



1 • Personality

PRE-READING 1 Complete the sentences with the key words in bold from the text.

- 1 Researchers long ago found a _____ between cigarette smoking and lung cancer, but smoking is still quite popular despite these negative _____.
- 2 There is also some _____ that second-hand smoke, breathing in smoke from other people's cigarettes, can be harmful as well.
- 3 Though the film was popular, _____ complained that it was just another predictable and unrealistic action film.
- 4 She made several _____ about the future, but none of them were _____.

PRE-READING 2 Read the text below and answer the question.

Hard-working employees wanted: Libras and Virgos need not apply

In 2009, an insurance company in Austria ran a job advertisement in several major newspapers that read, 'We are looking for people over 20 for part-time jobs in sales and management with the following star signs: Capricorn, Taurus, Aquarius, Aries and Leo.' Several equality groups complained that this was not a fair employment practice.

What do you think about this kind of employment practice?

- a Astrology is fairly accurate, so it is OK for the company to do this.
- b Astrology might be accurate in some cases, but not for everyone. It is rather unfair for the company to do this.
- c Astrology is not accurate. This is a very unfair practice.

Discuss your answer with a partner.



As above, so below?

5 In 1979 a French researcher, Michel Gauquelin, took out an advertisement in a Paris newspaper offering free personalized horoscopes. To the first 150 people who responded, he sent out readings giving details of their personality, and then he asked them to report back on the accuracy of the information. An amazing 94 per cent replied that their readings were very **accurate**. There were two things the researcher did not mention to the respondents, however. Firstly, all 150 people, regardless of their actual birthdates, received the same reading, word for word. Secondly, the reading that they received was one prepared with the time and date of birth of a French doctor called Michel Petiot, who was convicted of multiple murders during the Second World War.

15 Astrology is the belief that the position of planets and stars at the time of a person's birth has a strong influence on the person's character and future. Astrology originated in ancient Babylonia more than 3,000 years ago, and is still believed by a sizable percentage of people in the West. Recent surveys have found that 31 per cent of Americans believe in astrology, and 52 per cent of Europeans consider astrology to be a science. Many newspapers in the West carry horoscopes, allowing people to get daily advice according to the astrological sign corresponding to their particular birthdate. Astrology is not just for the average person, either. Former US President Ronald Reagan was a believer in astrology, and according to a presidential aide, every major decision taken by the President during his eight years in office was first checked with a well-known astrologer. Former French President Jacques Chirac is said to have checked his horoscope every morning.

25 Despite the popularity of astrology, the scientific community questions the accuracy of this theory. For example, another study by Michel Gauquelin examined the horoscopes of 15,560 professionals from five European countries, and could find no **link** between astrological signs and occupations. Perhaps the most damaging studies have been the ones on *astro-twins* (here defined as people who are born on the same day). The premise is simple: if one's date of birth has an effect on one's character and future, then people born on the same day should be more similar to each other than to those born on different days. These studies examined thousands of people who shared birthdates, looking for similarities in personality and intelligence, yet found that these people had no more in common with their astro-twin than with anyone else. Scientists also say that a belief in astrology has potential for confirming stereotypes and encouraging discrimination.

45 If researchers largely dismiss astrology as superstition, why do so many people in the West still believe it? For most, it is based on their personal experience. They have found it works for them, so what does it matter what the studies say? **Critics** of astrology, however, counter this 'but it works for me' defence with two explanations regarding why beliefs in astrology may seem justified to some. The first is called confirmation bias. Confirmation bias refers to the

50 tendency of people to pay more attention to evidence which seems to agree with and justify their beliefs, and to ignore or forget any **evidence** that suggests they might be wrong. Someone might remember a particular time, for example, when an astrologer told them they would find love in a particular year, but forget the other times when the astrologer got their **predictions** wrong.

55 Secondly, there is what is known as the Forer effect. The Forer effect states that people tend to view general statements that could apply to many people as being highly accurate for them individually. Consider the following statements: How many are true for you?

- 60
- You seem calm and in control on the outside, but on the inside you sometimes feel uncertain and afraid.
 - You are an independent thinker, and accept new ideas only after careful evaluation.
 - At times you are shy, but in some circumstances you can be outgoing and talkative.

65 Do most of those descriptions match you? Well, it turns out that the majority of people find those statements **true** for them (only a very few people are shy in *all* situations, for example). This explains why nearly all the people who replied to Gauquelin's advertisement thought the horoscope reading matched them well individually.

70 Regardless of whether or not there is any truth in astrology, for many people it is something they do for fun and don't take very seriously. Annie, an American university student, says 'I really don't know if astrology is true or not, but it's something fun to talk about with friends, and it's always interesting to read my horoscope in the

75 morning and see if it turns out right. As long as I'm not paying money to let an astrologer tell me how to run my life, what's the harm?'

COMPREHENSION 1 Decide if the sentences are True (T) or False (F). Then write the line number where the evidence is.

- 1 The research reported in the first paragraph gives evidence of the accuracy of astrology.
T F Line number: _____
- 2 Astrology is believed by millions of people in America and Europe.
T F Line number: _____
- 3 Most scientific research does not support astrology.
T F Line number: _____
- 4 Confirmation bias can mean remembering only evidence that supports your beliefs, and forgetting evidence that goes against your beliefs.
T F Line number: _____
- 5 The Forer effect shows that quite often, astrologers can give exact and highly accurate information about people.
T F Line number: _____
- 6 The article suggests that many people who believe in astrology are not harmed by it.
T F Line number: _____

COMPREHENSION 2 Answer the questions.

- 1 In line 9, what does the expression *word for word* mean?
 - a Using different words, but having the same meaning
 - b Using exactly the same words
 - c Using the same number of words
- 2 In line 28, what does the phrase, *questions the accuracy of this theory* mean?
 - a They don't understand why the theory is accurate
 - b They are very curious about the accuracy of the theory
 - c They have strong doubts about the accuracy of the theory
- 3 In line 33, what does *premise* mean?
 - a A statement on which a theory can be based
 - b A solution to a question
 - c An idea which is false
- 4 In line 42, *largely* means ...
 - a mostly
 - b in a big way
 - c strongly
 - d loudly

- 5 What is the meaning of lines 67-68?
- You feel calm when you are in natural places, like parks and mountains, but feel nervous and afraid inside buildings
 - You are calm in familiar places, but can feel afraid in new or strange places
 - Even though you might feel upset or scared, you appear calm to other people
- 6 In the final paragraph, what word or expression means *happens in a particular way*?
- _____

SPEAKING Discuss the questions with a partner.

- What is your star sign? Do you consider it an accurate description of your personality?
- Most scientists reject astrology. What is your reaction to this?
 - They are probably right. It is just a superstition.
 - They might be wrong. Perhaps more research is necessary.
 - They are probably wrong. It seems clear that there is a link between one's star sign and personality.
- What other beliefs do you know which claim to predict people's personalities? Do you think they are accurate?

**VOCABULARY
FOCUS 1**

Complete the sentences with the correct word.

For example:

Who knows what will happen next year? No one can predict the future!

a prove b ~~predict~~ c reject d justify

- In the West, there is a _____ that breaking a mirror brings bad luck. No one really believes it these days, though.
 - superstition
 - theory
 - warning
 - stereotype
- Saying you cheated in a test because your mark is important to you is not a good reason for cheating. There is no good excuse you can make to _____ cheating.
 - prove
 - deny
 - state
 - justify
- The company only employs white people, so some people are accusing it of racial _____.
 - discrimination
 - conformity
 - influence
 - warning

- 4 The researcher wants to test her new _____ about language learning. She's not sure if it will work, but she wants to find out.
a candidate b stereotype c theory d survey
- 5 Although some people smoke and never fall ill, the _____ for becoming ill is much higher in people who smoke.
a warning b accuracy c potential d trend
- 6 This new product is not safe. We need to _____ people not to buy it.
a justify b deny c conclude d warn
- 7 I'm a bit of a _____ of the new government. I don't think it does anything right.
a critic b researcher c broadcaster d psychologist
- 8 Why do you think that all European men smoke and drink too much? That's just a _____. There are many who do not.
a theory b superstition c stereotype d trend

VOCABULARY FOCUS 2

Circle all the words that match your personality.



Aries: passionate, direct, **creative**



Taurus: calm, peaceful, stable



Gemini: adaptable, clever, active



Cancer: loving, dependable, helpful, cautious



Leo: **confident, outgoing**, proud, trusting



Virgo: perfectionist, hard-working, **selfish**

Libra fair, sociable, **friendly**, romantic

Scorpio: mysterious, powerful, charismatic

Sagittarius: enthusiastic, adventurous, **optimistic**

Capricorn: ambitious, patient, **proud, stubborn**

Aquarius: **independent**, individualistic, **considerate**

Pisces: spiritual, sensitive, idealistic, creative



In the text on page 11, several words are in **bold**. Write them next to the correct antonym below.

For example: lazy hard-working

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| 1 dependent _____ | 6 shy _____ |
| 2 pessimistic _____ | 7 insecure _____ |
| 3 unoriginal _____ | 8 selfish _____ |
| 4 adaptable _____ | 9 cold _____ |
| 5 considerate _____ | 10 humble _____ |

Grammar

Relative clauses

We often shorten relative clauses. The relative pronouns *that* and *who*, and the following *be* verb, are optional in these sentences:

Beliefs **that are** based on superstition ... → Beliefs based on superstition ...

A broadcaster **who is** named Naomi ... → A broadcaster named Naomi ...

Americans **that are** aged between 13 and 64 ... → Americans aged between 13 and 64 ...

GRAMMAR 1 Read the sentences and cross out the unnecessary words.

For example:

This theory is based on studies ~~that were~~ conducted in 2001.

- Students who are coming early tomorrow will get extra points.
- The lady who is working on the contract said she hasn't finished.
- The man brought in a bag that was full of money.
- Actors who are in blockbusters often become very famous.

GRAMMAR 2 Combine the sentences into one using relative clauses. Then reduce the relative clause.

For example:

I have a friend. He is living abroad. He speaks English well.

I have a friend living abroad who speaks English well.

- My friend has a book. The book was signed by Stephen King.
- Islam is a religion. The religion was founded by the Prophet Muhammad.
- The Lord of the Rings* is a film. The film was based on a book.
- The pyramids in Egypt are huge structures. They were built by thousands of slaves.

Effective Skills

PERSONALIZATION

Read the following passage and indicate how closely each personality type is like you.

Are blood group and personality related?

In the West, some people believe that an individual's personality and character can be predicted according to the time of the year that the person was born. The Chinese believe that the year of birth determines character. In the past century, a relatively new belief has arisen: the idea that personality is related to ABO blood group. The blood-group personality theory started in Japan in 1927, when a secondary-school administrator noticed personality similarities and differences among his staff. The theory soon went out of fashion, but was brought back in force in the 1970s. The belief is still strong in Japan, and is now becoming increasingly popular in neighbouring countries.

Is the belief accurate, or is it just a modern-day superstition? Why not test it for yourself? First read each description and decide how well it matches your own personality. Then check to see if the ABO blood-group theory accurately predicted your personality.

1 People with this blood group are individualistic. They are creative and curious, and are always open to new adventures and challenges. They live life with passion, and tend to be optimistic and outgoing. Their main weakness is a tendency to be selfish, which can cause them to be irresponsible and forgetful of others. They are unpredictable, which can make them very entertaining and charming, but this can also make close relationships with them difficult. They can also be jealous. They are often good cooks.

- This is me exactly
- This is generally like me
- Some things are like me, but not all of them
- This isn't generally like me
- I'm completely different

30 **2** People with this blood group are natural leaders. They are confident, charismatic and ambitious, and prefer to be the centre of attention. Even in defeat they are optimistic about the future. They are often athletic and prefer to be active. Their main weakness is pride, which can lead them to be stubborn. They love to be around people, but also tend to be uncommitted in relationships. They often have trouble finishing what they start.

- 35
- 40
- This is me exactly
 - This is generally like me
 - Some things are like me, but not all of them
 - This isn't generally like me
 - I'm completely different

45 **3** People with this blood group are serious and hard-working. They are generally conservative, responsible and tend to follow the rules. They are often perfectionists, wanting everything to be done properly, and they feel stressed when things don't work out the way they planned. They seem calm and focused in difficult situations, but they tend to avoid confrontations and arguments. They are usually shy and quiet, and can be sensitive to criticism. They tend to be cautious, and can be very stubborn about doing what they feel is right. They are well-organized and punctual. They make keen gardeners.

- 50
- 55
- This is me exactly
 - This is generally like me
 - Some things are like me, but not all of them
 - This isn't generally like me
 - I'm completely different

60 **4** People with this blood group are contradictory, easily switching from one extreme to another. They can be cool and confident one moment, then sensitive and indecisive the next. They can be outgoing and sociable in some situations, but then shy at other times. They are very considerate and generous to some people, but also strict, critical, and unforgiving to others. Generally, they are unpredictable and independent, seeing themselves as separate from the group. They are often very analytical and rational in their views.

- 65
- This is me exactly
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 - This isn't generally like me
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DISCUSSION Complete the sentences with information about you.

- 1 The personality I am most like is number ___.
- 2 Other personalities that are similar to me are numbers ___.
- 3 The personality that is unlike me is number ___.

What is your blood group? Check below to see which descriptions match the blood groups. Did the ABO blood-group personality theory accurately predict your personality? Discuss the answer with a partner.

- | | | |
|----|---|----------------|
| 1. | = | blood group B |
| 2. | = | blood group O |
| 3. | = | blood group A |
| 4. | = | blood group AB |

- a It was very accurate. The description of my blood group is more accurate for me than any other.
- b It was fairly accurate. The description of my blood group matches me well, but so does the description of another blood group.
- c It wasn't very accurate. Other blood-group descriptions match me more closely.
- d It was mostly wrong.
- e It was completely wrong!

SUMMARY CORRECTION The following summary has incorrect information in each sentence. Underline the mistakes.

The ABO blood-group personality theory claims that our blood group can shape our future. It was first proposed by a scientist in Japan in the 1920s. It became largely forgotten for several decades, but then became popular again beginning in the 1990s. People in blood group A are considered to be hard workers and somewhat liberal. Type A people are hard-working perfectionists who enjoy confrontation. They tend to be disorganized, sensitive and punctual.

People in blood group B tend to be very creative and considerate. They love challenges and easily make close relationships. People in blood group O like to set big goals for their future, and usually finish what they start. They enjoy meeting their friends and new people, and are unlikely to divorce. Finally, people in the AB blood group are not always good at following rules, but they are always sociable. Their personality doesn't change often, and generally they are very logical in their views.