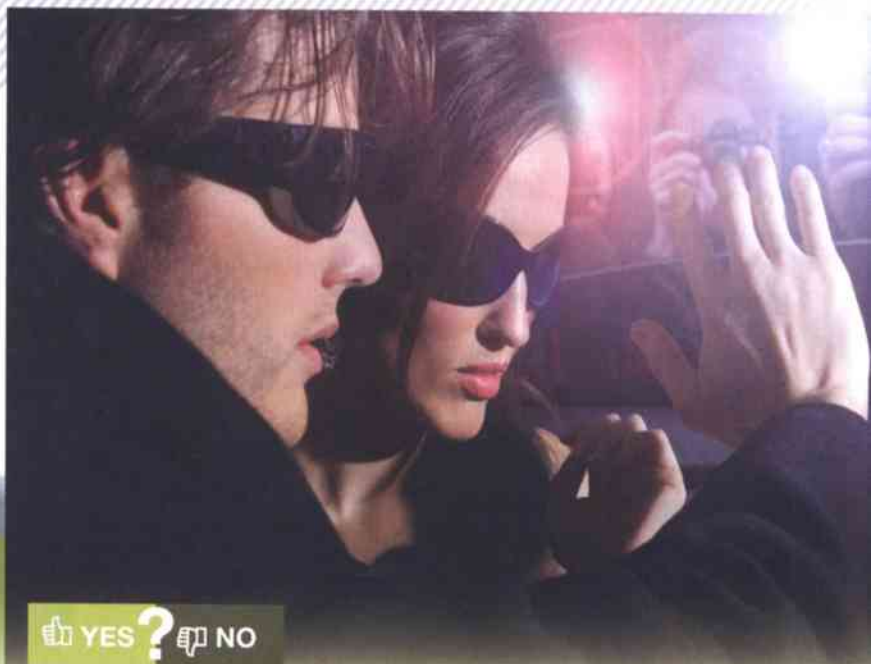


6.7 Writing

An opinion essay

I can explore an issue in writing from different aspects or viewpoints.

- 1 In pairs, discuss whether you enjoy celebrity gossip magazines and websites.
- 2 Read the extract from a website. In pairs, discuss which of the opposing opinions you agree with. Give reasons.



👍 YES ? 👎 NO

IMHO
IN MY HUMBLE OPINION

Today's question: should the media have greater respect for the private lives of public figures?

77% say YES

Latest comment:

YES! Politicians, sports personalities and entertainers do their jobs in the public eye, but they have the same rights to privacy and fair treatment by the media as you or me. Working life and private life are separate and the media should respect this.

23% say NO

Latest comment:

NO! Public figures use the media to increase their popularity and sometimes to earn large amounts of money. Dealing with media attention is part of being famous. You can't have it both ways.

- 3 Read the writing task and the essay below. Which of the opinions in Exercise 2 do you think the author would agree with?

The private lives of public figures are often reported in the media. Personally, I think this should only be allowed when there is a clear benefit to society. To justify this point of view, it is necessary to consider public figures' responsibility as role models as well as their rights to privacy.

In terms of public figures as role models, I believe that those with influence should take responsibility for the example they set. Politicians, for example, are chosen as representatives and lawmakers, and so have a duty to behave as model citizens. Likewise, entertainers and sports stars should be aware that their behaviour influences their fans. With this in mind, I feel the media should be allowed to report unacceptable behaviour such as racism or drug abuse among public figures, even if this means looking into their private lives.

It is also important to consider this issue with regard to public figures' rights to privacy. Whereas certain stories may expose unacceptable behaviour, others are really only printed to satisfy people's curiosity and make money. Articles concerning celebrities who have gained or lost weight or left their house without make-up, for instance, serve no useful purpose. Unless permission is given, I personally don't think such articles should be allowed.

All in all, I am of the opinion that public figures' private lives should only be reported if this benefits society by exposing irresponsible behaviour. Otherwise, I think it is unfair unless the person has specifically given permission. I certainly would not like my own private life to be reported on in this way.

Magazines, newspapers and websites often report on the personal lives of politicians, sports stars and entertainers. In your opinion, should the media be allowed to print stories about the private lives of public figures? Write an opinion essay on this topic, analysing the two aspects below:

- public figures' responsibilities as role-models
- public figures' rights to privacy.