

Activity Sheets Explained

Activity Sheets are printable comprehensions, quizzes, vocabulary puzzles and debates based on the week's news stories in First News, encouraging your class to **delve into the detail** of news stories and **develop their skills around evaluating information** and forming reasoned responses.

Created in three reading levels, Activity Sheets deliver fully prepared lesson content every week, with the **flexibility to assign the most suitable level** for whole classes or groups of pupils, supporting you in developing children's skills in the most applicable way to achieve the best results.

Level 1

Lower Key Stage 2

Level 2

Upper Key Stage 2

Level 3

Key Stage 3



Below you will find the three levels for:

- Comprehension
 - Quiz
 - Puzzle

Debates are available in Level 3 only.

HOME NEWS

UK

Daffodil shortage

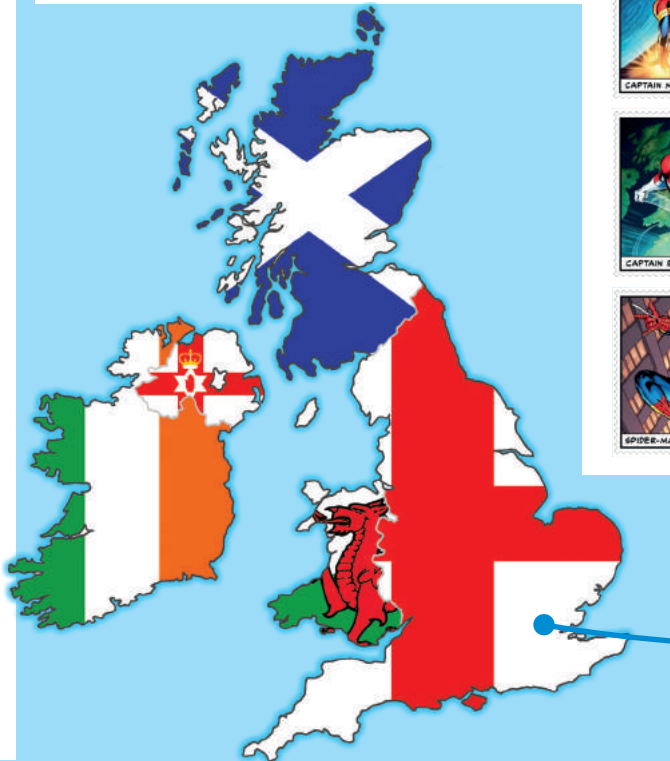
Experts have warned that there could be a shortage of daffodils this Easter. The record-breaking warm February weather is making the bulbs think it is spring already! Although it's lovely to see the cheerful yellow flowers so early, it could mean that all the daffodils have finished flowering by Easter.



UK

Super stamps

The Royal Mail is making a set of stamps featuring Marvel superheroes. The stamps celebrate the 80th anniversary of Marvel Comics. Spider-Man, Hulk, Thor and Iron Man are just a few of the superheroes who will be looking great on letters! The world-famous Marvel Comics published its first comic in 1939. The stamps go on sale from Thursday 14th March.



BASILDON

Ssscary discovery

A man in Essex got rather a fright when he discovered a snake in his toilet! The rat snake was over one metre long and had been dyed slightly blue from the chemicals used to clean the toilet. Naomi Burdett said that after finding the snake, her partner “ran upstairs in a moment of panic. Neither of us are the biggest fans of snakes and it’s not exactly what you expect to see in your downstairs loo.” The snake is now being cared for by the RSPCA who think that it is probably an escaped pet. The couple have no idea how long the snake had been living in their house.



Questions on: 'Home News'

Look at the news.

1) Match the headline to the correct topic.

Ssscary discovery

an anniversary

Daffodil shortage

a surprise

Super stamps

the weather

Look at the story 'Super stamps'.

2) Why are superheroes going to be on our stamps soon?

3) Find three characters that will be "looking great on letters" in March.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Look at the story 'Daffodil discovery'.

4) Why might there be no daffodils to decorate our houses at Easter?

5) Do you think the writer of this news story likes daffodils? How do you know this?

Look at the story from Basildon.

6) Why was this snake slightly blue?

7) What did the man do straight after discovering the snake?

- ☐ ran away in a panic
- ☐ called the RSPCA
- ☐ flushed the loo to scare the snake

8) The **headline** of this story is 'Ssscary discovery'.

Newspapers like to play with words in headlines to make them fun and to grab your attention. What has the writer done to this headline? Explain why.

SCIENCE

MIGHTY STRIPES



This horse was dressed up like a zebra for the study

WHY do zebras have stripes? Scientists have spent 150 years trying to answer that question. But now they might have solved the mystery.

New research by scientists has shown that having stripes may protect zebras from being bitten by insects. The scientists spent more than 16 hours standing in fields watching how horseflies behaved around zebras, horses and... horses dressed as zebras!

They found that flies buzzed around all three, but fewer landed on the zebras. To make sure that the flies weren't put off by something else – such as the smell of zebras – horses were dressed in stripy coats. The flies would land on the horses' heads, but not so many landed on the coats. This made the scientists think that it was the stripes that were keeping the flies off.

But why do stripes keep off flies? When the experts watched closely, they saw that the stripes appear to dazzle the flies and confuse them. They don't slow down and find it almost impossible to land.

The zebras were also better at avoiding flies in other ways. They ran away and swished their tails more often than the horses. So, the flies that did land on the zebras spent less time on them, and often did not manage to bite.

One of the scientists, Dr Martin How, thinks humans should learn from the zebras and wear stripy clothes outdoors in the summer. More stripes, fewer bites!

Questions on: 'Mighty stripes'

1) What question have scientists been wondering about for 150 years?

- ☐ Why don't flies land on zebras?
- ☐ Why do zebras have stripes?
- ☐ Why don't horses have stripes?

2) What do they think might be the answer to this question?

3) What did the experts have to do in their experiment?

4) How did they check that it really was the stripes putting the flies off, not something else like the zebras' smell?

5) Find two words that explain what the stripes do to the flies.

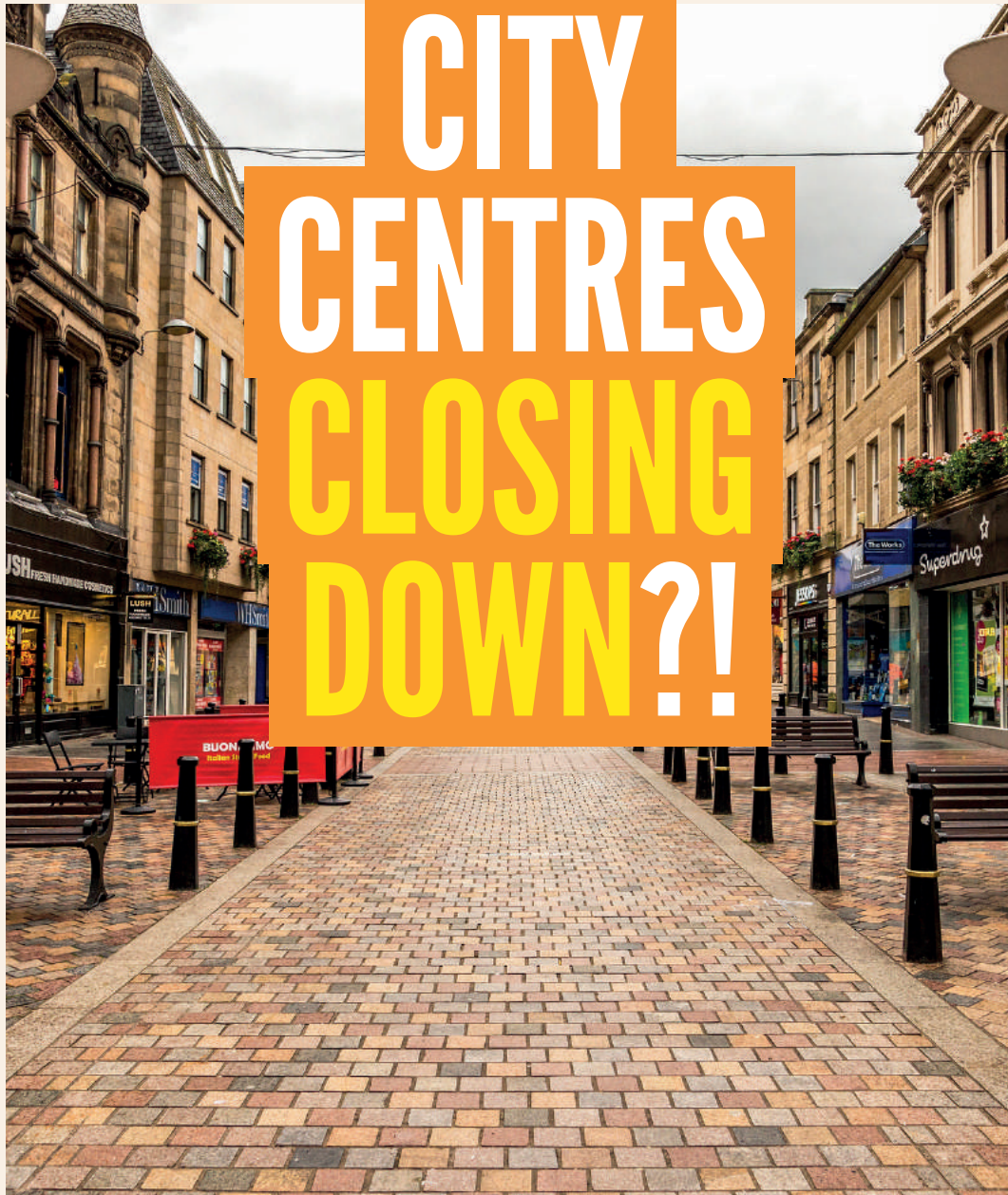
_____ and _____

6) What else does the zebra do to avoid being annoyed by flies?

7) Which sentence summarises some useful advice for humans?

8) If you had to decide whether to put this news report on the Animal News page or the Science page, which would you choose?

BIG NEWS



CITY centres across the UK could become ‘ghost towns’, a group of MPs has warned.

The shops on our high streets are struggling. Town centres used to be bustling with shoppers buying everything from bread to books to birthday presents. But the internet has changed the way we shop. Many of us choose to buy online now and have our shopping delivered, rather than go into town.

Lots of shops have had to close and the spaces are left empty for months. Stores that have been around for years, such as Woolworths and Toys R Us, have disappeared because they didn't make enough money.

A group of MPs want the Government to take action now, before our city centres have no shops left at all!

They think the Government should take more money in taxes from online shops, such as Amazon. The money could be used to make it cheaper to have a shop on the high street. It could also be spent making our town centres more attractive places to visit. If we take action, our high street shops could thrive once more.

MPs – Members of Parliament. An MP is the person voted for by people to represent their area in Parliament (the place where our leaders meet and our laws are made).

taxes – Money paid to the Government from money earned by people or companies. Our taxes pay for the services we share, such as schools, hospitals, transport and the army.

Questions on: 'City centres closing down'

1) Which people have been thinking about our town centres?

MPs

the Government

shopping experts

2) What does MP stand for and what do these people do?

3) What technology has changed the way we shop?

4) Explain how our habits have changed.

5) Find two shops that used to be found in many towns and cities, but have now closed down.

1) _____

2) _____

6) What ideas do the MPs have to help our shops and our towns?

7) The MPs don't really think our towns are going to be full of ghosts! What do they mean when they say our cities could become '**ghost towns**'?

8) Do you still shop on your local high street? Would you mind if most of the shops closed down and you had to do all your shopping on the internet?

BIG NEWS

COPYCATS!



iStock



Getty

A NEW study has found that cats take on the behaviour of the people they live with.

Experts in animal behaviour carried out personality tests on 3,300 cat owners and their cats.

They found that cats raised by moody or aggressive people would often be moody themselves. They were also more likely to be overweight. Cheerful and friendly owners were found to have cats that were affectionate.

Danielle Gunn-Moore is a professor of feline (cat) medicine. She said: “Cats are a mini-me. They are strongly affected by people around them.”

One cat who was definitely a lot like its owner is Choupette (see bottom right). Choupette was owned by Karl Lagerfeld, a very successful fashion designer who passed away last week.

Choupette has starred in fashion photos, has two maids looking after her, and has her own personal driver. The posh puss would even be flown about on a private jet!

After Lagerfeld died, many people wondered who would inherit his millions of pounds. Apparently, it might be Choupette! The super-spoilt moggy could be given as much as £150 million of his money to carry on her luxury lifestyle!

Questions on: 'Copycats!'

1) How did the experts investigate cat behaviour?

- ☐ They did personality tests on owners and cats.
- ☐ They watched the pets and owners in their own houses.
- ☐ They did experiments in the laboratory.

2) Choose the correct words to complete the sentences.

friendly moody affectionate aggressive overweight

- Moody or _____ people are more likely to have _____ and _____ cats.
- Cheerful and _____ people are more likely to have _____ cats

3) Why has the writer included the opinion of Danielle Gunn-Moore?

- ☐ She is an expert in cat medicine.
- ☐ She knows Choupette.
- ☐ She took part in the research.

4) Danielle says that “Cats are a mini-me”. What do you think a ‘**mini-me**’ might be?

5) Why is the story about Choupette included in this science story?

6) Choupette was owned by a man called Karl Lagerfeld. What did he do?

7) What information proves that Choupette was “super-spoilt”?

8) Why do you think cats that live with aggressive people might become moody and cats that live with friendly people might be more friendly themselves? You aren’t told the answer – say what you think.

MIGHTY STRIPES



This horse was dressed up like a zebra for the study

SCIENTISTS have spent more than 150 years trying to work out why zebras have stripes. It seems they may have now found the answer.

Research by the University of Bristol and the University of California suggests the stripes are there to ward off pesky flies and stop them from biting. Scientists spent more than 16 hours standing in fields observing how horseflies behaved around horses, zebras and horses dressed up as zebras.

They found that the flies approached and circled all three, but far fewer landed on the zebras. To rule out any other factors – such as a smell the zebra might have given off – they put the stripy coats on horses. Flies continued to land on the horse's head, but not many landed on the coat. This gave scientists the proof they were looking for that it was the stripes that put off the flies.

But how? Well, from a distance, they don't make much difference, but up close, the stripes seem to dazzle the flies and confuse them. As a result, they don't slow down, which makes landing almost impossible.

Zebras are also better than horses at avoiding flies. They ran away and swished their tails at a far higher rate than horses. This meant that any flies that did manage to land on the zebra spent less time there, and very few were on long enough to bite and draw blood.

One of the leaders of the research, Dr Martin How, reckons humans can learn from the zebras and wear patterned clothing outdoors in the summer to keep flies away and reduce bites.

COPYCATS!



A NEW study has found that cats take on the behaviour of the people they live with.

Researchers from Lincoln University's animal behaviour clinic carried out personality tests on 3,300 cat owners and their cats.

They found that cats raised by moody or aggressive people would often be moody themselves, while cheerful, open and friendly owners were found to have cats that were affectionate. Moodier owners were also more likely to have overweight cats, too.

Danielle Gunn-Moore, professor of feline medicine at Edinburgh University, said: "Cats are a mini-me. They are sentient [able to feel] creatures strongly affected by people around them."

One cat who is definitely a lot like its owner is Choupette, who was owned by the late Karl Lagerfeld, a very successful fashion designer who passed away last week.

Choupette has starred in fashion shoots, has two maids looking after her, and her own personal driver. The posh puss would even be flown about on a private jet!

After Lagerfeld died, many people wondered who would be inheriting his millions of pounds. Apparently, Choupette could be receiving as much as £150 million from Lagerfeld's estate!



CHIMPS USE SIGN LANGUAGE

SCIENTISTS have discovered that chimpanzees 'talk' to each other using hand gestures that are similar to the sign language that humans use.

After studying videos of wild chimps living in Uganda's Budongo Forest Reserve, scientists at the University of Roehampton found that they used meaningful gestures to communicate with each other. The team discovered that the chimps' gestures are based on mathematical patterns, or laws, similar to those seen in human language. They analysed video recordings of more than 200 uses of 58 different types of 'play' gestures used by the chimps.

As well as using hand and foot gestures, chimps also communicate using noises, facial expressions and body postures.



ANIMAL RESEARCH



GLOSSARY

Affectionate – Showing feelings of love or liking

Estate – Everything that a person owns when they die

Feline – To do with the cat family

Fashion shoot – An event where photographs are taken of people wearing new clothes or other fashion items

Gestures – Movement of the hands (or other parts of the body) to express an idea or feeling

Mathematical patterns or laws – Human languages tend to follow rules. For example, common words are usually shorter and longer words are made of many short syllables. The scientists have proved that the chimps' sign language follows the same rules.

1. These articles are all about animal research. What did the scientists have to *do* to study the animals?

Animal studied	The research method (what the scientists did)
Zebras	
Chimpanzees	
Cats	

2. Where do **all** the scientists work?

■ **Look at the article: 'Mighty stripes'.**

3. Why do scientists think stripes put off flies?

4. How did the scientists prove that it was the stripes that were putting off the flies, not the smell of the animal?

■ **Look at the article: 'Chimps use sign language'.**

5. How is chimp communication similar to human communication? Explain in detail.

■ **Look at the article: 'Copycats!'**

6. Find the **adjectives** to complete the sentences.

- Moody or _____ people are more likely to have _____ and _____ cats.
- Cheerful and _____ people are more likely to have _____ cats.

7. Why is news about Choupette the cat included in this report?

8. How is Choupette a 'mini-me'? (Have a think about what this expression means first.)

■ **Consider all the articles.**

9. Look at the first paragraph from each report, in bold (dark) writing. This is called the **lead paragraph** of a newspaper article. It often summarises the news. Why is the lead paragraph about the zebras the odd one out?

For bonus points, why do you think the writer has chosen to write this lead paragraph in this way?

10. Which group of scientists do you think is most likely to get funding (money) for more research on their topic? Explain your reasons.

ANIMAL RESEARCH



GLOSSARY

Affectionate – Showing feelings of love or liking

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First News

NEWS SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT TECHNOLOGY POLICE SHOPPING AND MORE

KIDS VOTE TO STAY!

27% OF KIDS DON'T WANT TELLERS WALKING AWAY

TECHNOLOGY

THE NEW IN THE NEWS

- One of the animals who took part in the zebra research: either a zebra or a horse dressed as a zebra!
- Choupette

Can you summarise each news item in one paragraph? You might want to think up some new, fun headlines. Write up your animal news in the space below.

MY ANIMAL NEWS

Teacher Answers

AIM OF THE NEWS COMPREHENSIONS: News reports are unique non-fiction texts. Being real, they naturally engage students, and with the range of topics that are covered, help to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world outside the classroom. The reports are ideal for short, focused comprehension or discussion activities. Along with the opportunity to find fascinating facts and appreciate the opinions of those involved, there is plenty to be inferred and deduced to understand in more depth what is being reported. Like authors, journalists play with language, so news 'stories' are rich nuggets of text to investigate and provide the opportunity for literacy programmes.

TEACHER ANSWER GUIDE: The teacher answers are intended to provide a quick reference guide. Suggestions are given for the 'Expected response' or starting point that pupils could give. The 'Development' then gives more in-depth ideas that students can work towards as they develop their reading comprehension skills.

For a list of the reading skills used, please email schools@firstnews.co.uk.

1. These articles are all about animal research. What did the scientists have to do to study the animals?

READING SKILL – Find and explain information

(NC 2a)

Expected response

Animal studied	The research method (what the scientists did)
Zebras	Stand for more than 16 hours in a field watching how flies behave around horses and zebras
Chimpanzees	Watch and study videos of wild chimps living in Uganda
Cats	Carry out personality tests on 3,300 cats and their owners

2. Where do all the scientists work?

READING SKILL – Find and explain information

(NC 2a)

Expected response

- Universities

Look at the article 'Mighty stripes'.

3. Why do scientists think stripes put off flies?

READING SKILL – Find and explain information

(NC 2a)

Expected response

- They think the stripes dazzle and confuse the flies. This prevents them slowing down and landing on the stripes.

4. How did the scientists prove that it was the stripes that were putting off the flies, not the smell of the animal?

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence

(NC 2c & 8)

Expected response

- They put stripy coats on horses.

Development

- They put stripy coats on horses and noticed that the flies landed on the horses' heads but didn't tend to land on their coats. This proved the flies were staying away because of the stripes, not something else such as the zebras' smell.

Look at the article 'Chimps use sign language'.

5. How is chimp communication similar to human communication? Explain in detail.

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence

(NC 2c & 8)

Expected response

- They talk to each other using sign language, like humans.

Development

- Chimps use hand gestures that are similar to human sign language.
- These signs use the same rules seen in human language.
- Chimps also use noises, facial expressions and body language to communicate to each other, just like humans.

Look at the article ‘Copycats!’**6. Find the adjectives to complete the sentences.**

READING SKILL – Understand vocabulary in context

(NC 2a)

Expected response

- Moody or **aggressive** people are more likely to have **moody** and **overweight** cats.
- Cheerful and **happy/open** people are more likely to have **affectionate** cats.

7. Why is news about Choupette the cat included in this report?

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence

(NC 2c & 8)

Expected response

- It is about a cat, just like the science research.
- Choupette was a lot like its owner.

Development

- Both news items are about cats, so the stories link together.
- Also, Choupette appears to be very like her owner, so is an example of a cat that has similar behaviour (or at least a similar lifestyle!) to its owner.

8. How is Choupette a ‘mini-me’? (Have a think what this expression means first.)

READING SKILL – Understand vocabulary in context

(NC 2a)

and

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence

(NC 2c & 8)

Expected response

- Choupette is like a mini version of Karl Lagerfeld. They even both have white hair.

Development

- Choupette seems to be very similar to Karl Lagerfeld. She is a mini, cat version of him. They both have a very luxurious lifestyle. She is involved in fashion, like her owner. She is now very wealthy, just like her owner.
- From the photo, they even look quite similar!

Consider all the articles.**9. Look at the first paragraph from each report, in bold (dark) writing. This is called the lead paragraph of a newspaper article. It often summarises the news. Why is the lead paragraph about the zebras the odd one out?**

READING SKILL – Make comparisons between texts

(NC 1e & 1f)

Expected response

- It doesn’t explain the research.

Development

- This lead paragraph doesn’t tell you the results of the scientific research. Both of the other lead paragraphs include this information.

For bonus points, why do you think the writer has chosen to write this lead paragraph in this way?

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence

(NC 2c & 8)

Development

- It leaves the reader in suspense and encourages them to read the article in order to find out the answer to the question!

10. Which group of scientists do you think is most likely to get funding (money) for more research on their topic? Explain your reasons.

READING SKILL – Make justified predictions

(NC 2d)

Expected response

- The cat researchers: people love learning more about their pets.
- The chimp researchers: I would like to know more about how chimps communicate.

Development

- The zebra researchers: flies are very annoying to humans and they might have some useful ideas about how humans can avoid being bitten by flies.
- The chimp researchers: I think there is a lot more we can learn about how chimps communicate. The researchers have only studied videos and they could go and observe them in the wild to learn more. I think this research would be seen as more important than the cat research, as this doesn’t really tell you a great deal about the animals.

SPECIAL REPORT

HATERS GONNA

WITH racist crimes in the news and MPs leaving their own political parties due to claims of bullying of Jewish people, it seems like there's a lot of hate around right now. But is hate crime really rising? And who are the people carrying it out?



Tackling hate crime is a big job

As we reported last week, the annual Hope not Hate report said that extreme views and actions are becoming more widespread in society. Several Labour MPs also left their party to form the Independent Group, saying that anti-Semitic (hostile to Jewish people) attitudes and bullying were common in the Labour Party.

In recent months there have also been stories about increasing numbers of Islamophobic (anti-Muslim) incidents, as well as other types of hate crime.

BUT WHAT IS A HATE CRIME?

There are different opinions, but the main definition of hate crime is “any criminal offence which is perceived [seen], by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice towards someone based on a personal characteristic.” The five main types of hate crime monitored by the police are those based on: **race or ethnicity, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation** (such as being gay), **disability, transgender identity** (for instance, someone who was born as a man, but now prefers to be seen as a woman).

The most recent police figures for England and Wales show that the number of hate crimes in 2017/18 were up 17% compared to the year before, and have more than doubled since 2012/13. The reasons why the numbers increased are quite complex, as it is largely due to the police improving the way they record these crimes.



There are also temporary spikes in hate crimes, such as the rise in Islamophobia after the Manchester Arena and London Bridge terror attacks.

Although attacks against Jews and Muslims have been in the news a lot lately, the vast majority (76%) of hate crimes still involve race. However, the Community Security Trust (CST) says that there were 1,652 anti-Semitic incidents in 2018, which is a 16% increase on the previous year. Nearly three-quarters of those incidents were in London and Manchester, which have the UK's largest Jewish populations. The CST says that the most common type of offence is people being verbally abused in the street, followed by attacks on social media.

Tell MAMA monitors Islamophobia, and their last annual report said that anti-Muslim incidents had increased by 46.9% overall between 2015 and 2016. However, the number of Islamophobic attacks increased by an enormous 475% in the two months after the EU referendum, when immigration was discussed in a very negative way.

Many women are also worried about levels of misogyny (dislike of women). Attacks on women by men aren't counted as hate crimes, but many people think they should be. The Law Commission is looking to see if any changes need to be made to the law, as there are worries that some groups have more protection than others.

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

People are encouraged to report hate crimes and not stay silent about them. The police have already improved how they record hate crime, and the Crown Prosecution Service has made sure that people who commit hate crimes receive stiffer prison sentences. It is also making sure that online hate crimes are treated just as seriously as those committed face to face.

The Government is also working with schools to educate kids about hate crimes and to reduce the levels of bullying within schools, as bullying often involves the same issues as hate crimes.

WHO ARE THE HATERS?

It's complicated and varies by area, but more than 82% of defendants in hate crimes are male. If you look at all of the cases to do with race and religion in 2017/18, 64.4% of defendants were white, 7.2% were black and 5.1% were Asian. The Leicester Hate Crime Project just focused on their city, and they found that half of the offenders were people like neighbours and colleagues who knew their victims. The researchers say that the range of offenders “is much more diverse than is commonly assumed”.



Verbal and physical abuse based on someone's race is the most common form of hate crime in the UK

WHY DO THEY DO IT?

Some people claim they're defending their town or country. A small number seem to think it's their mission to rid the world of groups they think aren't as worthy, while others do it for revenge, such as after terror attacks. And this isn't a new thing: in the 1980s, many innocent Irish people living in the UK were the subject of hate crimes, due to a series of bombings carried out by an Irish terrorist group called the IRA.

Another category of people who commit hate crimes are those who are classed as ‘thrill-seekers’, although their motivation is complicated. Many of these offenders commit crimes in groups, and have often been drinking alcohol.

Some research has shown that an economic crisis can lead to an increase in hate crimes, but it's not a precise link. Bart Cammaerts at the London School of Economics told us that in an economic crisis “blame is often put at the doorstep of ‘others’, of foreigners, of migrants, of those ‘that don't belong here’, which in turn normalises racist attitudes and actions.” So it's not the crisis itself, but rather “an irresponsible and vile political elite which uses an economic crisis to stir racism and hate of others.”

The internet and social media have also opened up whole new areas where people can be bullied or insulted, especially from anonymous accounts.

If you feel that you or someone else has been the victim of a hate crime, you should report it to the police. To read more and find out how to report it, see the Childline page at [tinyurl.com/hatecrimeinfo](https://www.tinyurl.com/hatecrimeinfo).

Questions on: 'Haters gonna hate'



GLOSSARY

Tell MAMA (Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks) – A national project that records and measures anti-Muslim incidents in the United Kingdom

Law Commission – The statutory independent body created by the Law Commissions Act 1965 to keep the law of England and Wales under review and to recommend reform where it is needed

IRA (Irish Republican Army) – An organisation seeking the end of British rule in Northern Ireland and the reunification of Ireland

Elite – A small group of people who hold a disproportionate amount of wealth, privilege, political power or skill in a society

Part A: Find and explain the facts

A1. What are the five main types of hate crime monitored by the police based on?

A2. What do the following percentages refer to?

17%	
76%	
16%	
46.9%	
475%	
82%	
64.4%	
7.2%	
5.1%	

A3. What is the Independent Group?

A4. What is the Law Commission looking into and why?

A5. What is being done about hate crime?

Part B: Deduce and infer information

B1. Recent figures show that the number of hate crimes have more than doubled since 2012/13. Why are the reasons behind this increase "quite complex"?

B2. Why is the IRA mentioned in this report?

B3. Explain why people commit hate crimes.

B4. What is the link between an economic crisis and an increase in hate crimes?

B5. What have the levels of bullying within schools got to do with the issue of hate crimes.

Part C: Analyse the writing and presentation

C1. Analyse the headline: 'Haters gonna hate'.

C2. How do the vector images and the caption complement (work well with) the headline?

C3. Comment on the use of questions in this report.

Questions on: 'Haters gonna hate'



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.....

A4. What is the Law Commission looking into and why?

A5. What is being done about hate crime?

Part B: Deduce and infer information

B1. Recent figures show that the number of hate crimes have more than doubled since 2012/13. Why are the reasons behind this increase "quite complex"?

B2. Why is the IRA mentioned in this report?

B3. Explain why people commit hate crimes.

B4. What is the link between an economic crisis and an increase in hate crimes?

B5. What have the levels of bullying within schools got to do with the issue of hate crimes.

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Part C: Analyse the writing and presentation

C1. Analyse the headline: ‘Haters gonna hate’.

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C2. How do the vector images and the caption complement (work well with) the headline?

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C3. Comment on the use of questions in this report.

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Teacher Answers

AIM OF THE NEWS COMPREHENSIONS: News reports are unique non-fiction texts. Being real, they naturally engage students, and with the range of topics that are covered, help to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world outside the classroom. The reports are ideal for short, focused comprehension or discussion activities. Along with the opportunity to find fascinating facts and appreciate the opinions of those involved, there is plenty to be inferred and deduced to understand in more depth what is being reported. Like authors, journalists play with language, so news 'stories' are rich nuggets of text to investigate and provide the opportunity for literacy programmes.

TEACHER ANSWER GUIDE: The teacher answers are intended to provide a guide to the reading skill each question is practising. Suggestions are given for a starting point for responses that students would be expected to give at the start of KS3. Further suggestions then give fuller, more developed responses that students will work towards by the end of KS3, in preparation for the non-fiction elements of GCSE English language.

TEACHER ANSWERS

Questions

Part A

A1. What are the five main types of hate crime monitored by the police based on?

READING SKILL – Find and explain information

Possible answer

Expected response

- race or ethnicity
- religion or beliefs
- sexual orientation
- disability
- transgender identity

A2. What do the following percentages refer to?

READING SKILL – Find and explain information

Possible answer

Starting point – some relevant information correctly identified.

Developed response – relevant information correctly identified.

17%	The percentage by which hate crimes went up in 2017/18 compared to the previous year.
76%	76% of hate crimes (the vast majority) still involve race.
16%	The Community Society Trust says that there were 1,652 anti-Semitic incidents in the UK in 2018, which is a 16% increase on the previous year.
46.9%	In their last annual report, Tell MAMA said that anti-Muslim incidents had increased by 46.9% overall between 2015-2016.
475%	The percentage by which the number of Islamophobic attacks increased in the two months after the EU referendum, when immigration was discussed in a very negative way.
82%	More than 82% of defendants in hate crimes are male.
64.4%	In all cases to do with race and religion in 2017/18, 64.4% of defendants were white.
7.2%	In all cases to do with race and religion in 2017/18, 7.2% of defendants were black.
5.1%	In all cases to do with race and religion in 2017/18, 5.1% of defendants were Asian.

A3. What is the Independent Group?

READING SKILL – Find and explain information

Possible answer

Starting point

- The Independent Group has been formed by several Labour MPs who left their party.

Development

- They left because they said that anti-Semitic attitudes and bullying were common in the Labour party.

A4. What is the Law Commission looking into and why?

READING SKILL – Find and explain information

*Possible answer**Starting point*

- The Law Commission is looking to see if any changes need to be made to the law regarding hate crimes.

Development

- Attacks on women by men aren't counted as hate crimes, but many think they should be. There are also worries that some groups have more protection than others.

A5. What is being done about hate crime?

READING SKILL – Find and explain information

*Possible answer**Starting point*

- People are being encouraged to report hate crimes and not stay silent about them. The police have already improved how they record hate crime, and the Crown Prosecution Service has made sure that people who commit hate crimes receive stiffer sentences. It is also making sure that online hate crimes are treated just as seriously as those committed face to face.

Development

- Furthermore, the Government is working with schools to educate young people about hate crimes.

Part B**B1. Recent figures show that the number of hate crimes have more than doubled since 2012/13. Why are the reasons behind this increase “quite complex”?**

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

*Possible answer**Starting point*

- The reasons behind this increase are “quite complex” because it is partly due to the police improving the way they record information.

Development

- It is also the case that there can be temporary spikes in hate crimes. For example, there was a rise in Islamophobia after the Manchester Arena and London Bridge terror attacks.

B2. Why is the IRA mentioned in this report?

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

*Possible answer**Starting point*

- The IRA is mentioned in this report to show that hate crime isn't a new thing.

Development

- In the 1980s, many innocent Irish people living in the UK were the subject of hate crimes, due to a series of bombings carried out by the terror group.

B3. Explain why people commit hate crimes.

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

*Possible answer**Starting point*

- There isn't just one reason to explain why people commit hate crimes. Some people claim they're defending their town or country. A small number of people seem to think it's their mission to rid the world of groups they think aren't worthy. Others do it for revenge, such as after terror attacks.

Development

- Another category of people who commit hate crime are classed as 'thrill-seekers'. For the most part, these people seem to be motivated by a pack mentality and fuelled by alcohol.

B4. What is the link between an economic crisis and an increase in hate crimes?

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

Possible answer

Starting point

- Some research has shown that an economic crisis can lead to an increase in hate crimes.

Development

- However, it isn't the crisis itself that causes the problem. According to Bart Cammaerts at the London School of Economics, the problem arises when the blame for the economic crisis is attributed to foreigners and migrants. This then normalises racist attitudes and actions.

B5. What have the levels of bullying within schools got to do with the issue of hate crimes?

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

Possible answer

Starting point

- Bullying often involves the same issues as hate crimes.

Development

- If children are educated about bullying then it is hoped that the levels of bullying will be reduced and that children will be less likely to grow up to commit hate crimes.

Part C**C1. Analyse the headline: 'Haters gonna hate'.**

READING SKILL – Explain methods used by the writer with appropriate use of terminology

Possible answer

Starting point

- The reference to "haters" and "hate" effectively summarises the article and prepares the reader for the main body text.

Development

- Readers may also be familiar with the phrase "Haters gonna hate" because it is used in the lyrics of the 2014 Taylor Swift song "Shake It Off." In that song Swift sings about the need to be proactive and to dismiss haters, so the headline provides a positive message for readers.

C2. How do the vector images and the caption complement (work well with) the headline?

READING SKILL – Identify benefits of text organisation and presentation

Possible answer

Starting point

- The vector images show figures pasting the word 'HATE' as if onto a billboard. The caption reads "Tackling hate crime is a big job."

Development

- The vector images work with the caption because pasting up the huge letters on a billboard is literally a big job. Therefore, it visually represents the magnitude of the problem of hate crime. The vector images work with the headline because they bring emphasis to the word 'hate' as the root of the problem.
- The caption works with the headline because in acknowledging that tackling the issue is a big job, it shows that hate crime is being tackled. Therefore, it justifies the headline. It is important that readers know that haters are not just going to be allowed to hate.

C3. Comment on the use of questions in this report.

READING SKILL – Explain methods used by the writer with appropriate use of terminology

Possible answer

Starting point

- Questions are used in the lead paragraph to make the reader progress onto the main body text in order to find out more. Furthermore, because the answers aren't provided immediately, the questions help the reader to understand that it is a complicated issue and that there aren't any easy answers.

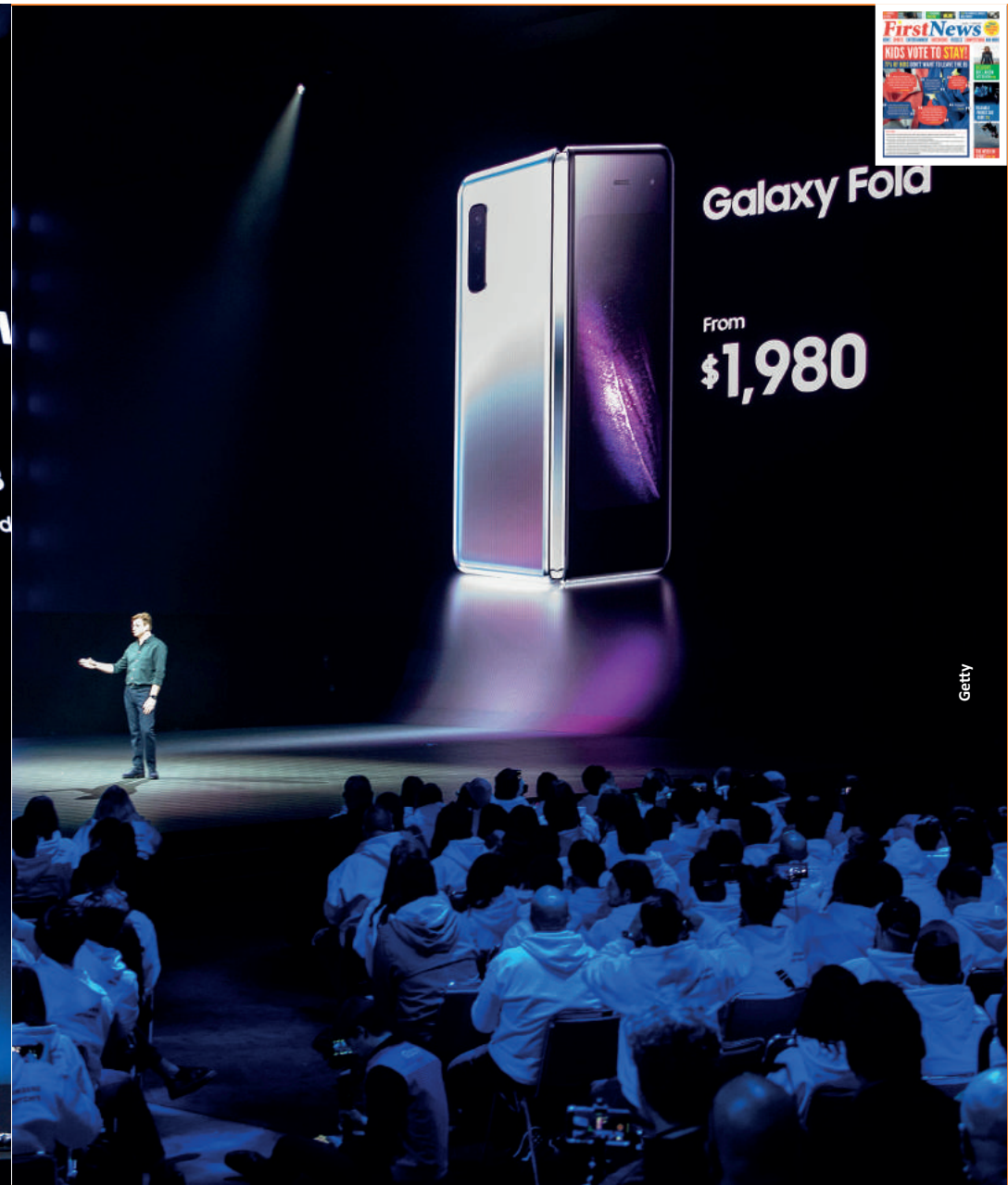
Development

- Many of the sub-headings also take the form of a question and thus the majority of the report is written in a question and answer format. This makes the information clear and easy to access. It is also reassuring for the reader as the questions posed are likely to be the ones that they were thinking of themselves.



1

- What is this animal?
- What do you know about this animal?
- Why is it in the news?





© Tracey Lund, National Awards 1st Place, United Kingdom, Winner, Open competition, Natural World & Wildlife, 2019 Sony World Photography Awards

3

- What are these animals?
- What clues can you get from the picture?
- Why is this photograph in the news?



Guinness World Records

Getty

4

- What is this?
- What is happening in the picture?
- Why is it in the news?

1



- What is this animal?
- What do you know about the animal?
- Why is it in the news?



- What is this?
- What is happening in the pictures?
- Why is this in the news?

3



© Tracy Lund, National Awards 1st Place, United Kingdom, Winner, Open competition, Natural World & Wildlife, 2019 Sony World Photography Awards

- What are these animals?
- What clues can you get from the picture?
- Why is this photograph in the news?

4



Guinness World Records

- What is this?
- What clues can you get from the picture?
- Why is it in the news?

Part A: Words

All these questions are about stories in the news this week. Can you find the article and the information? Write the answer, the section of the paper and the page number where you found the information.



A1 What is the sculpture sent by Greenpeace to Defra made of?

.....

A2 What blocked a sewer in Ipswich, because people have been using their toilets as bins?

.....

A3 How do chimps communicate with each other?

.....

A4 Which species of eagle are scientists hoping to return to the wild in Wales?

.....

A5 Why have mosques been in the news with association to 3 March?

.....

A6 What flowers might you not see much of at Easter, because the warm weather now is causing them to sprout early?

.....

A7 What do 97% of scientists disagree with US President Trump about?

.....

A8 What is a 'Snurfer' now known as?

.....

A9 Who is the first ever Scottish-born astronaut?

.....

A10 What does Wear A Hat Day raise money for?

.....

Part B: Pictures

These questions are about stories in the news this week. Can you find the article and information?
Write the answer, the section of the paper and the page number where you found the information.



Page Number: _____

What's the story?

Section: _____

B1



Page Number: _____

What's the story?

Section: _____

B2



Page Number: _____

What's the story?

Section: _____

B3



Page Number: _____

What's the story?

Section: _____

B4



Page Number: _____

What's the story?

Section: _____

B5



Page Number: _____

What's the story?

Section: _____

B6



Page Number: _____

What's the story?

Section: _____

B7



Page Number: _____

What's the story?

Section: _____

B8



Teacher Answers

Part A: Words

- A1 Over 2,500 plastic bottles recovered from beaches, rivers and streets from around the UK. News In Pictures, page 4
- A2 Yorkshire puddings. 14. Pudding Stop, Quick News, page 2
- A3 Hand and foot gestures, noises, facial expressions and body postures. Chimps Use Sign Language, Animal News, page 19
- A4 The golden and white-tailed eagle. Eagles In Wales, Animal News, page 19
- A5 3 March is Visit My Mosque Day, and more than 150 mosques will be open on that day for people to visit. Key Diary Dates, The Week Ahead, page 9
- A6 Daffodils. 13. Daffodil Shortage, Quick News, page 2
- A7 They say climate change is real and he doesn't think it is. Climate Controversy, USA, World News, page 8
- A8 A snowboard. The Snurfer was invented by Sherman Poppen. Innovators, Science News, page 11
- A9 Dave Mackay. Rocket Round-Up, Big News, page 7
- A10 Part of Brain Tumour Awareness Month, Wear A Hat Day raises money to try to find a cure for brain tumours. Wear A Hat Day, Special Report, page 13

Part B: Pictures

- B1 Wales have made history after beating England 21-13 in rugby union's Six Nations Championship. Dragons On Fire! Sport In Pictures, Sport, page 28
- B2 As part of her birthday celebrations, Lila raised £397 for the charity War Child with a JustGiving fundraising page. Birthday Fundraising, Your News, page 23
- B3 Italy's Federica Brignone picked up her third women's alpine combined win in a row at the Alpine Ski World Cup meet. Sport In Pictures, Sport, page 27
- B4 Born at a French zoo, Soa is a female crowned sifaka, a critically endangered member of the lemur family from Madagascar. Special Delivery, Animal News, page 19
- B5 Liang Meiyu of China celebrates a goal during the Pro League match against Great Britain. GB went on to secure a 3-2 shoot-out win. Sport In Pictures, Sport, page 27
- B6 Royal Mail is celebrating the 80th anniversary of Marvel with a set of Marvel-themed stamps. Superhero Stamps, UK, Home News, page 6
- B7 Matilda has made a model of her town, including her local library – which may soon have its opening hours reduced due to budget cuts. Lego Town, Your News, page 23
- B8 Hunter Bailey of the USA goes airborne at the men's Freestyle Skiing World Cup in Senboku, Japan. Sport In Pictures, Sport, page 27

Part A: Words

- A1** Why is Tracey Lund in the news?
- A2** What are scientists now able to do with carbon dioxide in the air?
- A3** Who is Andrew Moffat and why is he in the news?
- A4** Compared with 14 countries in Europe, what do 15-19 year-olds in Britain have the highest rate of?
- A5** Why has the USA declared a state of emergency over 48 people?
- A6** What did Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson describe as a "historic moment"?
- A7** What do experts mean by the "increasing observation of consumption" caused by Instagram and other social media sites?
- A8** By what percentage has the number of hate crimes risen for 2017/18, compared to the year before?
- A9** When polled, what did 77% of 2,650 British children say they didn't want to happen?
- A10** What is 60% of the litter found in the River Thames?

Part C: Person

Who is this person and why is she in the news this week?



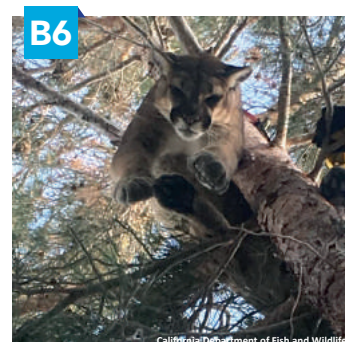
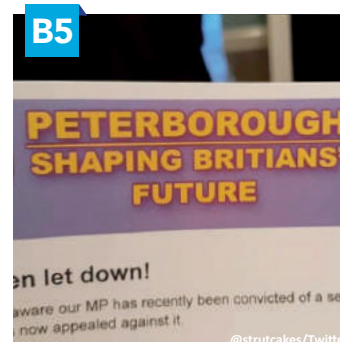
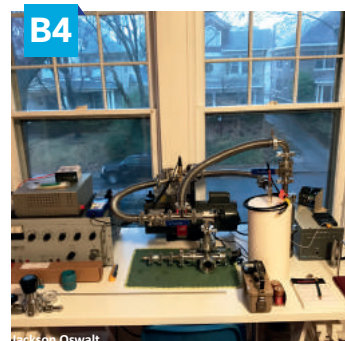
Part D: Object

What is this object and why is it in the news?



Part B: Pictures

What news do these pictures tell us?



Part E: Place

Where in the world was the Beresheet probe launched from?



Part F: Statistics

What news do these numbers tell us this week?

F1 71 years and 198 days

F2 88% of Childline counselling sessions

F3 74% of UK businesses

F4 1,250 ... = £2.6m +

F5 On Tuesday 26 February, the high temperature of 20.8°C in Porthmadog, Gwynedd

F6 Finishing on 161 all out

Teacher Answers

Part A: Words

A1 The British photographer won a Sony World Photography Award for her picture, Underwater Gannets. The Big Picture, page 12

A2 They have created a liquid metal that transforms CO₂ gas directly into solid batteries. Carbon Capture, Science News, page 11

A3 He's a teacher who has been named as one of the top ten finalists for this year's Global Teacher Prize, due to introducing a 'No Outsiders' programme, which creates opportunities for pupils to meet others from all different races, religions and cultures. Top Teacher, Big News, page 7

A4 Obesity. Health Worries, UK, Home News, page 6

A5 They contracted measles (an infectious viral disease causing fever and a red rash). Anti-Vax Scandal, Science News, page 11

A6 The announcement that the promotion of Sue Gray to Air Marshal (from air vice marshal) will make her the most senior woman in the British Armed Forces and the first ever female three-star officer. Sue, We Salute You, UK, Home News, page 6

A7 People posting pictures of their holidays, new clothes and cars on social media is causing others to get into debt by spending money they don't have, to try to keep up. Instabragging, Big News, page 3

A8 17%. Haters Gonna Hate, Special Report, page 10

A9 They don't want Brexit. Kids Vote To Stay! Page 1

A10 Single-use plastic. 8. Plastic River, Quick News, page 2

Part B: Pictures

B1 Jess Breach of England holds off Jasmine Joyce of Wales during their Women's Six Nations match. England won 51-12. Sport In Pictures, Sport, page 27

B2 There's even a junior under-15s' round in the World Pasty Championships taking place on 2 March in Cornwall. Pro Pasties, Crazy But True, page 20

B3 Wallace's giant bee, pictured here being compared to a European honeybee, has just been rediscovered on North Molucca island in Indonesia. The Rat Killed By Climate Change, Big News, page 3

B4 Fourteen-year-old Jackson Oswalt has built a working nuclear fusion reactor in the spare room of his house. Nuclear Bedroom, Big News, page 3

B5 Peterborough councillor John Whitby, a candidate for the UKIP Independence Party, has made the news with his error-filled leaflet. Bad Week For... UKIP, Big News, page 3

B6 This cougar had to be rescued after getting stuck in a tree in the Californian desert. Here, Kitty, Kitty, Crazy But True,

page 20

Part C: Person

Who is this person, and why is she in the news this week? This is the Royal Northern College of Music's Dr Michelle Phillips who, along with Dr Ioanna Filippidi, is researching 'earworms', stuck song syndrome or involuntary musical imagery. Name That Tune! Science News, page 11

Part D: Object

What is this object and why is it in the news? The 2.4cm record-breaking milk tooth of Curtis Buddie! Titanic Tooth, Crazy But True, page 20

Part E: Place

Where in the world was the Beresheet probe launched from? Israel. Rocket Round-Up, Big News, page 7

Part F: Statistics

What news do these numbers tell us this week?

F1 71 years and 198 days – is how old football manager Roy Hodgson was when his team, Crystal Palace, beat Leicester 4-1 recently. Sport In Numbers, Sport, page 28

F2 88% of Childline counselling sessions – were with girls who were concerned about their weight, having spots or not being 'body perfect'. Talking Body Image, Focus On You, page 17

F3 74% of UK businesses – pay higher salaries to their male staff than their female workers. International Women's Day, The Week Ahead, page 9

F4 1,250 ... = £2.6m + – The killing of 1,250 hippos over five years could generate upwards of £2.6m if the Zambian government approve a controversial cull. Hippos Under Attack, Animal News, page 19

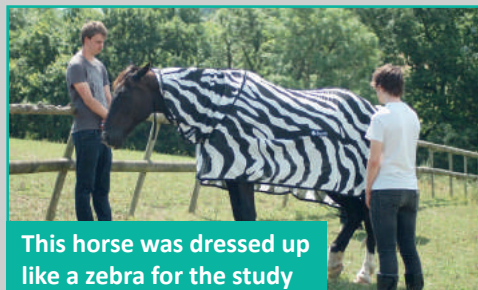
F5 On Tuesday 26 February, the high temperature of 20.8°C in Porthmadog, Gwynedd – made it the warmest February day ever recorded in the UK. After 'First News' went to press, a new record of 21.2°C was recorded at Kew Gardens! Feeling Hot! Gwynedd, Home News, page 6

F6 Finishing on 161 all out – England's women's cricket team suffered a huge defeat in the second one-day international (ODI) of their three-match series against India in Mumbai. England Walloped, Sport, page 28

This story is from the Science section of *First News*. Read the story, and then try the puzzle. To help you, we have underlined the answers to the crossword puzzle clues in the article itself – but you will need to match the correct word with each clue!



MIGHTY STRIPES



This horse was dressed up like a zebra for the study



WHY do zebras have stripes? Scientists have spent 150 years trying to answer that question. But now they might have solved the mystery.

New research by scientists has shown that having stripes may protect zebras from being bitten by insects. The scientists spent more than 16 hours standing in fields watching how horseflies behaved around zebras, horses and... horses dressed as zebras!

They found that flies buzzed around all three, but fewer landed on the zebras. To make sure that the flies weren't put off by something else – such as the smell of zebras – horses were dressed in stripy coats. The flies would land on the horses' heads, but not so many landed on the coats. This made the scientists think that it was the stripes that were keeping the flies off.

But why do stripes keep off flies? When the experts watched closely, they saw that the stripes appear to dazzle the flies and confuse them. They don't slow down and find it almost impossible to land.

The zebras were also better at avoiding flies in other ways. They ran away and swished their tails more often than the horses. So, the flies that did land on the zebras spent less time on them, and often did not manage to bite.

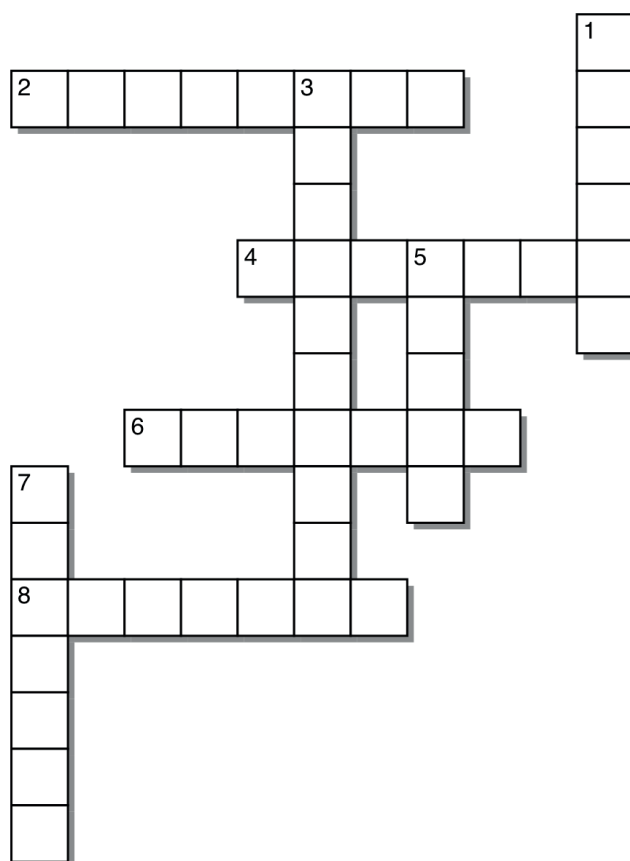
One of the scientists, Dr Martin How, thinks humans should learn from the zebras and wear stripy clothes outdoors in the summer. More stripes, fewer bites!

ACROSS

2. Keeping away from (present participle 8)
4. Muddle; puzzle (verb 7)
6. Long, narrow strips in different colours – as seen on a zebra (plural noun 7)
8. Rapidly swung (past participle 7)

DOWN

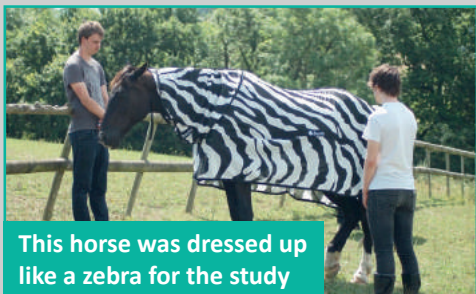
1. Found the answer to (past participle 6)
3. Not able to be done (adjective 10)
5. A small number of (determiner 5)
7. A puzzle (noun 7)



This story is from the Science section of *First News*. Read the story, and then try the puzzle. The answers to the clues are all words in the story. Answer the clue and then underline the word in the story.



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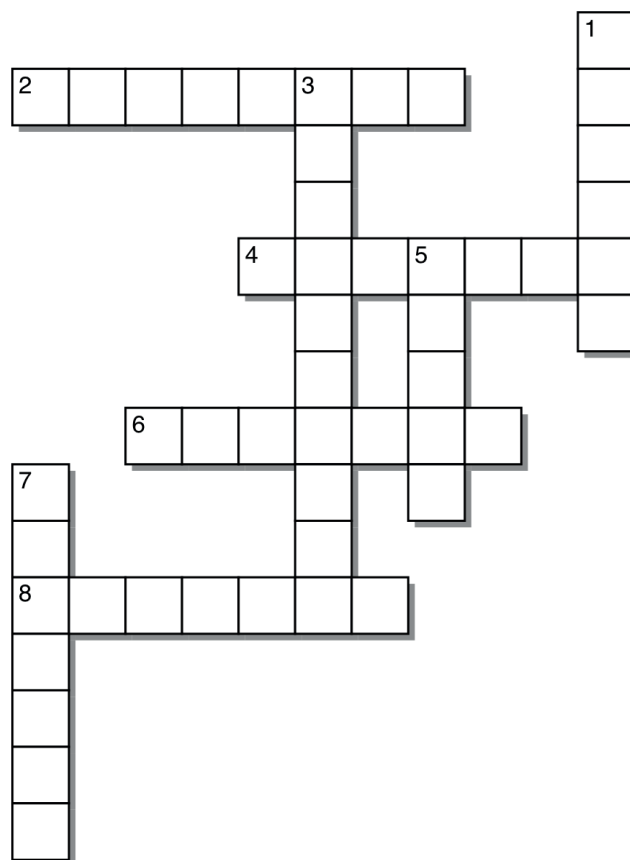
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ACROSS

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4. Muddle; puzzle (verb 7)
6. Long, narrow strips in different colours – as seen on a zebra (plural noun 7)
8. Rapidly swung (past participle 7)

DOWN

1. Found the answer to (past participle 6)
3. Not able to be done (adjective 10)
5. A small number of (determiner 5)
7. A puzzle (noun 7)



These stories are from pages 2 and 6 of *First News*. Can you match the key words in the stories to their meanings? When you have identified each word, can you put them back into their correct place in the story, so it makes sense?



SSSCARY DISCOVERY

A man got rather a _____ when he discovered a snake in his toilet at home in Essex! The rat snake was thought to be an _____ pet. It's now being cared for by the RSPCA.



DAFFODIL SHORTAGE

Experts have warned that there could be a _____ of daffodils this Easter, as the mild February weather is causing the flowers to _____ early and the demand for them to rise! Chris Bonnett from Gardening Express said: "It appears that the bulbs 'think' it's spring already, and have been shooting up their flowering stems since mid-February."



PUDDING STOP

When a _____ got _____ in Ipswich, water bosses didn't expect to discover Yorkshire puddings as the cause! That's exactly what they did find, though, and Anglian Water posted several pictures of the roast dinner favourites clogging up the system. Although it was an unusual discovery, the company has sent a serious warning, urging people not to use the sewers as bins.



SUPERHERO STAMPS

The Royal Mail will release a super set of Marvel-themed stamps to _____ the 80th anniversary of Marvel! The 15-stamp set features some of the most popular _____ from the comic books, including Spider-Man, Hulk, Thor, Iron Man, Doctor Strange, Captain Marvel, Peggy Carter and Black Panther. The world-famous Marvel Comics published its first comic in 1939. The stamps go on sale from Thursday 14 March.



superheroes

To break free from something (past participle)

sewer

Acknowledge a special event by doing something enjoyable (verb)

fright

Grow and put out shoots (verb)

escaped

A sudden feeling of fear (noun)

blocked

An underground tunnel for carrying off waste flushed down the toilet, such as poo and wee, etc (noun)

celebrate

Smaller number of (noun)

shortage

Obstructed or congested, so as to make movement or flow difficult or impossible (noun)

sprout

Characters with superhuman powers (plural noun)

This story is from page 5 of *First News*. Can you match the key words in the story to their meanings? When you have identified each word, can you put them back into their correct place in the story, so it makes sense?



COPYCATS!



A NEW study has found that cats take on the _____ of the people they live with.

Researchers from Lincoln University's animal behaviour clinic carried out _____ tests on 3,300 cat owners and their cats.

They found that cats raised by moody or _____ people would often be moody themselves, while cheerful, open and friendly owners were found to have cats that were _____. Moodier owners were also more likely to have _____ cats, too.

Danielle Gunn-Moore, professor of _____ medicine at Edinburgh University, said: "Cats are a mini-me. They are _____ [able to feel] creatures strongly affected by people around them."

One cat who is definitely a lot like its owner is Choupette, who was owned by the late Karl Lagerfeld, a very successful fashion designer who passed away last week.

Choupette has starred in fashion shoots, has two maids looking after her, and her own personal driver. The posh puss would even be flown about on a private jet!

After Lagerfeld died, many people wondered who would be _____ his millions of pounds. Apparently, Choupette could be receiving as much as £150 million from Lagerfeld's estate!

behaviour

Character; temperament (noun)

feline

Above a weight considered normal or desirable (adjective)

aggressive

Receiving (money or property, etc) as an heir at the death of the previous holder (present participle)

affectionate

Relating to or affecting cats or other members of the cat family (adjective)

overweight

Able to perceive or feel things (adjective)

personality

Ready or likely to attack or confront; hostile (adjective)

sentient

The way in which an animal behaves in response to a particular situation (noun)

inheriting

Loving and devoted (adjective)

SHOULD BILLIONAIRES BE BANNED?

THE DILEMMA

The world's wealthiest people have been in the news recently after the publication of a new report by the charity Oxfam. The report showed that the rich are getting much richer while the poor are becoming poorer.

The 26 richest billionaires own as much as the 3.8 billion people who make up the poorest half of the planet's population. Just two years previously, it took 61 of the richest billionaires to own that much. So more wealth is now in the hands of fewer people.

The wealth of more than 2,200 billionaires across Earth increased by £690 billion last year. That works out at £2 billion a day. But while the wealth of the richest people in the world increased by 12%, the wealth of the poorest half of the world's population fell by 11%.

The report didn't just list alarming stats and facts, though. Oxfam have come up with some possible solutions to the growing gap between rich and poor. They suggest a new wealth tax on the richest 1%, which they say would raise an estimated \$418 billion (£325 billion) a year, which is enough to educate every child currently not in school and provide healthcare that would prevent three million deaths.

But does this go far enough to deal with inequality? Is it right that anybody should be a billionaire when there are millions going hungry, including in Britain?

Is it time our Government banned billionaires, by making sure anyone who earned that much paid much higher taxes?



A Ferrari in Monaco, where people pay no tax on their earnings

OPINION

"It doesn't have to be this way – there is enough wealth in the world to provide everyone with a fair chance in life. Governments should act to ensure that taxes raised from wealth and businesses paying their fair share are used to fund free, good-quality public services that can save and transform people's lives" – [Matthew Spencer, Oxfam's director of campaigns and policy](#)



FACTS & FIGURES



Jim Ratcliffe

The richest man in Britain is Jim Ratcliffe, who has a personal fortune of **£21 billion**. He made his money in the chemicals industry. But it was recently announced he was leaving the UK to live in Monaco, in order to save billions in tax.

The richest man in the world is Jeff Bezos, the founder and owner of the online store Amazon. He has **\$112 billion (£85 billion)**.



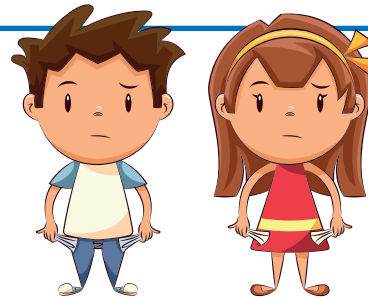
It takes Jeff Bezos just **9 seconds** to earn what the average Amazon worker earns in a year.

Around the world, **10,000** people die every day for lack of healthcare, and there are **262** million children not in school.



The poorest **10%** of Britons are paying a higher tax rate than the richest **10%** (**49%** compared with **34%**).

Nearly **1 in 3** UK children live in poverty.



The average British worker earns **£28,000** a year.



Between 2017 and 2018, a new billionaire was created in the world **every 2 days**.



44% of the UK's wealth is owned by just **10%** of the population.

HOW TAX WORKS



Tax is money that people and businesses have to pay to the Government. This money is then used to pay for public services, which includes schools, hospitals, the military, police and the fire brigade.

A portion of what a person earns in their job is paid to the Government as tax. Some of the things we buy in shops have a tax called VAT included in their price, which also goes to the Government. There are also specific taxes on things like flights, tobacco and alcohol.

The idea behind tax is that everyone pays into a pot that benefits the whole country. Almost every nation has a taxation system, though some countries have very low or even no tax on income. The percentage of a tax rate is the amount that a person pays to the Government. For example, if somebody owes 10% of £100 in taxes, the Government gets £10.

Fair tax?

Some people think that the current tax system is unfair. They argue that people who earn less should pay a smaller proportion of tax than those who earn more. The richest used to pay more in taxes: during the Second World War, the top rate of income tax in the UK was 99.25%. It was reduced to around 90% throughout the 1950s and '60s. In 1979, the top rate was reduced from 83% to 60%. Today it's 45% on earnings over £150,000. The lowest rate has fallen from 33% in the 1970s to 20% today. The Labour Party wants to increase tax for the wealthiest to 50%.

How much is too much?

Some politicians are reluctant to make tax rises because they are generally seen as being unpopular with voters. But some people think that there isn't enough money going into the Government's coffers. They point to the ongoing crisis in the NHS, where waiting lists for treatment are getting longer. They point to the cuts in education budgets, where many schools are struggling to make ends meet. Rather than cut services, some people say it's better to pay more tax because ultimately everyone benefits from better schools, hospitals and universities.

But who should pay this extra tax? Should people on an average income (around £28,000 a year) pay more? Or should the very richest be expected to pay a little extra into the pot?



TOP RATES OF TAX AROUND THE WORLD

Here's what the wealthiest people pay in income tax around the world.



WHERE THE BILLIONAIRES ROAM



A super-yacht in the River Thames, owned by American billionaire Shahid Khan

According to a report published last year, the countries with the most billionaires are:

- 10 France & Australia (43 billionaires)
- 9 South Korea (44)
- 8 Canada (46)
- 7 United Kingdom (54)
- 6 Hong Kong (67)
- 5 Russia (101)
- 4 India (119)
- 3 Germany (123)
- 2 China (373)
- 1 USA (585)

IS THE WEALTH GAP OK?



In India, there are 119 individuals who are billionaires. Yet around 70 million people live in extreme poverty. Is that just how the world works, or is it the role of the Government to step in and make sure that, until poverty is stamped out, nobody can become super-rich?

In Germany, Europe's richest country, there are 123 billionaires and the 45 richest households own as much wealth as the bottom half of the population. The top 1% of German households own a third of the country's entire wealth.

Is a big wealth gap the price we pay for the system we live in? Or is it wrong that a growing group of super-rich people should have so much more than the poorest in society?

OXFAM'S REPORT

Oxfam's Matthew Spencer thinks that things are deeply unfair and need to change urgently. He said:

"The way our economies are organised means wealth is increasingly and unfairly concentrated among a privileged few, while millions of people are barely subsisting. Women are dying for lack of decent maternity care and children are being denied an education that could be their route out of poverty. No-one should be condemned to an earlier grave or a life of illiteracy simply because they were born poor."

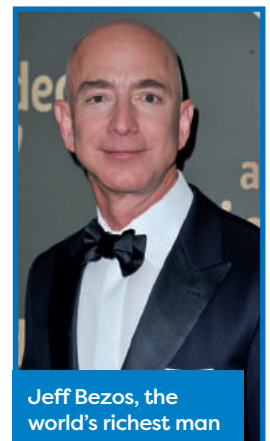
Oxfam are calling on governments worldwide to take action. They want to see:

- The richest companies and individuals paying their fair share of tax
- Free public services, like schools and hospitals, for everyone
- Decent work, living wages and an end to the gender pay gap

HOW DO YOU BAN BILLIONAIRES?

The obvious way to prevent people becoming super-rich is to introduce a very heavy tax on high incomes. Right now, this is how much British people are taxed for the money they earn from work:

Annual income	Tax rate
Up to £11,850	0%
£11,851–£46,350	20%
£46,351–£150,000	40%
Over £150,000	45%



So, to prevent people becoming billionaires, a new tax band could be introduced of 100% on any income over £999 million. This means that every penny earned by an individual over £999 million would go to the Government. There would also probably have to be taxes introduced on other things, such as property, to stop millionaires becoming billionaires. In Sweden in the 1980s, the very wealthiest paid as much as 88% of their earnings in tax.

BUT WHY SHOULD THE WEALTHIEST PAY EVEN MORE?

Many of the wealthiest people in the world have worked hard to earn their money. Why should they be stopped from becoming billionaires by heavy taxes? It's not their fault that politicians haven't done more to stop poverty.

The wealth of the top 1% of the planet helps create jobs for millions of people. It doesn't make sense to stop a man or woman from becoming a billionaire if their wealth is directly responsible for providing jobs that give people money that is, in turn, taxed. In other words, the world's billionaires are responsible for indirectly creating money for governments.



PAYING THE RIGHT AMOUNT

Fair share?

One of the major criticisms of the world's richest is that they don't pay their fair share of tax. They often find ways of legally avoiding paying a lot of tax. Recently, *The Sunday Times* newspaper claimed that the UK's richest man, Jim Ratcliffe, had worked with an accountancy firm to find legal ways of avoiding paying between £400 million and £4 billion in tax.

Amazon (owned by the world's richest man Jeff Bezos) has had a turnover of £7 billion in the UK in 20 years, but paid just £61.7 million in corporation (business) tax. That may sound a lot, but it's a tiny percentage.



A food bank for people too poor to afford food

Unfair income tax

But it isn't just that the super-rich can afford accountants who find ways of reducing their tax bill. It's that most tax systems around the world favour the rich.

For example, in the UK, the poorest 10% of households pay a greater proportion of their income in tax than the richest 10%. So they don't pay more money than the richest, but as an amount of what they have, it's much higher.

According to an organisation called The Equality Trust, the poorest 10% on average pay 42% of their income in the form of income tax, national insurance, VAT and council tax. But the richest 10% pay 34% of their earnings in tax. This contributes to the gap between the richest and poorest in society.

Unfair council tax and VAT

Council tax is charged by the local authority wherever you live to pay for things like rubbish collection, libraries and the upkeep of parks and public spaces. People who earn the lowest amount of money pay an average of 7% of their income in council tax, while the wealthiest pay just 1.5%.

VAT also unfairly favours the rich. According to The Equality Trust, the poor pay 12.5% of their income in VAT while the rich pay just 5%.



YES, BILLIONAIRES SHOULD BE BANNED



1. NOBODY NEEDS TO BE THAT RICH – The super-rich 1% of the world's population are incredibly wealthy. Nobody needs that much money. They can contribute to the society they live and work in by giving away much more of that money in taxes to reduce poverty and improve public services.

2. IT'S HIGH TIME THEY PAID THEIR SHARE – The wealthiest in society have avoided paying a fair share of tax through legal tax avoidance schemes. The tax system also favours the rich over the poor. It's time this ended – and introducing a mega-tax on the richest would go a long way to making things fairer.

3. THE RICH-POOR GAP IS IMMORAL – It's wrong that, in 2019, the gap between rich and poor worldwide is increasing. How can it be right that in Britain there are more than 30% of kids living in poverty while the richest man leaves for Monaco to avoid paying any taxes here?

NO, BILLIONAIRES SHOULD NOT BE BANNED



1. THIS IS A MATTER OF FREEDOM – In a free and open society, people should be allowed to earn as much money as they like. Taxation is important, but no government should be allowed to prevent people from becoming billionaires.

2. THE RICH WILL SQUIRREL THEIR MONEY ELSEWHERE – Super-rich people have super-smart accountants. They will find ways of sending money abroad, where they pay less or no tax. Some will just leave the UK altogether. It's better to have them here, paying tax, than banning them from having £1 billion or more.

3. THE SUPER-RICH CREATE JOBS – Many of the wealthiest people in the world own businesses that employ thousands of workers. Rather than punish them with heavy taxes we should be happy they are providing work and opportunities to so many people.

DISCUSS 

Should people be free to earn as much as they can?

DISCUSS 

Why is tax important?

DISCUSS 

Should people who earn less have their taxes cut?

DISCUSS 

Is it right that some countries don't charge any tax?

DISCUSS 

Should the richest people in society pay more tax?

DISCUSS 

Why might raising taxes on the super-rich be positive?

DISCUSS 

Why might raising taxes on the super-rich be negative?

DISCUSS 

Is it right that there should be more and more billionaires while poverty is increasing?

DISCUSS 

Is it right for a government to ban billionaires by taxing them heavily?

DISCUSS 

Do you think poverty can ever be ended?