

He was the golden boy of British tennis. • He was dogged by injury. • He starred in a couple of B-movies. • She's just another wannabe model. • He went off the rails. • She tried to resurrect her career. • He just vanished off the radar. • I read all the trashy tabloids. • I wasn't really reading it. I just had a quick flick through. • I just happened to see it. • He's a complete nobody. • I have penned the odd song myself. • I'm a sucker for any soppy romantic film. • You didn't fall for it, did you? • Oh, so you know George Clooney, do you? • Apparently, their marriage is just a sham. • She's in rehab now. • This all just appeals to the lowest common denominator. • He took out an injunction to stop the story coming out.

## Reading

### 1 Speaking

Discuss these questions with a partner.

1. Who do you think the most globally famous person from your country is? What're they famous for? Are you a fan?
2. Are there any famous foreigners living and working in your country? How do you feel about them? Why?
3. Have you ever seen or met any famous people? Who? Where?

### 2 Describing why people were famous

Complete these sentences with the words in the box.

caps	fling	host	rails
soap	contestants	glamour	kiss-and-tell
runner-up	wonder	famous	golden boy
launched	smash		

1. She was one of the ..... in the first ever 'Big Brother' reality TV show.
2. She was a famous ..... model and pin-up girl.
3. He was this one-hit ..... in the 80s. He had a single called "Don't Forget Me" that was a ..... hit all over Europe.
4. I never really knew what she did. She just seemed to be famous for being .....
5. She had a ..... with some government minister and then sold her ..... story to the tabloids.
6. He was a child star on TV in the 70s and then went completely off the ..... when he hit adolescence.
7. He was ..... in the Tour de France in the mid-90s.
8. He was the ..... of English football – for a few months. He won a couple of ..... for the national team.
9. He used to be a late-night chat-show .....
10. She was a ..... star in the 90s and then she got out of that and ..... a fairly disastrous singing career!

### 3 Practice

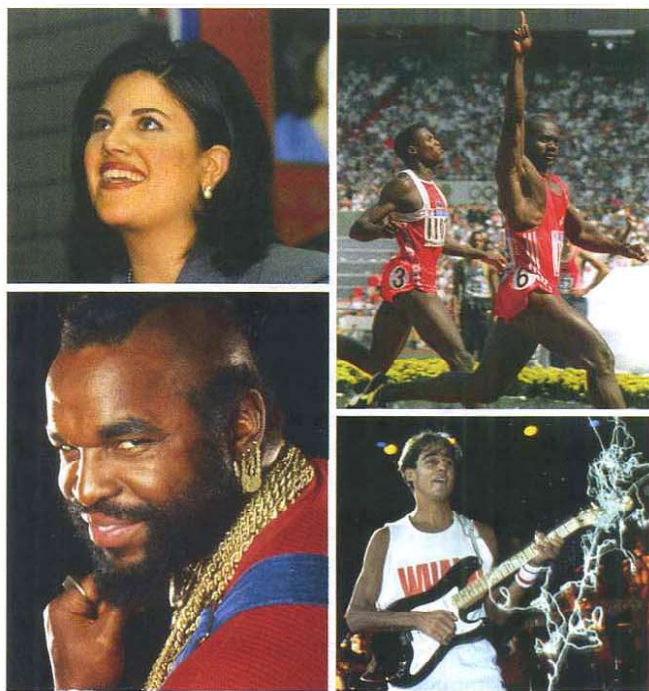
Think of three people you could describe using some of the language from Activity 2. Describe the people in as much detail as you can to a partner, but don't mention their names. Can your partner guess who you're describing?

### 4 Before you read

You are going to read about what happened to the four people in these photos after their moments of fame.

First, discuss these questions with a partner.

1. Do you recognise any of these people?
2. Do you know why they were famous?
3. Do you have any idea what happened to them next?



Decide which photos you think these words go with.

- an eco-warrior
- did stints as a bouncer
- endorse a brand of diet products
- feel hard done by
- leaked recordings of telephone conversations
- pursued a sideline career as a rapper
- sent home in disgrace
- went solo

Compare your decisions with a partner.



## 5 While you read

The class should now split into two groups. One group should read the text on this page. The other group should read the text on page 176.

Read your text and find out if you matched the words in Activity 4 with the correct photos.

Once you have finished reading, compare your findings with someone from the other group. Find out as much as you can about each person.

### Where are they now?

Andy Warhol once claimed that everybody will get their fifteen minutes of fame – and it is certainly starting to look that way! We now have celebrity chefs and celebrity gardeners, fly-on-the-wall TV shows about celebrity love islands and celebrity detox camps, plus countless celebrity gossip magazines and web sites. Celebrity scandal is splashed all over the tabloids, and in our subsequent conversations many of us talk as if we are on first-name terms with the Justins, Kylies, Leonardos and Christinas of this world.

Yet what happens when the limelight fades and the crowds move on to the next sensation? Here, we track the twists and turns in the lives of four ex-celebs now residing in the 'where are they now?' file.

#### Andrew Ridgeley

As half of the duo – Wham! – that propelled George Michael to superstardom, Andrew Ridgeley enjoyed a string of Top Ten hits in the mid 1980s, culminating in the mega-million-selling smash, 'Last Christmas'. The pair appeared in the first Live Aid concert at Wembley Stadium and were the first western group to play in China.

However, by 1987 it was all over. George went solo and Andrew was left to get over being known as the lesser talent and 'the other one in Wham!'. He then seemed to vanish off the radar, spending part of his fortune on an ill-fated attempt at becoming a racing driver, and trying his hand at restaurant ownership. A comeback LP, 'Son of Albert', flopped and Andrew is now a partner in a surfing firm and something of an eco-warrior, lobbying the government as part of the Surfers Against Sewage group.

#### Ben Johnson

When the naturalised Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson won the 100 metres in the 1988 Seoul Olympics, he was hailed as the world's fastest man. However, a mere three days later, he was stripped of his medal and sent

home in disgrace. Johnson's crime was testing positive for a banned steroid. It was an ignominious end to what had been a glittering rise to stardom – and one that denied Johnson the chance of cashing in on his success and earning millions from endorsements.

Johnson was born in Jamaica, but emigrated to Canada aged 14 and made his Olympic debut in Los Angeles in 1984, winning bronze. Three years later, he set a new world record of 9.83 seconds, a figure he himself bettered in South Korea, where he ran an incredible 9.79.

Johnson attempted a comeback in 1991, but received a life ban in '93 after failing another drug test. He then drifted from one strange career move to another, briefly acting as a trainer for Argentinian football legend Diego Maradona and then helping coach the son of Libyan leader, Colonel Gaddafi. He was last heard of living back with his mother in a relatively impoverished state, reduced to racing against horses and cars for publicity.

Today Johnson perhaps has good reason to feel hard done by – four of the other seven sprinters from Seoul subsequently also failed drugs tests – including the man who took his gold, Carl Lewis!

## 6 Comprehension check

Work with your partner. Decide if these statements about the four celebrities are true or false. Can you remember the exact words in the text?

1. Andrew Ridgeley's career as a racing driver wasn't very successful.
2. His solo album sold well.
3. Ben Johnson came third in the Los Angeles Olympics 100 metres.
4. Ben Johnson is still quite well-off.
5. Monica Lewinsky used to tell her secrets to Linda Tripp.
6. She started knitting because she didn't really enjoy being in the public eye.
7. Mr.T is now Laurence Tureaud's official name.
8. Mr.T's videos encourage kids not to get involved with crime.

Now look at the text again and underline the exact words.

## 7 Speaking

Discuss these questions with a partner.

1. Which of the four people do you think seems most well-adjusted nowadays? And who seems least well-adjusted?
2. Did any of the four stories remind you of any other celebrities? In what way?
3. Why do you think President Clinton's popularity ratings actually went up in the wake of the Lewinsky scandal?
4. Why do you think so many celebs end up with drink or drug problems, or else embroiled in endless litigation?





# Conversation

## 1 Speaking

Discuss these questions with a partner.

1. Do you ever read any gossip magazines?
2. Do you ever get stories about celebrities' private lives in any of the serious papers?
3. Do you know any stories about celebrities in the news at the moment? Do you have an opinion about them?

## 2 Listening

You are going to listen to three people talking about gossip magazines and celebrities. Listen and answer these questions.

1. How many of them like reading gossip magazines?
2. Why do they like / not like celebrity gossip?
3. Which celebrity story do they mention?
4. Why were the celebrities mentioned famous?

## 3 Listen again

Can you remember what was said in each of the gaps below? There is more than one word missing in each sentence.

Compare your ideas with a partner.

1. I was just having ..... – just keeping myself up to date with the latest celebrity gossip
2. I bet you've got a full .....
3. Have you ever seen anything ..... ?
4. She was, I don't know, some reality TV ..... or something.
5. Yeah? Probably. .... There always seems to be one celeb or other getting treatment for some addiction.
6. No, I didn't. I'm with you. .... for any of those glossy gossip mags and trashy tabloids.
7. I just happened to switch over and ..... of it.
8. We're just becoming obsessed with celebrities and ..... our whole media culture.
9. We build these people up and say how wonderful they are just so we can .....
10. They all employ publicists and ..... and libel actions at the first whiff of scandal.
11. It just appeals to the .....
12. You are just ....., aren't you? You don't really believe that, do you?

Now listen again and complete the gaps.

Which of the arguments about celebrities and gossip magazines do you agree with? Would you like to be a celebrity?

## Real English: an old fogey

An old fogey is someone who has old-fashioned views and doesn't like change. You don't need to be old to be one!

A: I don't know! Young people today don't have any respect.

B: Oh, don't be such an old fogey! You're only 33!

## 4 Speaking

Discuss these questions with a partner.

1. Do you subscribe to any magazines, journals or papers? Which ones? Why?
2. Is there anything you're a real sucker for?
3. Do you know anyone who picks arguments for the sake of it or deliberately winds people up?

## 5 Changing word class

Look at this sentence from the listening:

Her only talent seems to be for bedding B-list celebrities.

Bed here is used as a verb rather than its more common use as a noun. It means 'to have sex with'.

This change in word class is quite common in English, although it's sometimes difficult to know what's possible and what's not.

Which two words in red are not possible in the word class they are used in below?

1. He's a complete nobody. I don't know why he's a famous.
2. Apparently, the club was just a front for the local mafia.
3. There was a big celebrity awards do on in the centre of town.
4. We had to elbow our way through the crowd to get near the stage.
5. I tried to be as nice as possible, but I obviously didn't word it right because she actually kneed me!
6. I can't meet you today, but I'll pencil you in for Friday.
7. He was this rabidly anti-gay MP – until he was outed in the press by his secretary.
8. I'm hoping the company will up its offer. Otherwise, I'm just going to leave.
9. I'm sure Chris will have some ideas about how to improve things. He's very switched-on.
10. He was completely whiskied. He must've downed six or seven drinks while we were at the party.

Use your dictionary to find the meaning of the following nouns when they are used as verbs. Write example sentences for each.

brick	circle	foot	ground	sellotape
bus	floor	gas	pen	table



## 6 Using grammar: question tags

We often use question tags to show surprise or incredulity.

You are just winding us up, aren't you? It's got to be a joke.  
It was him, was it? I might've known!

Show your surprise by adding a question tag to one or both of the sentences in each of the ten examples below.

1. Nobody really believes that. Everybody knows it's all just about the money.
2. So it's my fault. I don't think so!
3. You don't really believe that. You can't do.
4. I don't have to come with you. Do you really need someone to hold your hand?
5. You didn't fall for that old trick. That's the oldest one in the book.
6. She didn't. She wouldn't really do that.
7. They can't really expect us to pay for this. It's outrageous.
8. So it was easy. Is that what you think?
9. You didn't think he'd actually do it. It was a joke.
10. She's not going to marry him. That would be such a disaster.

**Listen to check your answers. Notice the intonation.**  
**Practise saying the sentences in pairs.**

For more information on how to use question tags, see G25.



## 7 It's a scandal

Complete the sentences below with the verbs in the box in the correct form.

accept	chuck	dump	out
admit	collapse	expose	sleep
batter	cover up	kerb-crawl	snort

1. His wife's ..... him out because she found out he'd been having an affair with the kids' nanny.
2. Apparently, the marriage was a sham to ..... the fact that he's gay.
3. There was some exposé in the paper about him ..... with call girls.
4. He was picked up by the police for ..... in the red light district.
5. Apparently, he didn't even bother to tell her face-to-face it was over. He actually ..... her by e-mail.
6. He was filmed ..... a bribe to throw the game.
7. She claimed she was a qualified doctor, but she was ..... as a fraud.
8. She's always denied taking class-A drugs, but then they caught her on camera ..... coke.
9. Apparently he's been ..... to rehab for addiction to heroin.
10. He made his fortune through various dodgy dealings and his whole business empire ..... when it was exposed.
11. He's got this wholesome, goody-goody image, but apparently he ..... his wife and he's just a really nasty piece of work.
12. She denied she was a lesbian, but she was ..... in the paper by an ex-lover.

**Now discuss these questions in groups:**

- a. What do you think is the most scandalous story above? Why?
- b. Do you think any of the stories above have no place in a newspaper? Why?
- c. Have you heard of any of these – or similar – scandals? Who was involved? What happened?