

- **Goal:** describe your reaction to a situation
- **Language focus:** subject raising
- **Vocabulary:** idioms for expressing and controlling emotions



Reading

1 Work in pairs and discuss the questions.

- 1 What things irritate you when you're online? What about when you're offline?
- 2 Is there a difference between the way you (and other people) handle frustrating situations online and offline? Why?

2 a Work in pairs. Think of reasons why people's behaviours might change when they go online.

They might not think they're talking to a real person.

- b Read the article. Which of the ideas you discussed are mentioned?

Language focus

3 a Underline the ways ideas 1–6 are expressed in the article.

- 1 It turns out the person we're abusing isn't the evil CEO ...
the person we're abusing turns out not to be the evil CEO ...
- 2 It happens by chance that we see a member of our own community ...
- 3 It might appear that the respondent is blanking you deliberately.
- 4 It appears that the writer is actively trying to humiliate us individually.
- 5 It turns out that the writer had a completely different target in mind.
- 6 It seems that some genuinely unpleasant people enjoy causing trouble ...

- b Work in pairs. How are the two versions in Exercise 3a different grammatically? Think about the subjects and what comes after the verbs.

6 reasons why people change when they go online

Have you ever noticed how lovely people turn into monsters when they're online? Here are six reasons why everyone seems so angry on the internet.

Lack of feedback clues: In normal life, we get irritated all the time. But we calm down quickly when we see the other person's facial expression or hear the tone of their voice and realise they feel bad about making an honest mistake. But online, that information is missing and our anger quickly gets out of hand.

Lack of empathy: Most of us hate upsetting others. But online, it's easy to forget that the object of our abuse is a real person with feelings. When we're communicating with large corporations, we assume they're impervious to normal emotions, so we unleash our fury on them. But the person we're abusing turns out not to be the evil CEO but rather some low-paid temp simply trying to help.

Herd mentality: We naturally organise ourselves into online communities with people of similar opinions. So when we happen to see a member of our own community engaged in a conflict with an 'outsider', it's hard to resist the temptation to defend your own 'side'. As more and more people wade in, a simple disagreement can quickly spiral out of control.

Knee jerk reactions: When you post a complaint on a company's social media feed, you naturally expect an instant response. If you have to wait more than a few minutes, the respondent might appear to be blanking you deliberately, which quickly transforms your mild irritation into intense fury.

Egocentric assumptions: Whenever we read general criticisms from our social circle, such as 'I hate people who do X', we tend to take them personally. The writer appears to be actively trying to humiliate us individually, because we once did X. So we take offence, even if, as is often the case, the writer turns out to have had a completely different target in mind.

Lack of punishment: The final reason is actually much less powerful than most people assume. It's true that there are rarely repercussions for bad online behaviour. It's also true that some genuinely unpleasant people seem to enjoy causing trouble simply because they can. But the vast majority of online rage and abuse is committed by normal people who wouldn't dream of upsetting others in real life. In other words, people like me, people like you.

4 Read the language focus box to check your answers to Exercise 3b.

Subject raising

With a small number of verbs (e.g. *seem*, *appear*, *turn out*), it is possible to express the same idea in two different ways:

1 *it* + verb + *that*-clause

It seems that you're right.

2 subject + verb + *to*-infinitive

You seem to be right.

A range of *to*-infinitive structures are possible:

1 *It appears that they're lying.* →

2 *They appear to be lying.*

1 *It turned out that they'd left.* →

2 *They turned out to have left.*

1 *It seems that they were misbehaving.* →

2 *They seem to have been misbehaving.*

Version 1 is useful if you want to avoid a complicated *to*-infinitive structure. In most other cases, version 2 is preferred because it's shorter and there's no need for a meaningless subject (*it*).

Two versions are also possible with the verb *happen*, but version 2 suggests that the event was unplanned/unexpected. Version 1 is quite rare.

1 *It happened that Joe came to visit yesterday.* →

2 *Joe happened to come to visit yesterday.*

(= I wasn't planning/expecting him to visit.)

5 a 1.4 Listen to three sentences. In which sentence is *it* pronounced most clearly? Why?

- 1 It seems that you want to leave.
- 2 It turned out that the solution was simple.
- 3 It appeared that somebody was watching us.

b Practise saying the three sentences as naturally as possible.

6 Rewrite the sentences so they start with the subject in bold.

- 1 It seems that **nobody** understood the rules.
Nobody seems to have understood the rules.
- 2 It turned out that **she'd** been reading a text when she crashed her car.
- 3 It happened that **my video** went viral.
- 4 It appears that **somebody** has been trying to contact me for days.
- 5 It turned out that **the abusive post** had been written by a 14-year-old boy.
- 6 Did it happen that **you** noticed who broke the window?

7 Work in pairs. Complete the sentences so that they are true for you. Then ask questions about your partner's stories.

- 1 The other day, I happened to ...
- 2 _____ (Somebody/Something) turned out to be/to have been a lot more ... than I expected.
- 3 _____ (Somebody/Something) appears to have been _____ (doing what?)
- 4 I'm not sure, but _____ (somebody) seems to be _____ (doing what?) at the moment.

Go to page 146 or your app for more information and practice.

Vocabulary

8 a Read sentences 1–8 below. Which phrases are about:

- a feeling strong emotions?
- b expressing your emotions?
- c controlling your emotions?

- 1 I don't mind a little honest criticism – I've got a pretty **thick skin**.
- 2 It really **drives me up the wall** when people leave all the windows open.
- 3 I often want to scream at people, but I usually decide to **bite my tongue**.
- 4 Nasty online comments really **get under my skin**. Sometimes I think about them for days.
- 5 If I'm angry, I **let off steam** by kicking a tree rather than **lashing out** at other people.
- 6 I sometimes **bottle up** my emotions and **put a brave face on** things, but in the end it makes me more stressed.
- 7 I didn't want to **make a scene**, but I needed to **get something off my chest**. I knew he was lying to me.
- 8 Whenever I'm feeling annoyed, I try to remember to **take a step back** and look at the bigger picture. It really helps me to **put things into perspective**.

b Work in pairs. Tell your partner which of the sentences in Exercise 8a are true for you. Why?

Go to page 166 or your app for more vocabulary and practice.

Speaking

PREPARE

9 1.5 Listen to three people talking about conflicts. Answer the questions. Who:

- 1 had a bad experience which helped him/her avoid a worse experience?
- 2 blamed themselves for allowing the conflict to spiral out of control?
- 3 changed their opinion after seeing somebody face-to-face?

10 You're going to tell a story about a good or bad experience where you expressed or controlled strong emotions. Use the questions below to help you.

- What happened? Why? How did it make you feel?
- What did you do? What happened as a result?

SPEAK

11 Work in pairs. Take turns to tell your stories. Work out some general advice for how to avoid and deal with conflict.

Master your
reading
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