



Reading 5

For questions 1–6 sort out the parts of the text and put them in the correct order. There is one extra paragraph that you do not have to use.

Heroes

- A Yet, it is not solely responsible for the death of the hero. A democratic culture also undermines the idea that certain individuals carry a divine spark and are therefore in a category superior to that of the rest of us. No one deserves to be worshipped and there is a revulsion at the idea of bending the knee and kissing the hand of another individual.
- B Celebrities, on the other hand, with the string of stories about their hardships and their lucky breaks, their affairs and their break-ups, prove to be nothing out of the ordinary. Reading about their lives does not inspire us or fill us with purpose. If it isn't just a way of killing time — it may well help us to resign ourselves to our own sense of purposelessness.
- C Having killed the hero we have replaced him with a distinctively modern public figure: the celebrity. As one commentator put it: the celebrity is a person who is known for being well-known. Celebrities offer exclusive stories to increase their exposure, the media promote and we collude by paying so much attention to the glossy features, the exclusive interviews, and the various scandals and intrigues.
- D To become a celebrity it is more important to have a good press agent than to be a big achiever, which is one of the reasons why figures from the worlds of light entertainment and sports are some of the most successful celebrities. It is in these fields that being a household name but not your actual achievements is the key to clinching the next big contract and the next lucrative advertising deal.

E Back in the twentieth century there was a British punk rock song that claimed that there were "no more heroes anymore". Calmer critics and social commentators have agreed that the age of the hero is over. In the past people had heroes. They were the most prominent figures in the public consciousness — those who had achieved great things who had done great deeds — proud, noble leaders and bold pioneers.

F Psychologists have also entered public consciousness, adding to the forces tearing down the statues of the past. The drives of a great individual are seen to have their roots in an unhappy youth and inability to have a good time. The achievements remain but the man himself emerges from the analysis without a shred of nobility.

G The myth of the hero, though, could not survive when public life came to be dominated by the mass media. The mass media killed off the heroes and replaced them with celebrities. To become a celebrity what matters is not so much the greatness of what you have done but the exposure you are given in the media.

1	2	3	4	5	6

Reading 5 — Keys

1. E
2. G
3. A
4. F
5. C
6. D