D** moving
5	**A** path	**B** road	**C** route	**D** way
6	**A** set	**B** paid	**C** gave	**D** cut
7	**A** hold	**B** keep	**C** take	**D** see
8	**A** forefront	**B** frontline	**C** spearhead	**D** vanguard

Exercise 2

For questions 9–16, read the text below and think of the word which best fits each gap. Use only one word in each gap. There is an example at the beginning (0).

Chinese cinemagoers left feeling unwell by 3D film

A 3D version of the latest Bourne film, made **(0)** with Chinese audiences in mind, has led to complaints **(9)** _____ headaches and nausea among cinemagoers. The format remains extremely popular in the country, particularly **(10)** _____ it comes to action films, but the process used to convert the 2D original appears to **(11)** _____ been badly judged on this occasion.

(12) _____ ticket sales for 3D films have fallen in Europe and the US, Chinese audiences still have a strong appetite **(13)** _____ the technology. There is, however, more than one kind of 3D film. "Genuine" 3D films are shot with dual-lens cameras, **(14)** _____ record two versions of every shot, and special glasses then allow viewers to see a different image with **(15)** _____ eye.

A cheaper option is to film in 2D and add the effect later by computer. This works well for some films, but not for all. In the Bourne film, many scenes were shot on a handheld camera to give them a fast-paced, hectic feel, and it is **(16)** _____ scenes in particular that have caused problems for viewers.

Based on an article from BBC News

Exercise 3

You are going to read an article about social networks. For questions 1–6, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Here to stay?

A technology journalist looks back on the rise of social networks and asks what comes next.

I will admit it now: when friends first began urging me to set up a profile on a social networking site, I rolled my eyes. To me, it looked like the online equivalent of a novelty ringtone – amusing for a month, then quietly abandoned. I was confident that, like so many digital crazes before it, the whole thing would prove to be a flash in the pan. Rarely have I been so comprehensively wrong.

Anyone who still regards social networks as a passing fad is simply not paying attention. In recent years they have helped bring down governments, spread news of disasters faster than any broadcaster could, and, in one notorious British case, revealed the identity of a footballer whose lawyers had obtained a court order to keep his private life out of the papers. They have a darker side, too: during the riots that swept through several English cities in 2011, young people used messaging services on their phones to coordinate where to gather next. Whatever one thinks of these

events, they make one thing plain: what happens online no longer stays online. And now that most of us access these networks through the smartphones in our pockets, their reach into everyday life is only deepening.

Not everyone is convinced the boom will last, of course. Sceptics point to the dotcom crash of 2000, when the share prices of countless internet start-ups collapsed almost overnight. Investment analysts who specialise in the sector reject the comparison. The companies of the late 1990s, they argue, were valued on promises alone; many had never earned a penny. Today's social networks, by contrast, generate real income. It is a fair point, as far as it goes. But earning money and continuing to earn it are not the same thing, and the history of the industry suggests that size offers surprisingly little protection.

Consider MySpace. In 2005, Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation paid $580 million for what was then the most visited social network in the United States. Six years later it was sold for a mere $35 million. What went wrong? Part of the answer is that the site became cluttered with advertising as its new owners tried to recover their investment, and users, who had come for the music and the friends, simply drifted away. Meanwhile, Facebook's founder, Mark Zuckerberg, was obsessing over keeping his own site clean, fast and easy to use. The lesson investors drew was a sobering one: push commercialisation too hard and you risk driving away the very people who give a network its value.

Facebook itself floated on the stock market in 2012 with a valuation of around $100 billion, yet even then it was still searching for a reliable way to turn its vast membership into profit. Its answer, so far, has been advertising – and not just any advertising. Over the years the company has gathered enormous amounts of information about its users: where they live, what they like, who they talk to. This allows it to show each person adverts they are more likely to respond to. It is, when you think about it, a curious bargain. We pay nothing to use the service, and in return we hand over details of our lives that we would hesitate to share with a stranger in the street. Most of us accept the deal without a second thought, which may say more about us than about the companies involved.

So, is social media here to stay? I am no longer foolish enough to bet against it. But I suspect the question itself is slightly misleading. Individual networks will come and go; the MySpace story will almost certainly be repeated, perhaps with a name we now take for granted. What will endure is the habit – the expectation that we can share, comment and connect instantly, with anyone, at any time. The companies may change; the rules of the game, it seems, already have.

1 What does the writer admit in the first paragraph?

A She only joined a social network because her friends put pressure on her.
B She failed to predict how long-lasting social networks would be.
C She enjoyed social networks at first but soon lost interest in them.
D She considered social networks less useful than other new technologies.

2 The writer mentions the events in the second paragraph in order to

A criticise the way social networks are sometimes misused.
B argue that social networks need stricter legal controls.
C suggest that the benefits of social networks outweigh the risks.
D show that social networks have an impact beyond the internet.

3 What is the writer's attitude to the analysts' argument in the third paragraph?

A She accepts it but feels it does not tell the whole story.
B She believes it misrepresents the causes of the dotcom crash.
C She suspects the analysts have a financial interest in making it.
D She thinks it exaggerates how much today's networks earn.

4 According to the writer, MySpace lost its users mainly because

A Facebook offered them better music and entertainment.
B its new owners had paid too much for the company.
C its owners put making money before the users' experience.
D it failed to attract enough advertisers to survive.

5 What does the writer mean by "a curious bargain" in the fifth paragraph?

A Advertisers pay far less than users' information is really worth.
B Users give away personal information in exchange for a free service.
C Facebook's valuation was low considering how many users it had.
D Users do not realise that the company earns money from adverts.

6 What is the writer's main point in the final paragraph?

A Social networks are likely to be replaced by a completely new technology.
B Facebook will probably suffer the same fate as MySpace.
C Particular companies may fail, but the way we communicate has changed for good.
D It is impossible to predict how social media will develop in the future.

Exercise 4

Your class has watched a panel discussion on the impact of social media on society. You have made the notes below:

Which areas of life have been most affected by social media?

- personal relationships
- the way we get news and information
- young people's mental health

Some opinions expressed in the discussion:

"We have hundreds of friends online, but fewer real ones."
"Anyone can publish anything now, so it's much harder to know what's true."
"Social media gives young people a voice they never had before."

Write an essay discussing **two** of the areas in your notes. You should **explain which area has been more significantly affected**, giving reasons to support your opinion.

You may, if you wish, make use of the opinions expressed in the discussion, but you should use your own words as far as possible.

Write your essay in 220–260 words in an appropriate style.

Useful language

- **Introducing:** First of all / To begin with / Firstly
- **Adding:** In addition / Moreover / Furthermore / What is more
- **Contrasting:** However / On the other hand / By contrast / Although / While
- **Moving on:** Turning to … / As for … / Another key issue is …
- **Giving your opinion:** In my view / I would argue that / It seems to me that
- **Concluding:** In conclusion / To sum up / All things considered