**Why Are Social Networking Sites So Popular?**

**1** Social networking sites become more and more popular every day, and they are popular all around the world. In Japan, the top site is Mixi. In Europe, it is Bebo. The most popular site in Latin America is Orkut. In the United States, the top site is Facebook. In fact, Facebook is one of the most popular social networking sites in the world. A Harvard University student started Facebook in 2004, and it spreadto more than 400 million users in just a few years.

**2** Why is the social networking trend spreading so rapidly? One reason that these websites are popular is because people are social. We like to communicate with other people. We make friends with people in school, at work, and online. Most people like to stay closely connected to their friends and family. We use cell phones, email, instant messaging, and websites to learn what our friends are doing. The Internet is a good way to socialize and communicate, and social networking sites allow people to do this in many ways.

**3** Social networking sites are interactive and personal. People can share photographs of themselves and of others. They can tell people what they are doing at any moment and keep in touch. They can post a link to a site with their favorite writer. They can join groups with others who share their interests. Many people post videos of themselves on sites like YouTube. Other users can comment on these photos and videos. This interaction makes these websites become more popular.

**Complete the sentence. Choose A, B, or C.**

1. According to the passage, the most popular social networking site in Latin America is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
   1. Mixi
   2. Facebook
   3. Orkut
2. According to the reading, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is one of the most popular social networking sites in the world.
   1. Mixi
   2. YouTube
   3. Facebook
3. According to the author, the social networking trend is spreading rapidly because people \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
   1. enjoy communicating with each other
   2. prefer using their cell phones
   3. like making a lot of friends
4. According to the passage, people stay connected with each other by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
   1. communicating at work
   2. socializing at school
   3. sending email messages

**Politeness in American Culture**

**1** In every country there are rules about how to behave. But most of these rules are not written down. Some of these unwritten rules have to do with the space around you. For example, what is a comfortable distance to stand when you are talking to another person? In the United States, the distance is about the length of one arm. But in some countries, the distance is much closer. This makes Americans uncomfortable.

**2** People in the U.S. like to think that they have an invisible "personal space" around them. If you come into their personal space, they will be unhappy. Even on crowded buses, subways, or elevators, people in the U.S. try not to touch people that they don't know. If you get on a bus or train and there are many empty seats, you shouldn't sit right next to someone.

**3** In a public place like a library, the personal space gets even bigger. There it includes a person's books, papers, and other personal items. Another person should not come into the space where those things are. Another person should not touch those items without being told that it is OK. This feeling about personal items is also true of roommates. If you live with an American roommate, you should not use their things without asking.  
**4** Another idea about personal space has to do with noise. It is not polite to be very loud in a public place. You should be careful not to be too noisy in a place like a restaurant. It can even be rude to be noisy outside, especially if it is late at night or early in the morning. This includes talking loudly or shouting, playing loud music, or make loud noises with a car.

**5** Other countries may have different ideas about politeness and personal space. But if you visit the U.S., be sure to give other people lots of room!

**Read the sentence. Is it a main idea or a detail? Choose A or B.**

1. Another person should not touch those items without being told that it is OK.
2. main idea
3. detail
4. In every country there are rules about how to behave.
5. main idea
6. detail
7. Another idea about personal space has to do with noise.
8. main idea
9. detail
10. You should be careful not to be too noisy in a place like a restaurant.
    1. main idea
    2. detail

**Match each word with the correct definition.**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 9. ban  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 10. clear  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 11. expand  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 12. traditional |  | 1. easy to see, hear, or understand 2. ways of doing things that have existed for a long time 3. to officially say that something is not allowed 4. to become bigger, or to make something bigger |