MODULE 1

UNIT 4

COMMUNICATION

1 **Read the text, pay special attention to the words in bold type, write down their definitions.**

A Brief History of Communication from Cave Paintings to the Worldwide Web

Communication is so much more than the spoken or written word. Nature itself can also speak to us of its beauty and power through a moonlit night or sunset. Many animal species have developed a system of communication, but humans are the only living things ***capable of*** spoken language. Although parrots and some other species of birds can mimic the human voice, they ***are unable to*** use it as a language of communication. Effective communication is essential for a variety of reasons. It serves to inform, motivate, establish authority and control, and allows for emotive expression. Just as mankind has progressed with the development of farming, infrastructure and trade, our means of communication have followed suit. What began as cave painting and sign language has ***morphed into*** an endless variety of ways to express oneself to our fellow human beings.

Early Communication Methods

Communication has ***existed*** in various forms since man appeared on Earth. The methods, however, may have been limited to sign language at first, then gradually became more ***sophisticated*** with speech. The most well-known form of early communication are cave paintings. The pigments were made from the juice of fruits and berries and coloured minerals. These pigments were then used to create depictions on the cave walls. The ***purpose*** of the paintings has been questioned by scholars for years. One theory states that the depictions were used as a manual for instructing which animals were safe to eat. Other experts disagree and say that cave dwellers used paintings to display the best hunting methods, as well as a way of expressing status or ability as a hunter. Moreover, painting and other forms of art have been used to convey messages over thousands of years right up to the present day.

Other forms of early tribal communication, such as drums and smoke signals also existed and still exist in more ***remote*** parts of the world in parts of Africa and the Amazon. However, these methods may attract unwanted attention from enemy tribes and predatory animals.

In the centuries that have followed, the written word has become increasingly important, in order to write letters, record laws and other important documents. Today, the internet, email and social media have massively expanded and transformed our communication with each other on a national and international scale. Is this going ***to benefit*** us indefinitely, or will such advanced communication eventually be our ***downfall***?

2 **Read the text again. Are these sentences True (T), False (F) or Not mentioned in the text (NM)?**

1. The purpose of cave paintings is clearly understood by scholars.
2. Effective communication is essential for a great number of reasons.
3. Cave paintings were definitely used as a manual to show which animals were safe to eat.
4. The pigment for cave paintings only came from minerals.
5. Verbal communication was developed before the written word.
6. Drums and smoke signals are still used today in some parts of the world.
7. Birds can communicate with us by learning and using our language.
8. In the distant past, people used to live in very large communities.
9. The spoken word continues to be developed up to the present time.
10. We no longer use hand written letters because we have email.

3 **Answer the questions to the text.**

1. What was used to communicate before there was writing?
2. What may have been the purpose of cave paintings?
3. Do experts all agree on the purpose of cave paintings?
4. Why were drums and smoke signals not a good way to communicate?
5. Why is effective communication important?
6. Why is the internet such an effective tool for communication?
7. Can parrots and other species of birds, communicate with us in our language?

General questions and discussion.

1. What method of communication do you use most, the written or spoken word?
2. Which is the most important method of communication?

3. How many words do you know in spoken English? Is it enough to communicate with foreigners?
4. How many words can humans learn over a life time?
5. Is the continual advancement in communication a good thing, or is there a downside?
6. Name some methods of communication that may be harmful to family life and your nation.